

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

We are all human, so we all have **negative thoughts** from time to time. Negative thoughts are thoughts that cause us to **slip**, lose hope or that stand in the way of improving your health. A negative thought is usually a criticism of oneself.

Type of Negative Thought		Example
Good or Bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divides the world into good or bad foods Sees self as a success or failure Is on or off the track 	"Look at what I did. I ate that cake. I will never be able to reach my goal."
Excuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blames others for problems Claims to not be able to help or control situations 	"I have to buy these cookies just in case friends drop in."
Should	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expects to always make the right choice Gets set-up for failure Leads to anger 	"I should have eaten less dessert. Or, I should have gone walking."
Not As Good As	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compares self to someone else Blames self for not doing as well as someone else 	"They can do it, why can't I?"
Give Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beats oneself up Often follows with other kinds of negative thoughts 	"This is too hard. I might as well give up."

It helps to recognize **Negative Thoughts** as they occur and to teach yourself to talk back to them. Talking back to negative thoughts means that you must first catch yourself having the negative thought then imagine saying "Stop!" to yourself. Then, talk back with a positive thought. A **Positive Thought** gives you praise for what you have already accomplished.



Here are some examples of how it works for the different types of negative thoughts and a general way to stop them:

- 1. Catch yourself.** Think, "I am being negative about myself."
- 2. Say "Stop!"** to yourself. It might help to picture a huge STOP sign. **Say it** out loud!

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Negative thought	Talk back with a positive thought
Foods are either “good” or “bad.” "I can never eat dessert again." "Look at what I did. I ate that cake. I will never meet my goal."	Work toward balance "I can eat dessert and cut back on something else." "One setback is not the end of the world. I can get back on track."
Excuses "It is too cold to take a walk." "I do not have the willpower."	It's worth a try "I can go for a walk and stop if it gets too cold." "It is hard to change old habits, but I will give it a try and see how it works." "I can exercise inside while it's raining"
Should "I should have eaten less dessert." "I haven't written down everything I eat."	It is my choice "It was my choice. Next time I can decide not to eat so much." "I'm writing down everything I eat because it helps me make better choices."
Not as good as "My friend lost two pounds this week, and I only lost one."	Everyone is different "It is not a race. We all lose weight at different rates and I can still meet my goal."
Give up "This goal is too hard. I might as well forget it." "I will never get it right."	One step at a time "I've learned something about what is hard for me." "I will try something different next time."

Here are some suggestions:

Talk back to NEGATIVE thoughts with POSITIVE thoughts

Negative thoughts are your worst enemy. Talk back. "I am not a failure because I made an unhealthy choice. I am back on my feet again."



Ask yourself how the setback happened

Learn from it. Can you avoid the thing that triggered the slip in the future? Will you be able to handle the situation better?

Talk to someone supportive

Call the Disease Management Nurse or a friend and discuss your new plan for handling your setback. Then commit yourself to a new effort.

Focus on all the positive changes you made

You are making lifelong changes, and slip ups are just part of the process.

Regain control as soon as possible

Make your very next meal a healthy one. Or, get back on schedule with your activity plan right away.