



## **Parent Self Care Tool: Decreasing Negative Self Talk**

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Guess who criticizes you the most every day? You do! Many parents literally make hundreds of nasty comments to themselves every day. One parent kept track of her negative self-comments just for one Saturday. When she had counted over 100 negative comments by noon she gave up counting – it was too depressing!

**Negative self talk is poison:** Negative self-talk comes in all shapes and sizes. Here are a few examples:

- “I should be a better person.”
- “I am a rotten mother.”
- “Everybody knows how to handle their children better than me.” “I should be nicer to my kids.”
- “I never say the right thing to my daughter.”
- “My kids like their mother better than me.”
- “I should spend more time with my kids.”
- “I should know exactly what to do in this situation.”

The list goes on and on.

Write down some examples of how you talk negatively to yourself.

### **The Dot Trick--Stamping Out Negative Self Talk:**

The trick to decreasing negative self-talk is listening to yourself. The following idea has been used by teachers, doctors, therapists, and psychologists to increase self-esteem:

1. Make or buy a bunch of colored dots.
2. Put them everywhere. In your kitchen, on the mirrors, in the car, on door knobs, on your computer, on your watch, in your wallet, on your toothbrush.
3. Every time you see a dot ask yourself, “How am I talking to myself right now?”  
**AWARENESS IS THE KEY!**

Next installment we will be talking about how to replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk. But first, you have to be aware of what you say to yourself every day. If you look at the dot and find that you are in the middle of negative self-talk, make the following statement to yourself: “Stop! I want to be kind to me!”

Write down ideas for how you will use this technique.

### **DAILY REMINDER**

Negative self-talk is a waste of time and energy and words! Be kind to yourself – just say NO to the poison of criticizing yourself.