

Want to Regain Your Confidence and Control, NOT More Weight? Practice the Principle of Replacement

"Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts." (Proverbs 4:23 GN)

Long before psychology came around, God said your thoughts determine your feelings and your feelings determine your actions. If you want to change your life, you have to control the way you think.

Our minds are really an amazing creation. It would take a computer the size of a small city just to carry out the basic functions of your brain. Your brain contains more than 100 billion nerve cells. Each individual cell is connected with 10,000 other neurons.

You're also constantly talking to yourself. Research indicates that most people speak at a rate of 150 to 200 words per minute, but the mind can process about 500 to 600 words a minute. That's why you can listen to me and plan today's dinner at the same time.

The problem is that a lot of us are like Job, who says, "Everything I say seems to condemn me" (Job 9:20b GN). He's saying, in effect, "Everything I say puts me down." If you are a typical human being, you are your own worst critic.

We're always putting ourselves down. We walk into a room smiling, but inside we're thinking, "I'm fat. I'm dumb. I'm ugly. And I'm always late!"

But when you say those things, you're really pointing to the Creator who made you. When you say, "God, I'm worthless. I'm no good. I can't do anything," you're saying, "God, you blew it with me." That's why God says it's wrong to put yourself down.

How do you eliminate negative self-talk so you can become a more confident person?

The Bible teaches the principle of replacement. "Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right ... Think about all you can thank God for and be glad about" (Philippians 4:8 TLB).

In other words, don't think about all those weaknesses in your life. Focus on who God wants you to be and what God wants to do in your life. I don't know a better antidote to low self-esteem (or to facing your hurts, habits, and hang-ups) than to read God's Word every day — study it, memorize it, meditate on it, and apply it in your life.

The best thing you can do to raise your confidence level is to start believing what God says about you. When I find a verse in the Bible that speaks to me, I write it down on a card, memorize it, and then affirm it by saying it back to God: "Father, thank you that I am valuable, significant, forgivable, and capable." Let God renew your mind, because "your life is shaped by your thoughts" (Proverbs 4:23 GN).

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