

Positive Self-Talk

How does it help students?

- This activity helps students to generate positive self-talk phrases, thus breaking the cycle of negative judgment and criticism children and adolescents all too often loop in their minds.

What will we need?

- Nothing!

How do we do it?

- Sit quietly in a comfortable position. Bring attention to your body and your breathe. Carefully observe the thoughts that travel through your mind, gently guiding your focus back to your breathe.
- So often we get caught up in our own negative self-talk: that voice in our heads that criticizes all the ways we're not good enough. Now you will have the opportunity to generate a word or phrase that can serve you in a more positive and constructive way. Reflect upon the last time you judged or criticized yourself. What did you say to yourself? How can you spin that criticism around to become positive encouragement. For example, if you recently found yourself feeling scared and anxious, you might consider a phrase such as "Feel courageous" or "Have courage." The words don't need to be long or complicated. Keep them simple, and repeat the kind words over and again as you continue to breathe deeply.
- As you end these mindful moments, strive to stay connected to your positive word or phrase while you continue throughout your day. Set these words of encouragement as your default setting when you encounter challenges along the way.

Additional Notes:

- Some students may benefit from writing down their positive phrases.

Source: Schoeberlein, Deborah. (2009) *Mindful teaching and teaching mindfulness*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.