

Self-Statements to Refute Your Inner Dialogue

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Positive Self-Statements

Briere (2019) describes the use of positive self-statements to mitigate the cycle of shaming inner dialogues common in trauma survivors, and those who grew up with a critical and shaming parent. He gives the following examples:

- “I am a good person.”
- “I am doing the best I can.”
- “As far as I can tell, I am safe.”
- “I don’t have to do this if I don’t want to.”
- “There is nothing to be ashamed of.”
- “I can handle this.”
- “I deserve respect.”

(Briere, 2019, p. 78)

Metacognitive Statements

Metacognitive statements can help people recognize what is happening and what isn’t happening when they are caught in shame/fear/need to escape spiral. Briere (2019) offers examples of metacognitive statements that can help people distance themselves from shaming thoughts such as:

- “This is just my past [trauma/fear/anxiety] talking.”
- “I’m just thinking ___ because of my childhood. [These things I fear are not happening now and I am not in danger now]”
- “These are just thoughts, not facts.”

- “These thoughts are from the past, but the past isn’t right now.”
- “I don’t have to believe what my mind is saying.”
- “Just because I think/feel it doesn’t mean it’s true.”
- “I am not defined by my history or how people judge me.”
- “I feel ____, but these are just feelings; they aren’t who I am.”
- “I am not my thoughts.”
- “Though I feel ____ right now, it doesn’t mean I am a bad, angry, or unlovable person.”

(Briere, 2019, p.103)

Other examples include:

- Though I feelright now doesn’t mean I will continue to feel this way.
- I don’t have to be afraid of my feelings and thoughts. They developed as a survival adaptation.

Adapted from Briere (2019).

Reference:

Briere, J. (2019). *Treating risky and compulsive behavior in trauma survivors* (pp. 78, 103). Guilford Press.

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