

# Employee Assistance Program

Think Positive

When life hands you lemons, are you able to make lemonade? Research indicates that people who possess an optimistic attitude are healthier and lead more satisfied lives than their pessimistic counterparts. Studies also indicate positive thinkers engage in activities associated with healthy living such as staying smoke free, making healthy food choices, and exercising regularly, all of which contribute to reducing stress.

Through the course of the day we are constantly engaging in self-talk; the stream of thoughts that run through our minds without prompting. Are these messages positive? Or are they negative?

## ***What makes self- talk positive or negative?***

Self-talk influences our outlook on life. Positive messages are filled with possibilities, set fears aside, and welcome opportunities to try something new, while negative messages are wedded in concrete thinking, impossibility, and are resistant to change.

## ***Examples of Self-talk***

Negative	Positive
All or Nothing/Black or White thinking	Ability to see the good and bad in situations
Self Blame/Personalizing	Self compassion
Anticipating the worst	Hoping for the best

## ***How to move from Pessimist to Optimist?***

To begin to challenge negative self-talk and change your negative thoughts to positive ones, consider engaging in some of the actions below.

- Avoid perfectionistic thinking - No one is perfect; when you make mistakes forgive yourself and move on.
- Surround yourself with positive people - Invite people who will give you positive feedback and support into your life.
- Meditate - Carve out time daily to quiet your mind, focus on the present, and relax.
- Don't take yourself too seriously - Embrace opportunities to laugh and see humor in everyday life.
- Challenge negative thoughts - When a negative thought occurs, stop and replace the thought with a positive one.
  - Negative self-talk: "I'll never be able to get this assignment done!"
  - Positive self-talk: "I can do this if I develop a plan and take one step at a time."
- Offer yourself compassion - Treat yourself with the same understanding, compassion and respect you would offer to others.

Remember behavior change takes time. Be patient with yourself and the changes you are seeking will become habits in no time. For additional information or confidential consultation contact your EAP.



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