

Winning Ways

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A publication of

Winning Ways

Developing Goals, Focus and Leaders

This copy of Winning Ways is a gift for you from Winning Ways, Inc. We provide an environment that creates focus, momentum and success for long term changes in your personal and professional life through our sales, strategic planning and coaching services. We help you achieve the results you and your business want! Call Joan Fletcher 703-273-9299 today. We are committed to helping you achieve your goals.

The Voice Within: Positive Self-Talk

Imagine you're about to give a speech in front of a crowded auditorium of influential people. You're excited, but also very nervous. Before this speech, you get to spend about 20 minutes relaxing and preparing, and you get to have one friend with you. You have two good friends who want to come, and you're trying to decide which one to have along.

The first friend is well-meaning, but very anxious. He's full of worries, and as you're discussing the speech he continually says things like, "I hope you don't forget what you're going to say in the middle of a sentence," and "Are you sure you prepared enough?" and "You know, you really tend to mumble a lot, so watch that," and "Wouldn't it be awful if you tripped on your way to the podium?" He says he's just looking out for you and trying to be realistic, but when you're around him you feel nothing but anxiety and pressure.

The second friend is cheerful and confident. She says things like, "I know you're going to do terrific," and "I really like that second point you make, it's very clever and original," and "You're really good at communicating with your body language as well as your words," and "Just think how lucky they all are to get to listen to you!" When you express worries or fears, she acknowledges them, but reassures you by pointing out all the times you've succeeded in the past, and all the skills and gifts you have that will help you. She helps you feel relaxed and calm, and able to tackle the challenge.

Which friend are you going to choose to have in the room with you? I imagine most people would choose the second—she will help soothe your anxieties before the speech, and send you onto the stage feeling confident and capable. With her to lift your spirits, you will not only feel better, but you'll probably perform better in the speech.

Now imagine it's just you in the room before the speech, and the only person talking to you is

yourself. Which friend does the voice in your head most closely resemble? The anxious, critical, always-questioning one, or the confident, reassuring, affirming one?

No matter where you are or what task is in front of you, you have one companion talking to you constantly: yourself. And the things you say can often make the difference between success and failure. Dr. Shad Helmstetter, in his book *What to Say When You Talk to Yourself*, discusses how the things you say to yourself can actually "program" your brain for success or failure: if the messages you send yourself are continually negative or critical, they may act on your subconscious and sabotage your ability to succeed!

The way we talk to ourselves can often be the root of success or failure in any area of our lives. Negative self-talk can undermine our careers by telling us repeatedly that we don't deserve better, that we aren't capable of doing more or learning new skills. It can undermine our relationships by telling us that we aren't valued, are always making mistakes, are more trouble than we're worth. It can undermine our leisure time by telling us we don't have enough energy to do something really interesting, or we would fail at anything new and fun we tried. It can leave us stuck in a rut, withdrawn from those we care about, feeling guilty and convinced there's no way to change.

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Positive self-talk, on the other hand, can promote our success in all these areas. It can boost our careers by reminding us that we're capable of whatever we set our minds to, and encouraging us to dream and plan big. It can strengthen our relationships by assuring us that we have valuable things to contribute to others, and encouraging us to reach out. It can enhance our leisure time by inspiring us to try new things.

Start paying attention to the way you talk about yourself—both out loud and inside your head. What is the usual tone of your comments? Are you generally positive and self-assuring, or do you tend to be constantly negative and self-critical? When facing a challenging

situation, are you more likely to think about all the ways in which you could succeed, or brood over all the ways in which you could fail?

Practice talking to yourself in a positive, affirming way. When negative thoughts arise, refuse to let them dwell—instead restate them to say something positive. For example, instead of saying to yourself, "I'm always late," say, "I respect other people's time and do everything in my power to get there five minutes early." You will be amazed to find how a simple change in your thoughts can affect your behavior. In a few days or weeks, you will find that your affirmation is coming true!

Tips for creating a positive affirmation:

- 1) State the affirmation in positive terms.
- 2) Always use first person singular: "I..."
- 3) Make it realistically high—something you believe you can do.
- 4) Make it directly related to your goals.

Example: I am a person who is confident and believes in myself!

Remember to say your affirmation out loud and several times a day. The more you state it with emotion, the more it will become!



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Who We Are and What We Do

Joan Fletcher President and Founder

Joan launched Winning Ways, Inc. in 2001 after owning her own business since 1987. Joan works with clients on sales, strategic business planning and leadership. She believes that combining a great attitude with the right skills and developed goals will create the success you have only dreamed about! Her expertise is in helping you find the solution to your business challenges.

Betsy Hudson VP of Business and Educational Development

Certified as a Sales Professional and as a Facilitator by the National Association of Home Builders, Betsy has held leadership positions in sales and marketing with the leading home building companies, including Pulte Homes and Centex Homes. In her 18 years in this field, she has earned a reputation for her ability to motivate both clients and team members to set and achieve goals.

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