

## SELF-TALK THAT PROMOTES OR INTERFERES WITH YOUR BEING ASSERTIVE

How you think about the situations where you might wish to be assertive has a lot to do with whether you will actually make the decision to take the risk to speak up for yourself in a variety of situations. Positive thoughts and self-talk can actually promote your being more direct, open, and assertive with others. Negative thoughts and self-talk will interfere with and undermine your efforts to be assertive. Below are some very specific examples of self-talk in each of these categories. Start to notice what you are thinking when you may want to make the choice to be assertive.

### POSITIVE SELF-TALK

- *I've had some good experiences speaking up for myself*
- *I have a lot to offer other people*
- *I can get through this*
- *We're on the same team; we need to work on this together*
- *I can do this*
- *This is important to me*
- *I have something important to say about this issue*
- *Someone needs to say something here*
- *People are interested in what I think/feel/say/want/need*
- *Others want me to contribute in this situation*
- *I have the right to say something about this issue*
- *I have the right to feel this way*
- *I have a responsibility to speak up here*
- *I have a responsibility to say something in this situation*
- *I have the right to ask others to consider my feelings/opinions/thoughts*
- *I can get closer if I share my feelings with my partner and other people*
- *I'll feel bad later if I don't say anything here*
- *I can work on and change this part of me*
- *This can work out for both me and her*
- *It's OK to make mistakes*
- *This can be easier than I think it is*
- *I'll be able to handle this*
- *I have something to offer in this situation*
- *I have the right to feel safe*
- *I can make different choices*
- *I always have a choice about whether I speak up*
- *This isn't nearly as hard as I thought it would be*

### NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

- *They're smarter/better/more capable than I am*
- *I just can't do this*
- *I don't want to "rock the boat"*
- *It's not really that big a deal*
- *I'm probably just too "sensitive"*
- *I guess this isn't really all that important*
- *I suppose that it doesn't really matter*
- *I guess it's none of my business*
- *They wouldn't really like what I have to say*
- *They won't like me anymore if I speak up here*
- *I won't be able to defend my opinion/what I feel/what I think/what I want*
- *I really shouldn't be feeling bad about this issue*
- *What's the point in saying anything anyway?*
- *It won't do any good to speak up in this situation*
- *I don't want to offend anyone*
- *I'm probably just over-reacting about this issue*
- *I'm just not very good with words*
- *This just isn't worth the hassle*
- *No one else really cares what I think/feel/want*
- *I don't want to get into an argument with them*
- *I guess things really aren't that bad*
- *It's just too late to say something now*
- *There's nothing I can do about this situation*
- *I could get hurt if I speak up about this*
- *I'm probably wrong about this issue*
- *It's just too scary to say something here*
- *I'm powerless/helpless in this situation*
- *This situation is just plain hopeless*
- *I'm just too shy to say something*
- *Nothing will change no matter what I say/do*
- *I might not be right about this*
- *Saying something won't do me any good anyway*

## POSITIVE SELF-TALK

- *I can be different from who I've been before*
- *Speaking up is a good idea*
- *It's OK to speak up/be honest/be direct with others*
- *I'll just feel worse later if I don't say something about this now*
- *I need to take more risks about speaking up*
- *This could actually help to change things in a positive way*
- *I need to take the risk to do this*
- *I can handle whatever happens in this situation*
- *It's OK to see things differently/have a different perspective than they do*
- *Things might actually change if I say something here*
- *My feelings/thoughts/needs/wants are important*
- *I deserve to be heard in this situation*
- *It's OK to speak up even if things don't change right now or work out the way I want*
- *I need to let others know what I want/need*
- *If I don't say something about this now, I'll get resentful later*
- *It's OK to be myself in this situation*
- *If I don't talk more about what I feel, I'll end up hurting our relationship*
- *Asserting myself can be good for me and our marriage*

## NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

- *Other people are more important than I am*
- *I haven't really thought out what I want to say*
- *I guess I'm the real problem here*
- *I might hurt someone if I speak up*
- *I might make someone mad if I say something*
- *This issue probably isn't all that important*
- *I'm probably the only one who feels/thinks this way*
- *I'll never be able to handle how they react if I say something here*
- *This is probably my fault anyway*
- *No one cares about what I think/feel/want/need*
- *I'll let others down if I tell people what I think*
- *Why bother?*
- *I don't want to "make waves" with them*
- *I'm guess I'm just being "irrational" about this issue that bothers me*
- *I should just forget about it*
- *What I want/need doesn't really matter that much*
- *They won't like me if I say something here*
- *I'll just regret it if I speak up*
- *It's just not "nice" to say something to them*
- *There's probably something "wrong" with me if I feel like this*
- *They'll probably take what I say "the wrong way"*
- *I have a good thing going; I better not wreck it by speaking up now*
- *I really shouldn't complain about what's going on right now*
- *Saying something will just make my life more difficult*
- *Others are just too vulnerable/sensitive for me to be really honest in this situation*
- *I've never been able to express myself very well*
- *They probably didn't really mean what they just said to me*
- *Other people will reject me if I tell them how I really feel*
- *They'll just think I'm a "whiner" if I say something about this issue*
- *They'll think I'm "rude" if I speak up about this*