

How to use your Willpower—to Defeat Mind Chatter!

What you think creates your feelings. From your feelings (emotions) you are motivated to do/not do things. The process looks like this:

Thought → Belief → Feelings → Actions (what you do)

Example: You have the belief: **“A good reward for good work is good food.”**

Driving home from a challenging day at work you see signs and billboards for restaurants and other food that trigger this thought: *“Hey, I worked hard today, I deserve to reward myself!”* This thought stems from your belief that food is a good reward for good work. This thought grows and intensifies as you think of what you have at home to eat and how you could reward yourself. When you arrive home 10 minutes later and walk into the house you find yourself really “feeling like” a glass of wine and some cheese and crackers! *It’s now gone from a thought that “popped up” to a “feel like” feeling that is compelling you!*

But wait! You’re trying to lose weight! So you summon “willpower” to stop yourself. You choose an apple instead, but while munching on your apple your original thought of rewarding yourself with food & drink keeps popping up making you feel deprived! You keep using your willpower but your brain is now pouring out thoughts like:



- “It’s OK, just have a treat, you can diet tomorrow!”
- “You work hard and deserve a treat!”
- “Why worry about it, you know your diet is going to fail anyway!”

With these thoughts growing in your head, you’ll eventually adopt one or all of them and pour a glass of wine, cut up some cheese, and self-justify to yourself to feel OK with doing what you really didn’t want to do. *“I deserve a treat...I work hard!”* you hear yourself say silently. However, deep inside this small failure is recorded in your subconscious as further proof to yourself that you don’t have enough “willpower” to succeed.

Most people use their willpower *after* the thought has grown into a strong feeling. **Once a feeling is established, it is nearly impossible to change because your Mind Chatter will keep flooding your brain with justifying thoughts to get what it wants—pleasure or pain avoidance.**

The only place where willpower can be effective is by stopping the thought BEFORE it becomes a feeling! This occurs two ways:

1. Find and change the belief causing the feeling
2. Talk back to the thought before it takes root as a feeling

If the person in my example changed her belief to: "A good reward for good work is feeling good", the thought to eat to reward herself might not pop-up. Or even better, what if she decided to establish this new belief: "A good reward for good work is going for a good run!" Imagine the potential difference in outcome!

But even if no new belief is established, when the thought "I deserve some good food for my hard day at work" pops up, talking back with a strong statement of your will such as:

- "That is crap, I won't reward myself with more fat on my rear!"
- "The reason I work hard is because I want a better life!"
- "I will be a role model of good health to my kids...that IS my reward!"

Yes, talking back is a very powerful strategy in stopping your initial automatic thoughts from growing and turning into compelling feelings. The reason so few consciously "talk back" to their own internal thoughts is the erroneous belief that our own thoughts are always true and it seems unusual (strange) to talk to ourselves.

Talking back to your automatic thoughts gives you conscious control over what feelings develop. **Use your willpower HERE and you'll gain control over what you "feel like" doing!** Like any other skill, you'll need to practice doing this to make it a habit and get good at it. But once you do, believe me, it's THE most powerful skill you can have to change your life and your weight permanently!

Self-Talk also programs in your subconscious the belief that you want to have. When Mind Chatter occurs, it's like your brain is open up to the page containing that belief giving you a golden opportunity to write-in what you want! Each time you use your strong Self-Talk, it weakens that old belief and soon your new belief will start popping up compelling you to do what you want! For example, when you hear Mind Chatter say :

"Go ahead and eat the treats, you work hard and deserve it!"

You say out loud: "A reward for my hard work is to live proud of myself and to enjoy a good workout!" "Food should not be used as a reward!" "Food is a tool I use to live a healthy and awesome life I am proud of!"

Using your willpower in the **Thought → Belief** stage is where it will be the most effective. To be specific, this is the time just after a thought pops into your head. Once the thought has taken root (because you haven't rejected it) and becomes a "feeling" to you, it is EXTREMELY hard to uproot and get past by using willpower. Your powerful weapon to win this war is voicing your

will before a thought grows into a feeling. Will you always be successful? Heck no, but at least you'll start to empower your will to dictate what you do rather than your old programmed habits!

How best to respond?

