

Tools for Living Free

NUMBER 17 IN THIS ONGOING EDUCATIONAL SERIES

The Power of Positive Self-Talk

Excerpts from the article "Everyday Evolution: Arena for Self-Discovery" originally published in "Branches" Spring 1995

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under the supervision of Dr. Roger B. Lane

We all have thoughts and feelings that we take for granted, and until we look at them we may not understand what is stopping us or preventing us from having the life we want. I know from my own upbringing that many responses and habits I have learned from my parents work and many don't. For example, it is easy to think that circumstances are out of our control and that we have no responsibility for what has happened or will happen to us. I was able to see that a large part of that feeling came from my childhood, and a part of my consciousness is still reacting and responding to something that was true when I was a child, but isn't true now. Most children feel as though they have no control of their lives, and unless we "unlearn" or re-educate ourselves, as adults we continue to believe that we have no responsibility for the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

In the Everyday Evolution Classes and Workshop we have the opportunity to learn how to identify the habitual responses that are not serving us, and we also learn how to talk to ourselves so that we do not have to continue in the same way. All of us are continually talking to ourselves all the time whether we know it or not and for the most part it is negative. I discovered that most of the time I was walking around telling myself. I wasn't smart enough or that I would never amount to anything. Even though I had accomplished a lot, I had never told myself that. I was for the most part still living in the past.

An important key for growth is to keep yourself in the present and that means to update yourself. It sounds so simple and yet it makes a major difference in our daily lives. I have found many examples of that in my

own life. Just recently I discovered that I had to tell myself that I was no longer doing textile design as a profession and that I was moving into doing my own paintings. A part of myself was still focused on doing textile design, and I wasn't totally free to move into painting. This kept part of my energies attached to textile design and in the past and not in the present. Just the simple step of updating myself has given me much more energy. I have found that most people need to do this about many aspects of their lives. I know that I had to let myself know that I no longer lived with my parents and that I really do have choices in every aspect of my life.

Through Everyday Evolution I learned that at each moment I have a choice. I have a choice as to what I say to myself, where I will place my focus. Many people spend most of their lives blaming parents, spouses, siblings, friends, jobs, lack of money etc. for their unhappiness. Until I learned another way, I spent most of my time thinking happiness or unhappiness was outside of myself. I was always waiting for that someday when everything would be better. It never came. I had moments or even years of being happy, but underneath that I had an underlying fear. What was it? Mostly old thought patterns of "Never enough money", "Don't be too happy or something bad will happen", "Have to work hard to make money", "Who said life was easy?", "Grow up, you can't have everything you want."

Until I took the Everyday Evolution Classes I didn't know I could really live another way. It seemed so complicated and difficult to change my behavior and my responses to the world and to myself. Learning Positive Self Talk changed my life. Here are the four rules of Positive Self Talk:

1. Keep it positive. Update yourself about what is going on now. An example of that

Everyday
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gives you
the tools
to re-educate
yourself
so that
you can
actually
change those
old thoughts
and patterns
that don't
work.
It also gives
you the
opportunity
to experience
that the
power
to give
yourself the
life you want
is within you.

From the article
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would be to tell yourself, "I am fine and safe now."

2. Keep it in the present tense. Phrase it, "I am fine and safe now," rather than "Someday I will be OK." Otherwise, that day is always in the future and a part of our consciousness is always waiting for something to get better; we are never free to be present for ourselves.

3. Keep yourself encouraged. That means that you reinforce inside yourself that you are taking the steps that you need to keep moving. An example from my own life is that I am looking for an art studio in which to paint, and I have had to tell myself that I am taking steps to have that art studio and that I am moving in that direction.

4. Give yourself direction. You direct yourself into making positive choices. For example, if you want to quit smoking and you have a craving for a cigarette, you would tell yourself that you are moving into greater health and breathing clean air by not smoking. Give yourself another choice, such as calling a friend or taking a walk.

In the Everyday Evolution Classes and Workshops you have the opportunity to

experience Positive Self-Talk. Most of us, until we learn otherwise, walk around with negative thoughts in our heads. Everyday Evolution gives you the tools to re-educate yourself so that you can actually change those old thoughts and patterns that don't work. It also gives you the opportunity to experience that the power to give yourself the life you want is within you.

Everyday Evolution is available as a series of classes and as three-day Workshop. This Workshop is a great way to build a foundation to discover more about yourself and, ultimately, to find out what you really want out of life. Rather than being lecture-oriented, the workshop provides an arena for self-discovery through lively one-on-one and personal experiences.

The next 10-week Everyday Evolution Course starts Wednesday, March 6, 2002 at the Home Center, New York City. For information call 212-828-0464.

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Step-by-Step

Here's a quick reference list for daily practice. Please refer to the articles for complete information.

The four rules of Positive Self-Talk:

- 1. Keep it positive. Update yourself as to what is going on now.*
- 2. Keep in the present tense. For example say, "I am fine and safe now."*
- 3. Keep yourself encouraged. Reinforce inside yourself that you are taking the steps that you need to keep moving.*
- 4. Give yourself direction. Direct yourself into making positive choices.*

Consider This ...

"We need to make an inner decision. What's the inner decision? The inner decision is that "hey, yeah I'm in this human form, I'm in this body. I have things that come with it. I have things like fear, pain, doubt, worry, anxiety, separation. And I have all sorts of thoughts, too. But I'm more than my thoughts. I'm more than my feelings. I'm more than my fears. I'm more than all that that exists along, what we call, the negative polarity. And I'm going to decide to go with the more than all that..."

"So in your daily life - and I'm talking about minute to minute, second by second, be honest with yourself if you're coming from lack, fear, pain and you're operating from that spot, take a moment and just say, "Whoa, what am I? Am I this fear? Am I this lack? Am I this limitation? Am I this pain? Not that I can't be going through it," yeah you can. Or "Am I the Spirit that is under and through and over this?" And then make your choice..."

from the Open Satsang "Give - Then Give Some More" TAPE No. A53

Try This ...

Dr. Lane often mentions the Basic Selves -- those parts of ourselves that are apt to distract our attention and try to talk us out of moving in a positive direction so that habitual and reincarnational patterns can be maintained. Here's a process you can try involving the Basic Selves.

Call in the Light of the Most High. Now ask the Light of the Most High to work with your Basic Selves to assure their cooperation with your requests. Ask your Basic Selves to come forward. Tell them that you need them to follow you, and that you need their cooperation and energy for _____ (fill in whatever is needed). Now tell yourself that you're doing great and to keep up the great work! (Adapted from the "Checklist for Daily Living.")

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