

Self-Talk Test

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1. You are hosting a dinner party, and everything goes pretty well except for dessert, when you realize you forgot to pick up the pastry shells for the ice cream. At the end of the evening you are most likely to say to yourself:
 - A. Who cares? The evening was a great success.
 - B. Sure, the dinner party went all right, but dessert was a failure.
 - C. I ruined everything when I didn't remember to go to the bakery.

2. You have a project at work that requires your team's support, and you are very eager and excited to get moving on it. At a meeting, however, one of your colleagues raises numerous questions about your idea and suggests you hold off until the team has more time to think about it. You most likely say to yourself:
 - A. He might have a good point.
 - B. He doesn't trust me.
 - C. He is either for me or against me.

3. The work that most aptly describes your internal dialogue about yourself is:
 - A. Positive and upbeat.
 - B. Neutral and on the fence.
 - C. Negative and critical.

4. You've just made a major mistake at work that potentially cost the company a major sale. You are most likely to say to yourself in the next day or two:
 - A. I may have made a mistake, but I'm still a worthwhile person.
 - B. I never measure up to the person I want to be.
 - C. I'm worthless.

5. You enjoy a much-needed outing with friends. When you arrive home, you find your spouse sprawled on the couch watching television, with leftover pizza and stacks of dirty plates and cups on the kitchen counter. You most likely say to yourself:
 - A. My spouse must be exhausted. I'll whip those dishes into shape and then relax on the couch too.
 - B. I never get to go out by myself. Couldn't my spouse at least be courteous enough to clean up this one time?
 - C. I should never have gone out. Things completely fall apart when I'm gone.

6. When you were a kid, what kind of messages did you most often receive from your parents?
 - A. Encouraging and loving messages.
 - B. An equal amount of encouraging and critical messages
 - C. Critical and hurtful messages

7. You are headed out for the evening and want to wear one of your favorite shirts. It is just finishing the final cycle in your washing machine. You put it in the dryer and the dryer shorts out. It's completely dead – no power. And your shirt is completely wet. You realize it won't be dry in time to wear it. You most likely say to yourself:
 - A. No problem, I'll wear something else.
 - B. It never fails. This always happens to me.
 - C. I can't stand this. My whole evening is ruined.

8. You are needing a helping hand to move some heavy furniture and wondering about asking a friend. What thought is most likely to shoot through your brain?
 - A. I'm pretty sure he can help, and if not, he'll say so.
 - B. Am I pushing the limits of this friendship too far?
 - C. I don't deserve to have anyone help me, and I better not even ask.

9. Your tennis opponent says out loud to himself, "What a lousy shot!" You are most likely to:
 - A. Say, "You're being too hard on yourself."
 - B. Remain silent.
 - C. Say, "You're right; I've seen better."

10. In general, the internal conversation you have with yourself most days tends to:
 - A. Help you experience more fully and consistently your profound significance.
 - B. Go back and forth between helping and hindering your experience of profound significance.
 - C. Keep you from experiencing your profound significance.

Scoring

If you answered mainly “A”, it’s safe to say that your self-talk is based on a solid sense of significance. You tend to consistently see things in their proper perspective and rarely punish yourself for mistakes. Your self-talk is based on the reality of the situation. If your shirt was wet, for example, you simply chose another shirt. No big deal. Also, your negative situations don’t tend to elicit a negative emotional response. This is a sure sign of well-schooled self-talk. Plus, if you’ve made a mistake, you don’t see **yourself** as a mistake – a sure sign of profound significance. In general, you are secure in yourself and enjoy a depth of self-worth. You have learned to use your self-talk as a tool to maintain your dignity and significance. Of course, if nearly every one of your answers was in this category, you may want to review how honest you are being with yourself. Rarely does a person answer every item with an “A”.

If you answered mainly “B”, your self-talk tends to be more negative than is beneficial. While you are not likely to punish yourself for very long with a condemning internal dialogue, you certainly are not using your self-talk to maximize your experience of profound significance. You are literally talking yourself out of the full enjoyment of being loved at your core. There is much you can learn to improve your self-talk.

If you answered mainly “C”, your self-talk shows signs of needing serious attention and repair. Likely, you are suffering from a low sense of self-worth, and your self-talk is keeping at bay any chance of experiencing profound significance. Almost reflexively, you immediately equate any failure or bad experience to your own “badness.” You have a very difficult time separating who you are from what you do. No doubt you already know your internal dialogue is repeatedly sabotaging your ability to receive your significance and worth. What can you do? Plenty.

Are the results of a self-test like these generalizations? Of course. However, this simple self-test can at least help you **identify** your general tendencies so you can get the most out of this chapter.