

MentallyFIT

IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING

Nice

TO SAY...

By Julie Fuimano, Executive Coach

As a leader, it's so important to be aware of how you speak...about yourself. How often do you put yourself down during the course of the day? Entertaining negative thoughts of yourself in the inner sanctum of your own mind has a negative impact on your life. As your Coach for the moment, I would like to make a huge request of you: never, ever, speak negatively about yourself to anyone, including you!

Increase Your Awareness

Pay attention to what you say during the course of a day and how it feels when you say these things about yourself. If you pay close attention, you will discover that it feels bad; it hurts when you say negative things. And it damages your self-esteem - little by little, comment by comment. "My hair looks awful today." Honestly, no one else knows your hair caused you so much difficulty this morning. And aren't your bad-hair-days the days when you receive the most compliments on your hair anyway?

Become more aware of how you communicate about yourself. Notice the words you choose to use when communicating with others. Notice the things you say to yourself during periods when you are listening to your inner monologue. Whenever you say something negative, apologize quietly to yourself and keep your focus on doing better with each conversation.

Choose Your Words Carefully

Choose your words very carefully so you never, ever say anything negative

about yourself. This means you need to be very conscious about your use of language. Take a 10-second pause before responding when in conversation or in meetings. Take a deep breath and focus on your intention or the purpose for what you are about to say. What is your point, and why do you want this person to know this? If you can learn to stop and ask yourself this question, it is less likely you will bash yourself publicly because there is no point or benefit to it. In fact, the impact is quite negative and damaging to you. And it can be insulting to the other person who might hold a high regard for you.

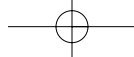
When using written communication, it's a bit easier because you can review what you've written before you send it, whether it's an email or a letter or a memo.

When you choose to speak about yourself negatively, you are communicating to others how you feel about yourself. It says a lot about how you treat yourself and how you want others to treat you. If you do it to yourself, you open the door

to allowing others to speak negatively to you and about you. Once you change, you must teach others how you expect to be treated. You will find that people will respect you much more when you treat yourself respectfully.

Change Your Thinking

You have to believe, regardless of what you do and especially when you make a mistake, that you are a good person. Separate the behavior from the person. If you do something wrong, apologize and drop it. You're human! Congratulations! Don't be long-winded about your mistake or why it happened; do not rationalize or make excuses for your behavior. Focus on what you and others can learn from it. If you have trouble accepting that you make mistakes, then overcome your need to be right or your fear of being wrong, whatever it is that gets in your way of accepting responsibility for your behavior. In other words, get over it! Mistakes are where our greatest learning takes place. And guess what? We all make mistakes. We'd never grow if we didn't make mistakes. We



wouldn't pursue "feeling good" unless we knew what it felt like to "feel bad" or guilty or embarrassed.

The fact is that you have a right to be here. You have a right to express yourself. Move beyond questioning your right to be who you are, and accept yourself as the wonderful, incredible human being that you are. You are a child of the universe. You are a gift in this world. Honestly, you have no right to speak negatively about yourself! Just as your mother taught you not to say anything if you couldn't say anything nice about another person, you have no right to say something bad about yourself. After all, you are the most important person in your life!

Language is never innocent so choose your words wisely. Slow down when speaking with others so that you can pay closer attention to the language you use, and remember to never, ever put yourself down. If you treat yourself with the highest level of respect and honor, you will find that you treat others in the same way, and you will start to expect the same from them.



Julie Fulmano, MBA, RN is an Executive Coach with Nurturing Your Success Inc. She is passionate about partnering with people as they take the challenging journey to a new level of success. Contact her @JulieFulmano@phillyfitmagazine.com.

