

Do You Talk to Yourself?

Pre-intermediate (A2-B1)



Part 1. Read the situations. Which ones do you recognise? Tell your partner.

You make a mistake and say 'Stupid!' to yourself

You talk yourself through a difficult task step by step

You have a conversation in your head before a difficult situation

You say 'Come on!' or 'You can do this!' to yourself

You replay something embarrassing and imagine doing it differently

You narrate what you're doing while you're cooking or driving

You give yourself a small pep talk before something important

You criticise yourself much more than you would criticise a friend

- Which situations feel most familiar to you?
- Do you usually talk to yourself out loud or just in your head?
- Did you think about this much before — or is it something you do without noticing?



Part 2. Choose one option in each pair. Give a reason or example.

Talking to yourself out loud	or	doing it silently in your head?
A kind, encouraging inner voice	or	a strict, critical one?
Thinking out loud when you're alone	or	keeping it all inside?
Giving yourself a pep talk before something difficult	or	just getting on with it?
Saying nice things to yourself	or	finding that very difficult or strange?

Part 3. Read the statements. Which ones feel true for you? Explain why.

- I am harder on myself than I am on other people.
- When something goes wrong, I often replay it in my head many times.
- I sometimes talk myself through difficult situations step by step.
- My inner voice can be quite negative — even when things aren't that bad.
- I feel better when I say positive things to myself before something important.
- I talk to myself differently in different languages.



Part 4. Discuss the following questions.

- When do you talk to yourself most? At home? At work? When you're stressed?
- Is your inner voice more like a kind friend or a strict teacher? Give an example.
- Do you think talking to yourself is normal? Why do some people feel embarrassed about it?
- Do you think children talk to themselves more than adults? Why?

Part 5. Look at the situations. Which thought sounds most like you? Or write your own. Then discuss with your partner.

You make a small mistake at work or in class.

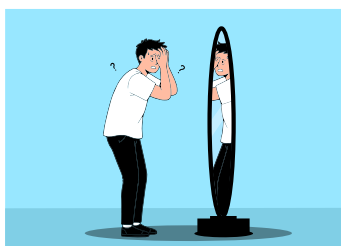
1. 'Why am I so stupid? I always do this.'
2. 'OK, it happened. What can I do now?'
3. 'Everyone probably noticed. This is so embarrassing.'
4. 'I would never say this to a friend. Why do I say it to myself?'

You have to do something that makes you nervous — a presentation, a difficult conversation, a new situation.

1. 'I'm going to get it wrong. I'm not ready.'
2. 'OK. Breathe. You have done hard things before.'
3. 'What's the worst that can happen? I can handle it.'
4. 'Just get through it. Don't think too much.'

You are trying to do something difficult and it isn't working.

1. 'I'm just not good at this. Maybe I should stop.'
2. 'OK, one step at a time. What's the next thing I can try?'
3. 'This is taking too long. Other people do this easily.'
4. 'I've learnt hard things before. I can learn this too.'



Part 6. Match the terms to their meanings. Then choose three expressions and use them to tell your partner something true about yourself.

Inner voice	Self-talk	A pep talk	Self-critical
Motivate yourself	Be your own worst enemy	Kind to yourself	Talk yourself out of something

1. _____ the thoughts and words you hear in your own mind
2. _____ a short, encouraging conversation to make someone feel more confident
3. _____ thinking a lot about your own mistakes and judging yourself harshly
4. _____ the way you speak to yourself, in your head or out loud
5. _____ to find the energy and reasons to do something difficult
6. _____ to do or think things that make your own life harder
7. _____ treating yourself gently and with understanding, not harshly
8. _____ to use your own thoughts to convince yourself not to do something

Part 7. Do you agree, disagree, or partly agree with the statements below? Explain your thinking.

- Talking to yourself is completely normal — everyone does it.
- People are usually much kinder to their friends than to themselves.
- If you say positive things to yourself, you actually feel better.
- A strict inner voice can be useful — it helps you work harder.
- It is possible to change the way you talk to yourself.

Part 8. Read the situations. What would you say to a friend? Then answer: do you say the same thing to yourself?

- Your friend made a mistake at work and feels terrible about it.
- Your friend is very nervous before an important interview.
- Your friend tried something new and it didn't go well.
- Your friend says, 'I'm just not good enough for this.'

Discuss: Why is it often easier to be kind to a friend than to yourself?

Part 9. Guess your partner's answers first. Then ask and check.

- When do they talk to themselves most?
- Is their inner voice usually kind or critical?
- Do they give themselves pep talks?
- What do they say to themselves when something goes wrong?
- Is there something they have talked themselves out of doing?

Part 10. Think of a time when your inner voice helped you — or made things harder. Tell your partner about it.

Think about:

- What the situation was
- What your inner voice said
- How it made you feel or what you did
- What you would say to yourself differently now

REFLECTION

Complete the sentences in your own words.

- My inner voice is usually...
- I talk to myself most when I...
- One thing I want to say to myself more often is...
- I am going to try to be kinder to myself when...

