



Turning Around

By M.J. Clark, M.A.,APR

I spent this morning on the verge of tears during my entire workout at Curves, a women's fitness center. There was nobody in the center but me and the trainer, who was working at a computer. It was the only emotionally hijacked workout I've ever had, and it affected me profoundly.

I joined Curves a year and a half ago in an effort to stop gaining weight. I have been successful in my goal until this past month, a month in which my work schedule was so rigorous that I only made it to Curves a few times during the month. Although I also worked out some at home with my Wii Fitness Coach and various aerobics tapes, it just wasn't enough. For the first time since I joined Curves, my weight rose more than just a pound or two.

During my morning workout, I was beating myself up mentally for my backslide. "I can't believe I let this happen," I told myself. "Why can't I get this under control? I'm so disappointed in myself!"

As I trained, I began to read the posters on the walls to get my mind off my destructive thoughts. One that caught my eye said, "No matter how far you go down the wrong road, you can always turn around." That really struck me. "I'm here now," I said to myself. "I went down the wrong road, but I'm here at Curves now. I'm working out today. I'm committed in this moment to taking better care of myself. All is not lost; I'm just starting fresh."

Thinking those thoughts started to make the tears welling in my eyes subside a little. I kept repeating to myself throughout the rest of the workout, "I'm here now. I'm here now. I'm here now." Saying that was comforting. Once the tears were completely gone, and I was stretching out after my workout, my internal thoughts became, "I can do this. I can turn this around. I know what to do, and I'm on the right path. Today is the start of a new plan of attack. I must fit these workouts into my schedule, no matter how busy I become. Now how can I do this? What will I do?"

Sometimes when we talk to ourselves, we say things we would never allow another person to say to us. We say hurtful, destructive things that only further damage our situation. Would we talk that same way to our kids or our best friend? Of course not! Would we say those things to our spouse or our own mother? No! And yet we treat ourselves so poorly that we sabotage our own efforts toward success.

What are you saying to yourself? Are you tearing yourself down from the inside out? What in your life is impacted by your negative self talk?

If you find yourself entertaining negative thoughts, you can decide to embrace new, replacement thoughts, as I did at Curves. Speak to yourself with the same respect you would give those you love the most. Encourage yourself! Help yourself succeed, just as you would help a co-worker asking for advice. Love yourself by being your own best cheerleader.