

Timeless Transformations *Our Internal Chatter Matters*

I'm waking up in Portland Oregon this morning. I'm in the pacific time zone so it's two hours behind. It's extra dark, quiet and peaceful. When I left yesterday, I didn't have a specific inspirational topic planned. I decided to let it flow to me naturally. After I got unpacked the weather was so gorgeous, I decided to take a long walk and find my way around the city. Here is a picture of the Airbnb. In the left-hand top corner, above that round window on the third floor is my one-bedroom suite. It has a balcony overlooking the city. As I walked through the city alone, down to the river about a mile away, with no one to talk to I couldn't help noticing my internal chatter. That gave me the inspiration to write about self-talk in a powerful way.



When I got back to my room, I perused through pictures on my laptop. Looking for great pictures in the month of late March, I found these gorgeous ones from 2013. We spent Easter weekend in Galveston at Point West. Our family is looking extra fantastic I must say! How inspirational is this picture? What a great time in our lives. I love everyone's smile.



I've always been fascinated with self-talk. It's that internal chatter that runs through our mind every minute of the day no matter what we are doing. Even if we are listening to others, our mind is processing what they are saying. Even when we are talking, our mind is running in the background thinking about what we are saying or planning to say next. Even when we are dreaming, we are talking to ourselves. All this chatter is self-talk. It's the way our mind interprets and processes experiences.

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We will never talk to anyone else more than we talk to ourselves so why wouldn't we talk to ourselves like our own best friend or our biggest supporter? Our self-talk is the diamond key that unlocks our success. My purpose for writing this inspiration is to give you this key or remind you about how valuable this key is. **Our internal chatter matters.** If we can master directed, positive self-talk, we can be more confident, more focused and more successful.



This is an interesting point. I heard Howard Caesar talk about this years ago and I never forgot it. Think about what you value or what you say you value. For example, here are my six primary values. I've shared these with you before. Now think about what you talk about. Is what you talk about in line with what you think you value? One of the ways we can determine what we value is by what we talk about. If we don't know what we value then our conversations are all over the place, probably meaningless, including our self-talk.

It's an interesting concept to think about. If we value something or someone then why wouldn't we talk about those things in the most positive way? We should talk to ourselves like our most prized possession, like we would talk to someone we love.

When I was walking through the city yesterday, I couldn't help but notice my internal chatter. I was saying to myself, now that I'm retired, what is my value for being here at this conference? Maybe I shouldn't have come. I'm already missing everyone. Maybe I should have just stayed home. Mind you, I'm up for Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of the year at the national level. Why in the world would I allow myself to talk to myself like that? I had to stop and remind myself of my value, my contributions and what I still have left to give. It was an affirmation about much **our internal chatter matters.**

I try and think back about what my internal chatter might have been in 2013 when these pictures were taken. I believe it was that I am so proud of you three, and about how much you three love your Dad – and how much I love him too! I always hope my self-talk carries over to my verbal talk, especially to you.



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Here is the first key point. Our self-talk can be self-defeating. Why would we ever say anything about ourselves that we wouldn't want to experience? Never criticize yourself. We don't have to compete with anyone except ourselves. The only thought or question should be, did I do my best?

Don't you hate the first time you put on a swimsuit in the spring? I always feel pale, out of shape and blah. I know I've heard you girls say the same thing. By looking at these pictures, I don't think you are feeling that way this day! Great smiles, great times and great fun.



I know it's a challenge, especially the first time on the beach as an example, but we should never put ourselves down in any shape or form – no matter what our shape or form is. Our self-talk is about self-judgment. It's about self-complaining. You complain on me? Never me complain on me!

The second key point is our self-talk is creating our experience. If we are not having a good experience maybe we need to examine our internal chatter. I love this quote, "*Be careful how you talk to yourself because you are listening.*" – Lisa M. Hayes. Maybe it's not the exact words we are saying but the clarity of the words we are using. Maybe we must be clearer about what we are saying to ourselves.

You girls will think this is weird, but the use of affirmations is very powerful, especially with self-talk. I plan to write an inspiration about affirmations in the future but here is an example. Read these and see if you feel a burst of confidence.

