

# BEST SELF

## BE YOU, ONLY BETTER

by Life Coach Mike Bayer



### EXCERPT

Since the goal is for you to develop your own internal life coach, as I won't be by your side every day, we want to build the skills of that coach within you and listen to what he or she has to say. Is your inner life coach a mean one who beats you up when you get off track? Or is your inner life coach encouraging?

#### Answer this question:

What kind of a coach are you to yourself throughout the day? Notice if you are the kind of coach you can count on to lift you up and encourage you? Or does your inner coach tear you down and reinforce your worst fears about yourself? You're the one who talks to you, all day, every day. Are you actively creating an unhealthy internal environment for yourself, and negatively influencing your experience of the world? Or are the messages that you tell yourself characterized by a rational and productive optimism? For example, if you were to decide to eat some pizza and ice cream late at night, do you say to yourself—"look at you, at it again, eating all the stuff you're not supposed to—you have no willpower, you loser!" or do you think, "Hey, don't beat yourself up. It tasted good, and you don't eat pizza or ice cream that often. It's not like you're going to wake up five pounds heavier tomorrow." Or, do you say, "Well, you already fell off the wagon; you might as well order another pizza! Round two!" Another thought you may have is, "Next time let's make it a pizza and ice cream party and have some people over!" You get the point—you can choose to talk to yourself about any given activity or decision in one of numerous ways. That voice is your inner life coach, and the goal is for your coach to lovingly help you align with your Best Self.

**What kind of coach are you to yourself? Be specific:** \_\_\_\_\_

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By completing those exercises, you've just gained very useful insight into how you're talking to yourself. We all have a constant conversation going on in our heads, and by acknowledging that and really listening to what we say to ourselves, we can begin to rescript that conversation.

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Now that you've identified areas in which you are sending yourself unkind or discouraging messages, you can begin to root out those thoughts and replace them with your mantra or another self-affirmation. The next time a negative thought about yourself begins to form, imagine an alarm bell dinging in your head. When you hear the alarm, stop immediately and choose to reject that thought, and then choose a new message.

For example, let's say you are preparing for a social event with networking opportunities. As you go through the motions of getting dressed and ready to walk out the door, you might catch a glimpse of yourself in the mirror and you think, *I don't know why I bother with these things. I never know what to say to new people. I'm so awkward. Or, you may think, Wow, I look old and tired. And what is that new roll doing around my waistline? Ugh.* Now, the second a thought like that flashes across your mind, imagine that you hear an annoying dinging or buzzing sound in your ears. Look at yourself in the mirror and say out loud, "I'm confident in my ability to socialize. I will smile, be friendly, ask questions of others, and I will create valuable new connections and friendships." Do this again and again until the positive, affirming thoughts become tape loops that just naturally play in your mind. In so doing, you will form new neural pathways in your brain. The result is that you will essentially go on autopilot and create the new reality that you've envisioned, from the inside out.

As I've explained, I constantly talk to myself in the mirror because I want to be the best version of myself. If that still feels strange to you, find another method—just do something that gets the negative self-talk out of your head! We want to find what authentically works for you!