

Make That Little Voice in Your Head an Ally

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A little voice resides inside your head. Is it friend or foe? You could make it a terrific partner!

That little voice is continually talking to you, giving you guidance, subtle direction, and even explicit orders. The voice is very influential in directing your behaviors, because it's YOUR voice!

Because it's not a stranger's voice, you never doubt its wisdom. The concepts you subliminally hear, however, have been adapted from words others have said to you. Maybe your Mom or Dad. Maybe a grandparent. Perhaps a teacher. Maybe a former boss or friend. Possibly your husband or wife-- or a former husband or wife. Or maybe the words really are your own!

The little voice has been there for a long time. You trust it so much that you likely no longer realize when it's speaking to you and influencing your behavior. I invite you over the next weeks to become more aware of the existence of that little voice. Make a conscious effort to pay attention to when it speaks and what it's saying to you.

You may know this little voice by another name: self-image, subconscious, or self-talk. Whatever you might call it, just become more aware of its existence. Don't judge it or try to change it. Merely confirm for yourself that a dialogue (or perhaps a monologue) is going on at a level that you don't normally perceive or acknowledge.

What's the voice saying to you? What's the tone? Is it encouraging? Inspiring? Is the voice judging you? Critical of your activities? Is it offering ideas? Is the voice pointing out the humor in your life and situations? Is it grateful?

Consider making some notes about the content and tone of that little voice, because it might be saying different things to you at different times.

After about a week of just noticing what that little voice is telling you, consider whether it's helping you achieve what you want in your life. It may seem like that little voice has a mind of its own. But it really does represent your thinking. You see, you've unconsciously programmed that little voice.

Have you noticed that your weight seems to increase or decrease a few pounds above or below something that is "normal" for you? Your metabolism is speeding up or slowing down to keep you at that genetically programmed set point. Can you change the set point? Yes, but many people will attest that it's not easy. However, an outside factor (such as an illness or the side effect of a new medication) can adjust the set point when that's not even your intention.

That little voice inside your head operates in a similar fashion. If you've experienced some big success, for example, that little voice likely will ensure that the jubilation doesn't last for long. People (your parents, your teachers, your friends, even you) have programmed your set point so that there is stability in your life. Rise too far above that set point or drop too far below it, and the little voice in your head starts guiding you back to your comfort level.

Can you adjust that set point? Sure, but the first step is to recognize that it exists, and that at all times, the voice is either helping you or holding you back. The message encourages you forward or convinces you that the anticipated stretch is not like you and you shouldn't attempt it.

Confidence is such a fickle ally, yet is so critical for your effective service to others. Once you recognize that your little voice is sometimes inhibiting your efforts, start to retune. You may need only a slight adjustment or you may determine a major reconfiguration is in order.

My desire is that you serve as a catalyst for raising the self-image set point for those individuals you influence! However, the flight attendant says to put the oxygen mask over your own nose and mouth before you help the passenger beside you. Let's do the same by working on your set point first.

Check back in two weeks, and I'll offer some thoughts on how you can crank up your self-image set point (and then enhance your role as a set point adjuster for others)!