

## POSITIVE SELF-TALK

How soon we forget. This statement is especially true for people struggling with depression. They forget how to think positively and they forget about their worth as individuals, their contribution to society in general and friends and family in particular. The cloud of depression blocks out the positive and distorts their vision into seeing themselves, the world, and their future as negative. This assignment is designed to help you break out of that self-defeating, unrealistic negative thinking cycle. It will take effort and focused attention to break the bad habit of distorted thinking.

1. List five positive mood-enhancing statements regarding yourself (e.g., “I am a competent person who has had successes.”), the world (e.g., “Other people are basically kind and want to be helpful.”), and the future (e.g., “As I increase my activity, the future looks brighter.”). You must force yourself to focus in on your successes, positive traits, the goodness of people, and an optimistic view of the future. Your tendency will be to think of failures and discount or ignore successes as well as seeing the future as hopeless. In other words, you must think contrary to your natural depressive inclination and return to the realistic positive way of thinking that characterized you before bad habits got a stranglehold on your thoughts.

### Positive View of Me

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### Positive View of the World

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**Positive View of the Future**

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2. Each day select one mood-enhancing thought from your lists and write it on a piece of paper to be posted somewhere in your house so that it will be easily visible (e.g., on the refrigerator, on a mirror).
3. Stand in front of a mirror each day for three minutes and look yourself in the eye while repeating the positive self-talk that you have written in item 1.
4. Explain the impact that the positive self-talk has had on your mood.

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5. Rate the degree of improvement in your mood when you think positively versus when you think negatively.

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| 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5      |
| No     |   |   |   | Great  |
| Impact |   |   |   | Impact |