

Talking to Yourself

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Everyone talks to themselves in one way or another. You may have an outright (out loud) conversation about something, or you may just think it. While you're having that conversation with yourself, various events may spark additional internal commentary: something good happens, something bad happens, someone says something to you, etc. What you say (verbal or nonverbal) to yourself says a lot about your outlook on life. Your opinion of yourself, particularly when expressed verbally or in thought, reinforces who you believe you are.

You probably already realize this, but what you say to yourself is actually heard by you and has a distinct impact on how you think and feel. For example, if you constantly tell yourself, "I really feel tired," you will continue to believe (and feel) what you say, even when you get more than enough sleep. It will become a habit of mind that affects you on all levels.

A classic example of this concept can be found in the movie, "[Ferris Bueller's Day Off](#)." Here we find two teenage boys who stay home from high school because they are "sick." If you remember the movie, Ferris isn't sick at all; he just wants to have some fun. His friend Cameron isn't sick, either, but he has told himself he is. Here's how it plays out on film:

Cameron (whispering to himself after hanging up from a phone call with Ferris): "I'm dying." The phone rings and Cameron answers it. It's Ferris again.

Ferris: "You're not dying, you just can't think of anything good to do."

But wait, it gets better. While I don't condone his methods (lying, fraud, manipulation, etc.), you have to admire Ferris' determination to have a great day. Take this, for example:

Sloane (Ferris' girlfriend, who is also taking the day off): "What are we going to do?"

Ferris: "The question isn't, 'What are we going to do,' the question is, 'What aren't we going to do?'"

Ferris, Cameron and Sloane all experience the same day. They spend a beautiful day outside at a baseball game, witness priceless art treasures at an art museum, eat exotic food at a fine restaurant, and more. As they do, their comments to themselves, each other and the camera illustrate their respective outlooks. Toward the end of the day, Ferris asks Cameron a revealing question:

Ferris: "Cameron, what have you seen today?"

Cameron: "Nothing good."

Ferris: "Nothing - wha - what do you mean nothing good? We've seen everything good. We've seen the whole city! (Chicago) We went to a museum, we saw priceless works of art! We ate pancreas!"

Sadly, Cameron's outlook, combined with his verbal affirmation of his negative attitude, caused him

to miss the fun that his friends enjoyed, even though he was right there with them the whole time.

Another truth this movie points out is that there will always be those who will try to dampen your positive outlook. In Ferris' case, it is his sister Jeanie and the school principal, Mr. Rooney:

Jeanie (thinking to herself): "Maybe I'm overreacting. Maybe Ferris isn't such a bad guy. After all, I got a car, he got a computer. But still, why should he get to do whatever he wants, whenever he wants? Why should everything work out for him? What makes him so #%* special?"

Ed Rooney (to Ferris): "How would you feel about another year of high school - under my close personal supervision?"

Our lives are filled with a mix of good and evil, for lack of better description. This is true for everyone, whether a high school student, a publisher or a doctor of chiropractic. We can expect to experience most of what is common to all and the emotions that go with those experiences. These are beyond our control. What we *can* control is how we react to what happens. We can control what we tell ourselves about who we are and how we relate to what someone else said or did. We can begin each day with a positive, encouraging conversation with ourselves, expecting the best from the new day we have been given.

Each new day is a gift from God. It should be illegal to waste it or to diminish its value with negative comments about yourself, undue sarcasm about your situation or deliberately missed opportunities.

Make a commitment to speak only positive, encouraging statements to yourself, and remember to compliment yourself often. This applies to you both as a human being and as a doctor of chiropractic. Think positive and keep in mind all that you accomplish on a daily basis to help people in pain. Think about all you do to inspire others, starting with your family. After all, personally and professionally, there will always be plenty of Jeanies and Ed Rooneys who will try to rain on your parade.

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