

Understanding Your Child's Negative Self-Talk

Kind Words for Hard Moments

Gentle self-talk your child can practice

These hold two truths:

the struggle is real, and you're still safe

When learning feels difficult:

"I didn't get it yet — and I am still okay."

"I don't understand this right now — and nothing bad is happening."

"This isn't clear to me yet — and I'm safe."

"This is taking me longer — and that doesn't mean I can't learn it."

When trying something new:

"I'm still learning this — and I stay with myself."

"This feels unfamiliar right now — and it's okay to be a beginner."

"I haven't figured this out yet — and I'm allowed to practice."

When feeling overwhelmed:

"This feels really big right now — and I can take one small step."

"I feel stuck — and feelings change."

"This is a lot — and I don't have to do it all at once."

When making mistakes:

"I made a mistake — and mistakes help me learn."

"That didn't go the way I wanted — and I can try again."

"I messed up — and that doesn't make me a mess."

When comparing to others:

"Someone else got this faster — and we all learn at our own pace."

"They can do something I can't yet — and I can do things they're still learning too."

When feeling different or left out:

"I feel different right now — and different doesn't mean wrong."

"I don't fit in here — and I belong somewhere."

How to use these:

Say them together at first. Your child learns by hearing you model the language.

Repeat them often. The first time feels strange. The tenth time feels familiar. The fiftieth time becomes something they reach for on their own.

Let your child adapt them. They can change the words to fit what feels true for them.

Model it yourself. When you catch yourself in harsh self-talk, use a bridge statement out loud. Children learn by watching.

Remember:

You're teaching your child a language they can use for life — one that lets them stay with themselves during difficulty instead of turning against themselves.

Want to understand more deeply why this works?

Download the complete guide: [*Understanding Your Child's Negative Self-Talk*](#)

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