Verbalizing your response out loud is by far the most effective and powerful way to stop a thought from becoming a feeling. Your brain is powerfully drawn to strong out loud talk. Out loud talk seems more truthful and believable to your brain than just a silent thought dancing in your head. Try it today driving in your car. When you see a sign for fast food (like Burgers for \$3), say to yourself silently *"Burgers are fat bombs...I'm done with those!"* Then verbalize it out loud. Notice the difference in how it FEELS! **Hearing your own voice is VERY powerful in programming your subconscious** to follow your will and not the old programming and long-ago established habits that no longer serve you. Also moving your body in a strong way like sitting

Self Talk Affirmation	Power
Say silently in your head	Good
Say out loud	Better
Say out loud with enthusiasm	Very Good
Say out loud with enthusiasm with body movement	Best

up straight, lifting your head or raising a fist in the air, makes a much more powerful impression on your subconscious. Remember, emotion is power when it comes to your subconscious programming!

To utilize this extremely powerful tool, you'll need to get past the belief that talking to yourself is strange. Join me in believing it is more "strange" to keep failing at weight loss and other important things in your life than to try using

self-talk and see what it can do for you! I 100% guarantee if you start using it, you will be amazed at how different you feel and from that how much more motivated and successful you are.

Respond in the present tense and positive form

Respond to your Mind Chatter with present tense positive statements like "I am", "I do", "It is" rather than statements that imply you're not there yet. "I like eating salads" is a more powerful Self-Talk statement than "I will learn to like eating salads". If you don't like salads yet, your brain will respond with a "you're full of crap" thought, but that's OK because it just means you really struck a chord with your old subconscious programming—a good thing!

Also make statements in the positive form. “I exercise daily” is the positive form of “I won’t skip exercise”. “I always go to bed without eating” is the positive form of “I won’t eat before going to bed”.



Also, it’s OK to believe in something that isn’t reality yet. In fact that’s how EVERYTHING came into existence! Everything that is here today had to be believed in before it actually became. Belief is your most powerful asset for change! Force your brain to believe even before you do by using positive Self-Talk statements!

Examples of present tense positive responses:

- *“Today is going to be a great day!”*
- *“I love eating healthy.”*
- *“I love to go for walks every night after dinner.”*
- *“I enjoy riding bike every morning when I get up.”*
- *“I love how strength training makes me feel!”*
- *“I am a healthy person.”*

Eating Mind Chatter:	Eating Conscious Responses:
“I don’t have time to cook healthy.”	“On weekends I cook healthy foods for the week.”
“I love to eat too much, this is hopeless!”	“I am teaching myself to love eating healthy foods and amounts”
“Everything that I am supposed to eat I hate!”	“Not EVERYTHING I hate... that is an exaggeration. The real me loves eating healthy foods!

Exercise Mind Chatter:	Exercise Conscious Responses:
“I’m too old to exercise”	“I’m too old NOT to exercise! I start easy and progress gradually.”
“I can’t exercise outside, what if someone sees me?”	“If someone sees me, I’ll be an inspiration to others!”
“I can’t jog, I hate running!”	“The real me loves to exercise! I feel alive and healthy!”

What your BRAIN said:	What YOU should say:
"I ALWAYS screw up"	"I am learning a lot.... that feels so good!"
"I just CAN'T control myself"	"I CAN control myself... that feels so good!"
"I'll always be a big girl"	"I can be whatever I want to be... it feels so good to know that!"
"I HATE Beets"	"I am learning to Love healthy foods.. I am so proud of that!"
"Getting up early sucks!"	"Getting up early makes me successful.... I love that feeling!"
"I NEED a slice of pie!"	"I control food... I am accomplishing my goals and that feels so awesome!"
"Wow, that looks delicious"	"I Love how I LOOK more than what food looks like... that makes me feel so good!"

Key Point #1: You can't put out a fire by dismissing or ignoring it, you have to put water on it. Similarly, you can't put out your Mind Chatter without action. Your own Self Talk is the "water" that puts out the "fire" of your Mind Chatter!



Key Point #2: The sooner you put water on the fire, the easier it is to put it out. If you wait too long, the fire will grow so large, and your Self-Talk won't work!

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify times when your Mind Chatter influences you to overeat, eat things you didn't plan on, skip exercise, etc. Then formulate what you will say out loud at the time you experience this reoccurring Mind Chatter that has been "burning" you.

(example: When eating dinner, my Mind Chatter says: "...eat more, you're still hungry!" My planned response is: "Full = fat! I now love to eat healthy portions and feel great about it!")

- a. Mind Chatter:
Your planned response:

- b. Mind Chatter:
Your planned response:

- c. Mind Chatter:
Your planned response:

- d. Mind Chatter:
Your planned response:

To learn more about Self-Talk I highly recommend reading: "What to Say When You Talk to Your Self." By Shad Helmstetter, PhD.

