



Talk Back to Negative Thoughts

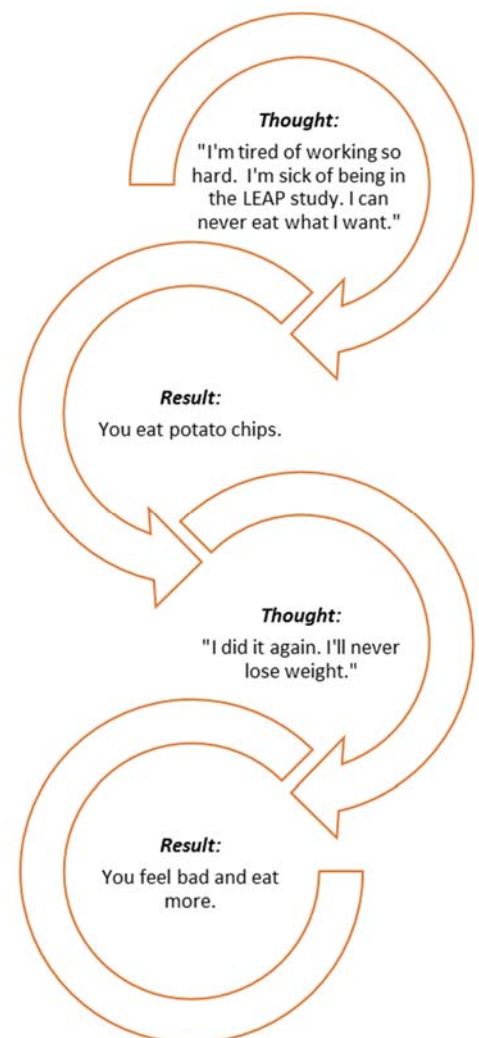
At times, we all have had negative thoughts about our eating and exercise behaviors. Negative thoughts can lead you to eat more and not be active. A vicious cycle of self-defeat can result.

Look at the cycle of negative thoughts and behaviours on the right. Have you experienced this type of thought cycle?

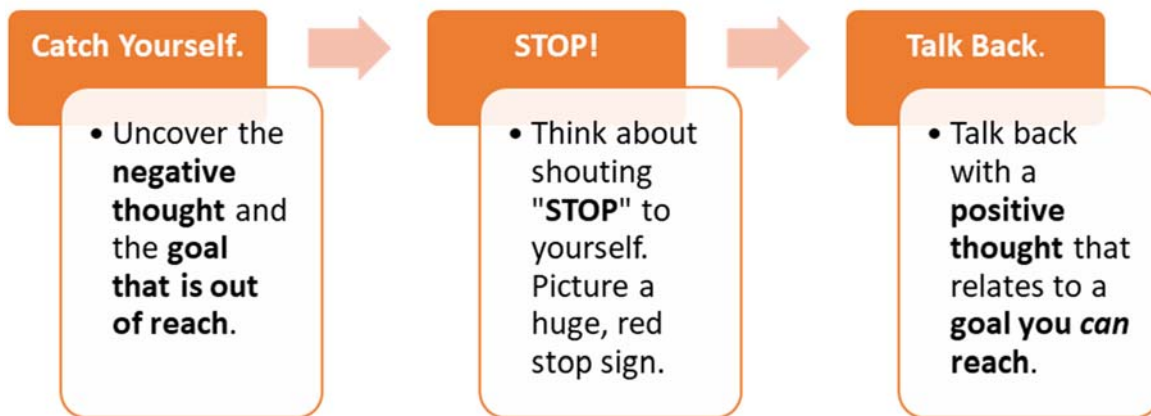
Some of the most common ways of negative thinking :

- **Good or Bad.** This is when we have a habit of dividing things into two distinct categories- right vs. wrong, good vs. bad, or hero vs. villain. When it comes to weight-loss, we might separate foods into good or bad, see ourselves as either a success or a failure, or think of ourselves as being either on or off the program.
- **Excuses.** This is when we blame someone else or something else for our problems. We don't mean to not follow the study intervention, but we "can't help it."
- **"Should Have".** This is when we expect to be perfect. This is often a set-up for disappointment and can lead to anger and resentment. An example would be thinking "I should have eaten less dessert."
- **Not As Good As.** This is when we compare ourselves to someone else or blame ourselves for not being good enough.
- **Give Up.** This is when we defeat ourselves and often follows after some of the other negative thoughts described above

Negative thoughts are often a result of setting goals that are out of reach. We may not even be aware of these goals. Still, we may be hard on ourselves when we don't reach them. Don't let negative thoughts get the better of you. Talk back to them instead.



How to talk back to a negative thought:



Here are some examples:

Negative Thought	Positive Thought and Goal
I ate two pieces of pie! I can never eat dessert again.	I can cut back on something else to get back in line with my Daily Points goals.
I didn't walk today. I'll never get in shape.	One missed day isn't the end of the world. I can get back on track tomorrow.
I should have eaten less when we went out to dinner. I have no willpower.	It was my choice. Next time I can decide not to eat as much.
My friend, Steve, has lost 40 pounds on his diet. I have only lost 10 pounds.	It isn't a contest. Steve and I can both lose weight at different rates and both succeed.
The WW program is too hard. I might as well forget trying to keep with this.	I've learned something about what's hard for me. I don't have to be perfect, but tracking my food and exercise is helping me improve my behaviors.
It's too cold outside to go for a walk.	I can try breaking up my usual 30 minute walk into two 15-minute walks so I don't get too cold.
I ate a candy bar after lunch again. I am a failure.	One candy bar isn't enough to ruin the entire day. I can cut back on something at dinner. My goal is to stay below my Daily Points in WW <i>most</i> of the time.