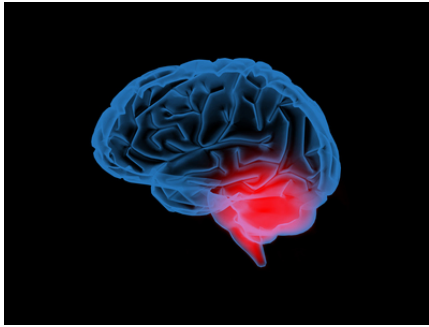


## Reducing Conflict 10 Retrain Your Brain

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD



Last week I wrote about changing your attitude by training your brain to think differently. This week I want to address the area of training your brain in a broader sense.

Let's start with a question. Who is your worst critic? I ask that question in all my leadership classes, and all but one person out of the thousands I have asked have said "myself." The lone hold-out was one brave man who immediately blurted out, "my wife."

For most of us, we run ourselves down over countless things we do or say or the shape of our bodies, etc. The habit is unhealthy because when we are feeling bad about ourselves, we limit the amount of happiness and success we experience.

### The Formula to Change our Thinking

There is a simple three-step formula that you can start using today that will ultimately change your mindset to one of growth and health. You will no longer be your own worst critic.

#### Step One

**Catch yourself** in the act of having some negative self-talk. Our current habit just allows us to have a thought without even thinking about it. We have done this for most of our lives. As a result of reading this article, you will now have the opportunity to become conscious of the negative thought when it pops into your mind.

#### Step Two

**Reject the thought.** I have a mental picture that I use to knock the bad thought back from the front of my conscious mind back to my unconscious mind. I have a mental tennis racket in my brain that I use to physically hit the bad thought back to where I am no longer conscious of it.

One caveat here is that not **all** negative thoughts should be rejected. Occasionally you will do something that you really are ashamed of. In those instances, you must deal with the pain and resolve to not do that again. The vast majority on negative self-talk is for

minor issues or things where we just beat ourselves up unjustifiably. Those are the thoughts we want to reject.

### **Step Three**

**Feel good about it.** Take the time to praise your self by recognizing that you are taking greater control of your brain. This self-reinforcement is an important part of the model because it provides the chemical, dopamine, that causes pleasure and gives you the recognition that you are improving.

If you follow this formula, you will find it feels a bit odd at first, but as you enjoy the feeling of growth you will instinctively do it more easily and more often. If you can follow the prescription for 30 days, you will have formed a habit that will have a significant positive influence in the quality of your life. This habit will last the rest of your life.

### **Free Video**

Here is a 3-minute video that contains more information on retraining your brain.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJMoUMmDEug>

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