

MODULE 3

MAKING POSITIVE THINKING WORK FOR YOU

When you change your thoughts, your reactions to situations and to other people automatically change too. In turn, this changes the reactions of other people towards you. As we stated earlier, we all affect one another.

To change your thinking from negative to positive, you first need to recognise that your thinking is negative. The above exercises have shown you how you can do this.

Having identified that you are thinking negatively, you then need to challenge these negative thoughts that you are having.

In simple terms, challenging negative thoughts means actually stopping your bad thoughts about yourself, about other people, or about any situation, and allowing only good thoughts into your mind.

Thinking back to the Process of Change that we mentioned earlier, you have now reached the 'Making Changes' stage, and you may feel that you are on your way towards the Relapsing stage, possibly wondering how you can miss out the 'Maintaining Change' stage!

You may be inwardly thinking 'It's easy to be positive in an exercise when I've had time to analyse my responses, but how can I sit down and write an exercise when something or someone pushes my 'negative thinking' buttons?

Please understand that it takes time and practice to change the way you think. After all, you may have been thinking like this for a long time, so any change will not happen overnight.

If you are determined enough to change the course of your life, your relationships and the way you feel about yourself, then you must persistently

challenge your negative thoughts whenever you can catch them. You will then, very quickly, start to see real changes in the way you react to situations, and you will immediately notice how difficulties become opportunities and how you magnetise kind and helpful people towards you.

Changing from negative to positive is the quickest and profoundest way to make good things happen to you. It really is worth the effort you make.

HOW NEGATIVE SELF-TALK STARTS

Patterns of positive or negative self-talk tend to start in childhood, created by the thoughts and beliefs we had back then, which go on to create the events that we experience throughout our life. Frequently our most damaging self-esteem messages are deeply ingrained in our childhood years. They can be related to anything, such as financial circumstances, weight issues, school grades, sports performance, speech, dress, deportment, or anything at all, which can be used to compromise our self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence.

Regular negative statements from others can gradually chip away at our feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. As adults we can learn how to challenge this.

But children tend to believe negative assessments of themselves from parents, teachers or peers, and when fed criticism on a regular basis, they develop a compromised conception of themselves.

It is true of an adult that "*Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent.*" - *Eleanor Roosevelt*. But children don't stand a chance. They don't rationalise what they are hearing. They just absorb it.

But we are now adults and we need to realise that **every thought and belief we had is already in the past. It is finished.** What is important is the thought we are thinking at this precise moment. These thoughts are the ones that are creating our future, not the ones we had yesterday or twenty years ago.

By allowing ourselves to believe the many negative thoughts that pass through our minds every day, we are denying ourselves the opportunity to change our lives, at the deepest level and for the best.

If we do not believe we are worthy of good things or good relationships, or are not good enough for the job we want, or not attractive enough to have friends, we are stopping good things from happening to us.

As we saw in Module 1, if you believe you are dull and uninteresting, you will project that image and be looked upon by others as being dull and uninteresting.

PRESSING 'CANCEL' ON OLD NEGATIVE MESSAGES



Reviewing your past messages and pressing the 'Cancel' button is a powerful skill in boosting your self-esteem and self-worth, and it goes a long way to eliminating your negative thinking.

It doesn't matter what you think or believe about yourself, they really are only simple thoughts that go through your mind. But they have power.

If you regularly think 'I'm not good enough', these negative thoughts transform themselves into negative feelings and then into negative behaviour.

In other words, you will start projecting negativity. This means that you will have a negative air about you, and people who come into contact with you will pick up on it. They will respond to your negative energy and negative body language and will take on board your image of not being good enough. They will believe that you are not good enough.

The moment you change that thought, you will change the sort of energy you project, so your body language will change and other people will change their reactions to you.....