I am totally in charge of what I say to myself. I don't let old thought patterns control my life. I closely monitor what I say to myself and I talk back to the old self-talk. I know the old self-talk is a lie.

- I live by truth. And the truth is *I am* totally in charge of what I say to myself.
- If I hear internal chatter start to criticize me, I refuse to accept it as truth. I know who *I am*. I like who *I am*. My first response is to remind myself that *I am* in control of my thoughts.
- Today is one of those days where nothing can stand in my way. When I need extra determination, I have it. When I need more energy and drive, I have it. I have the power to get it done. I have the patience to see it through, no matter what the challenge or job maybe. I can do this, and I know I can. *I am* worthy of my success. *I am* a remarkable person. *I am* a champion. *I am* a champion every day and in every way. I know it and everyone around me knows it.

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What you tell yourself will lift you up. Try it before you knock it! *I am* are two of the most powerful words in our language. How we use those two words shapes our experience.

The last key point is this: our self-talk matters even when our internal chatter is negative about another person. It's hard to do because other people get on our nerves or we may not like how they behave. We may not verbalize it but often our self-talk is about criticizing another person. An abundant mentality seeks to admire other's greatness. Success is contagious. Everyone wants to be successful, even those that get on our nerves. This one shift in behavior of never saying anything we don't want to experience, or we don't want another to experience could potentially change our lives more than we can imagine. I know this is something I am reminded of and will work on more in the future.

As your Mother one of the things that I worked hard at was to never let you say negative things about each other. I didn't set my foot down on many things, but this was one of them. I never stood for it. I also tried to never say anything negative about one of you, especially if the other one wasn't there, e.g. talk behind your back, even in my internal chatter. I believe that is why you three are as close as you are. One of my greatest hopes is you will do everything in your power, verbally and internally, to talk about each other and our family, including future grandchildren, in a positive way. If we don't do this, if you don't do this for each other, it will be a recipe for disaster in family dynamics.



I heard this the other day. About 90% of all communication is about gossip or complaining. That means we've eliminated about 90% of the conversation. That 90% is all meaningless talk anyway. Why not talk about things that we value, things that are valuable, and things that are meaningful – both in our verbal talk and internal talk.

I close with this, in this moment notice what you are saying to yourself. There is no one else in the world that we spend more time with than ourselves. This is what I am saying to myself, as I attend the biggest, the most successful CTO conference in the nation that only happens once a year.

- ✓ I help Chief Technology Officers, technology leaders, education trustees and strategic partners of the academic community build and transform Trusted Learning Environments, Technology Leaders, Teams, Systems and Services.
- ✓ I shape school system transformation and strategies to provoke significant change and action in the K-12 community.
- ✓ I serve as a catalyst for *Performance Excellence* in K-12 Leadership.
- ✓ I am a *Success Advocate* for Education Technology Leaders.

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I am an author. I have been contacted by the leading academic publisher in the nation, Rowman and Littlefield, to write a book called, *The K-12 CTO: A Critical Skills Handbook for Performance Excellence in K-12 Technology Leadership*. I've been invited to develop the article featured in the current issue of *School Business Affairs* (on pages 8-11), Critical Skills for Today's CTO, into a book and market to educators at all levels throughout the country and perhaps internationally. I heard this the other day. About 90% of all communication is about gossip or complaining. That means we've eliminated 90% of the meaningful conversation. Why not talk about things that we value, things that are valuable and things that are meaningful – both in our verbal talk and internal talk.

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This is my story and I'm sticking to it. What's your story? What story are you creating for yourself? Be careful how you respond. Your thoughts - *your internal chatter* - runs your life. **Our internal chatter matters.** May your internal chatter always matter!

I love you more than all the internal chatter running through my mind for the rest of my life – Love Mom!

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Summary



Self-talk is that internal chatter that runs through our mind every minute of the day no matter what we are doing. Even if we are listening to others, our mind is processing what they are saying. Even when we are talking, our mind is running in the background thinking about what we are saying or planning to say next. Even when we are dreaming, we are talking to ourselves. All this chatter is self-talk. It's the way our mind interprets and processes experiences. **Our internal chatter matters.** If we can master directed, positive self-talk, we can be more confident, more focused and more successful.