

## Shifting Our Mindset

July 2021

### Self-Awareness Exercise

#### Listen

Actively listen to the daily negative thoughts you are having for one week.

Write down the daily negative thoughts that you have, and review what thoughts you had for the week.

#### Learn

Analyze the thoughts you are having.

What thoughts come up the most?

Why might you be having these thoughts?

Is that thought helpful for you?

#### Think

Honestly answer how warranted these thoughts are.

Are you feeling anxious?

How true is this thought?

Are you making assumptions?

Noticing your patterns and being conscious of your inner dialogue is the first step towards change. From there you can stop negative thoughts as they come up and replace negative statements with positive ones.

# LFR M.E.D.S.

## Promoting Positive Self Talk

Self-talk is the inner dialogue that is occurring naturally throughout the day. We can either shape these internal conversations to utilize them as a tool, or we can allow negative thoughts to take over, which ultimately results in diminishing our abilities and confidence.

It is human nature to fixate on negative thoughts over our positive thoughts in an effort to correct them, known as the negativity bias. By trying to stop these negative thoughts, we end up focusing on them throughout our day. One study conducted by the University of Texas showed that a group of students going into the study expected 60-75% of their thoughts to be positive, however the results showed that 60-70% of their thoughts were conclusively negative.

These negative thoughts and negative self-talk tend to fall into one of the four following categories:

- *Personalizing* – Blaming yourself when things go wrong.
- *Polarizing* – Seeing only good or bad, leaving no room for grey areas or middle ground.
- *Magnifying* – Focusing on the bad or negative in scenarios dismissing anything good.
- *Catastrophizing* – Expecting the worst to happen.

Once we can recognize that our inner dialogue with ourselves carries a negative bias, we can learn to change our self-talk to be more positive. By realizing that a negative thought is just one of the thousands of thoughts that we may have throughout the day, they become much more insignificant. If we can mindfully notice these negative thoughts, then recognize why and when we are fixating on them, we can stop the cycle of repetitive negative thinking.