

Develop Positive Self-Talk

How to use: Print first for the main practice. Then use the device to repeat activities and save progress.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Recognize negative self-thoughts
- 2 Replace negative self-thoughts with a positive reframe that is honest and encouraging

MINI LESSON

Self-talk is the voice inside your head — the things you say to yourself when something happens. That inner voice is powerful. Negative self-talk can make challenges feel impossible, while positive self-talk gives you the energy to keep trying.

What is negative self-talk?

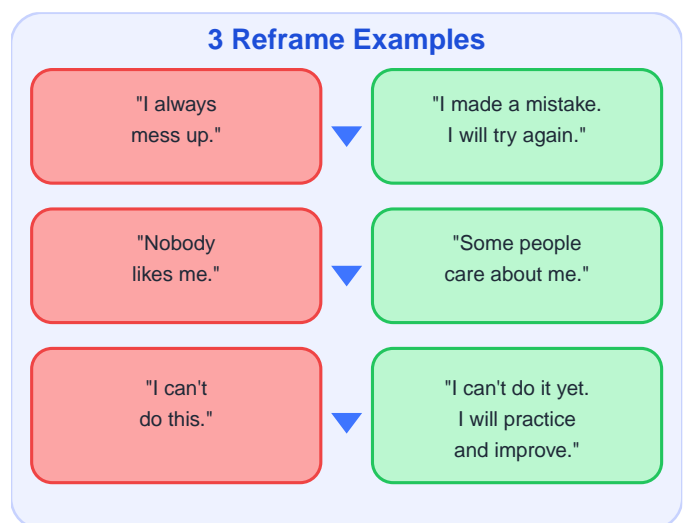
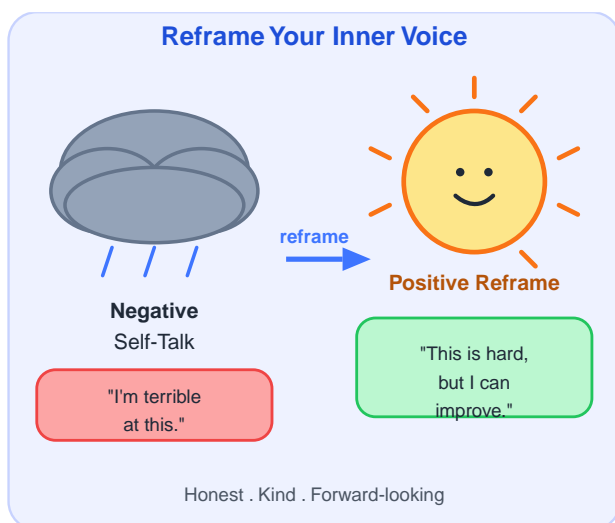
- Thoughts like "I'm terrible at this," "I always mess up," or "Nobody likes me."
- These thoughts are usually exaggerated — they use words like "always," "never," "terrible," or "everyone."
- They focus on failure and make you want to give up.

What is a positive reframe?

- A reframe is not pretending everything is perfect — it is finding a more honest and helpful way to look at the same situation.
- "I'm terrible at this" becomes "This is hard, but I can get better with practice."
- "I always mess up" becomes "I made a mistake this time. I will try again."

The reframe rule

- Keep it honest — don't say "I'm amazing at this" if you're not.
- Keep it kind — speak to yourself the way you would speak to a good friend.
- Keep it forward-looking — include what you can do next.



! Self-check: Can you turn "I can't do this" into a positive reframe right now?

TRACING PRACTICE

Trace each word, then copy it twice on the lines below.

TRACE

hopeful

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

discouraged

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

determined

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

frustrated

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

encouraged

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

confident

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

anxious

COPY 1

COPY 2

TRACE

resilient

COPY 1

COPY 2

Tip: As you trace each word, say a positive reframe out loud — speak kindly to yourself.

EXERCISES — MATCH THE PAIRS

Draw a line from each negative thought to its positive reframe.

1. "I'm terrible at reading."

2. "I always get everything wrong."

3. "Nobody wants to be my friend."

4. "I'll never be good at sports."

5. "I'm the worst in the class."

6. "I can't do anything right today."

A. "Sports take practice. I can improve if I keep trying."

B. "Some things are hard for me. I am learning and improving."

C. "Today is tough, but tomorrow I will try again."

D. "Reading is challenging for me right now, but I am getting better."

E. "I made mistakes today. Mistakes help me learn."

F. "I have people who care about me, and I can make new friends."

Write the matching letter next to each number (e.g. 1-B, 2-A, 3-C...).

1 — ____ 2 — ____ 3 — ____ 4 — ____ 5 — ____ 6 — ____

EXERCISES — MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What is self-talk?

- The thoughts and inner voice you have about yourself.
- The words you say out loud to your friends.
- A way of writing in your diary.

2. Which word is a warning sign of negative self-talk?

- "sometimes"
- "a little"
- "always"

3. What does it mean to reframe a negative thought?

- Pretending the problem does not exist.
- Finding a more honest and helpful way to think about it.
- Saying something that is not true to feel better.

5. How does positive self-talk help you when something is difficult?

- It makes the task easier by doing part of it for you.
- It removes all feelings of frustration.
- It helps you stay motivated and keep trying.

7. What does "talk to yourself like a good friend" mean?

- Use kind, honest, and supportive words when you think about yourself.
- Always agree with everything you feel or think.
- Only say nice things and never admit a problem.

9. Why should a reframe be forward-looking?

- So you can forget about past mistakes completely.
- So it points to an action you can take next, not just how you feel now.
- So it sounds more impressive to other people.

4. Which reframe of "I can't do this" is best?

- "I can't do it yet, but I can practice and improve."
- "I'm amazing at everything and always succeed."
- "It doesn't matter because nobody cares anyway."

6. A classmate says "I'm the best at everything" to replace "I'm bad at everything." Is this a good reframe?

- Yes — it is positive and that is all that matters.
- No — a reframe must be honest, not just flattering.
- Yes — exaggerating is fine as long as you feel better.

8. What is the main difference between negative and positive self-talk?

- Negative self-talk is quieter; positive self-talk is louder.
- Negative self-talk only happens at school; positive self-talk happens at home.
- Negative self-talk focuses on failure; positive self-talk focuses on growth.

10. What is the best positive reframe for "I always mess up"?

- "I made a mistake this time. I can learn from it and try again."
- "I never make any mistakes ever."
- "Mistakes don't matter at all."

ASSESSMENT

PARENT / TEACHER CHECKLIST

- Identifies at least two examples of negative self-talk and explains why they are unhelpful (e.g., "It uses 'always' and makes everything seem worse than it is").
- Creates a positive reframe for a given negative thought that is honest, kind, and forward-looking — without simply reversing it into an exaggerated positive.
- States the three qualities of a good reframe in their own words: honest, kind, and forward-looking.
- Applies positive self-talk to a real situation from their own day (e.g., reframes a moment of frustration or self-doubt they actually experienced).