



## Choose positivity over pessimism.

### Stop negative self-talk to reduce stress and improve health.

Is your glass half-empty or half-full? Answering this age-old question about positive thinking may say a lot about your outlook on life and your attitude toward yourself. Whether you're optimistic or pessimistic may also affect your stress levels – and even your overall health. That's why a positive attitude is also a healthy attitude.

Sometimes positive thinking is easier said than done and when negativity starts to creep in, the temptation to give up is sure to follow. In those moments, it's important to pause. Start to be aware of how you talk to yourself and instead of beating yourself up, try to focus on any progress and celebrate all of the healthy choices you've made.

### Practice overcoming negative self-talk.

Use these examples to help stop negative self-talk and put positive thinking into practice. And always remember, creating any new habit takes time and practice.



#### EXERCISING MORE

##### Negative self-talk

I've never done this exercise class before. What if I look foolish? I probably shouldn't even try.

##### Positive thinking

The last time I tried that spinning class, the instructor said I was pretty good. What else might I be good at?



#### EATING HEALTHIER

##### Negative self-talk

If I buy a lot of healthy food, it will go to waste. Then I'll be angry with myself for spending all that money.

##### Positive thinking

I'll start by buying healthier snacks. Then I'll try making one or two healthier meals. Sure, it will take time, but it will be well worth it.



#### QUITTING SMOKING

##### Negative self-talk

I've tried to quit before and I always failed. If I'm going to fail, I shouldn't even try.

##### Positive thinking

This time, I'm going to enroll in a smoking cessation class and ask my friends and family to help me through this.



#### LOSING WEIGHT

##### Negative self-talk

I've never been good at sports, exercise or eating healthy meals. I'll just have to get used to not liking the way I look and feel.

##### Positive thinking

I'll give it another try and plan to walk three days a week for 2 months. Once I reach a goal, I might reward myself with a new pair of sneakers.

WebMD. "Positive thinking sets you up for success." Achieve Health Goals With Optimism/Positive Thinking (webmd.com). Last medically reviewed on October 16, 2013.

Mayo Clinic. "Positive thinking: Stop negative self-talk to reduce stress." <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/positive-thinking/art-20043950>. February 3, 2022.

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