FIGHT WITH LOGIC AND DISENGAGEMENT

“I guess what I am trying to say is that if you want something, you have to take action. A little step toward it every day. Then there is a reason to feel accomplished every day. Match your energy and vibration with what you envision. Believe. You deserve success, so go for it.”
—Riitta Klint

I hope you’ve spent the last week tracking your Sabby’s voice and really paying attention to what they had to say and how they said it. You should now be much more familiar with your Sabby’s fighting style. That’s going to give you the upper hand in starting to fight back.

We’re going to start by looking at two different styles of responding to Sabby: Logic and Disengagement. Let’s start by looking at how to fight back with logic.

Look back through your Sabby tracker over the last week and notice what Sabby had to say. I’m going to assume that if you dig into it, most of it is not even remotely rooted in logic. In fact, much of it is probably completely illogical!

I don’t know exactly what your Sabby has had to say over the past week, so for examples I’m going to address some common Sabby attacks I hear from my patients:

- You always fail, so there is no point in trying.
- It’s not going to be a good (or fun, enjoyable, or happy) experience, so don’t bother.
- Unless it’s perfect, it’s not worth it.
- You are just going to end up getting hurt, so you need to protect yourself.
- You already screwed up—might as well screw up more!

You can probably take any one of these examples and customize it to fit your particular Sabby. Perhaps your Sabby attacks you about your weight. In that case, they may tell you that you always fail at diets, so there is no point in trying to lose weight. Or maybe they say you can’t follow the diet perfectly, so it’s not worth trying. Or that you’ve blown your diet with that cupcake, so you might as well just eat everything in sight.

Perhaps your Sabby holds you back career-wise. If this is the case, they may tell you that you didn’t get the promotion last time, so you shouldn’t waste time trying for it again. Or they may remind you how awful it felt to not get the promotion and how you shouldn’t put yourself through that for a second time. Or maybe they just tell you you’re not good enough for the promotion and you don’t deserve it.

Maybe your Sabby is always focused on holding you back in your social life. In that case, they may tell you you’ve been hurt in relationships in the past, so it’s not worth trying to find someone new. Or maybe they tell you that you aren’t going to succeed in making friends, so it’s not worth
going to events where you might meet people. Or Sabby might say that you’ve lost friends in the past and will continue to lose them.

And do you know what all of these Sabby attacks have in common? They are all completely illogical—every single one. None of them are rooted in logic, facts, or rational thinking. They just attack you emotionally.

Sabby doesn’t have to use logic in their fights because they’re trying to hit you on your emotions, not your rational perspective. If Sabby hit you in your logic center every time, they’d lose. So Sabby says things that actually don’t make a lot of sense because they know you’ll just allow them to hit you emotionally without thinking about how they got that punch in.

But what if you started to look at Sabby’s words from a logical framework?

Let’s take the following example: “You always fail, so there is no point in trying.” Is that a logical statement? Do you always fail? Have you failed at every single thing you’ve ever done in your life?

Of course not! You don’t always fail. Like everyone else on the planet, you sometimes fail. But that doesn’t mean you should never try, or that success isn’t out there for you. It is completely illogical to think you should never try because you have occasionally failed.

If you look at anyone you know who is in a successful relationship, they are in that relationship because every single one of their previous relationships ultimately failed.

If you look at anyone who has lost weight and successfully kept it off, they probably have stories of their dozens of previous, unsuccessful attempts at weight loss before they found a diet that worked. If you ask anyone who’s ever gotten a promotion, they can also tell you about all the times someone else got the promotion instead.

What that essentially means is that you fail every time, until you don’t. So, through this lens, failure is not an endpoint unless you decide to stop trying.

USING LOGIC TO OVERCOME ILLOGIC

Let’s go back to the example of Sabby saying, “You always fail, so there is no point in trying.” If we look at this as the illogical statement it is, then we can fight back with logic. And by fight back, I mean respond to Sabby. Address precisely what they’re saying, but with logic instead of emotion. Here are some examples:

● “That is not true—I have succeeded plenty of times in my life!”
● “There is always a point in trying; it only takes one time to get it right, and if I don’t try, that won’t happen!”
● “Everyone has failures. It’s how we learn and move forward. Every new attempt is a chance to get it right!”
“I’m growing and changing, and giving in means giving up on my dreams; I’m not going to do that!”

Do you see what I mean here by fighting back with logic? These are all powerful statements that effectively leave Sabby powerless. They were trying to hurt you through your emotions, but you blocked that punch and hit Sabby with an unexpected left hook. They were totally unprepared for that, like a fighter going into the ring against someone they’ve never seen before, so they have no way to respond. That’s how you win the fight!

I want you to revisit your Sabby tracker from last week and look at how you can respond to Sabby’s words with logic instead of emotion. Can you find where they’ve been illogical? If so, how can you respond with logic? Use the worksheet on page 94 to identify some logical responses (your surprise left hooks) that you can prepare yourself with so you have a brand-new way to respond that leaves Sabby speechless the next time they attack. Point to you!

USING DISENGAGEMENT TO DISEMPOWER THE SABOTEUR
You also have another option besides logic: disengagement. I often say to my patients that you can’t fight if only one person is fighting, and that is equally true of a fight between you and your Sabby. Sabby wants you to engage. They’re itching to get under your skin, to get a rise out of you, to make you feel a certain way and behave accordingly. But what if you don’t engage? What if you never get into the ring with them? What if Sabby is throwing punches, and they just bounce right off of you? You essentially take away their power.

If you are going to respond to Sabby with disengagement, it can be really helpful to have a few short and sweet statements prepared to use whenever you hear Sabby start to attack. These are statements that shut Sabby down and remove you from the fight—essentially making it so there is no fight.

Imagine a situation where someone comes up to you and says, “Hey, I don’t like you. Let’s go outside and fight.” What would you do in that situation? You might simply walk away. Maybe you say, “No, thank you.” Perhaps you say, “I’m sorry to hear that, but I’m not interested in fighting.” I’m guessing for most of you reading this, you don’t actually say “Okay!” and then go outside and fight this person.

Think of your Sabby as a person asking you to go outside and fight. Disengagement is the way you remove yourself from that situation. Of course, you can just say, “No, thank you,” but with Sabby, the stronger and more powerful the response is, the more likely you are to get them to leave you alone.

Let’s again use the example of Sabby saying, “You always fail, so there is no point in trying,” but instead of fighting back with logic, you are choosing to disengage. Here are some ways you could respond that achieve that:

- “Nice try, Sabby—I’m not going to fight you.”
- “You are a bully, and I’m not going to let you bully me!”
- “I refuse to listen to you!”
- “You are mean and cruel, and you don’t have power over me!”
- “Oh, shut up and leave me alone.” (Said loftily, as to an importunate nag.)

Can you see how these statements could end the fight? They are simple and direct, and you can use them in just about any situation when Sabby chimes in. (Of course, you are welcome to use stronger language in your actual response!)

What is your go-to disengagement response going to be when Sabby starts a fight and you don’t want to engage? I would encourage you to come up with a few of them. Test them out and find the one that feels the most powerful.

Use the worksheets from this chapter as your homework for this week. You now know how to fight Sabby with logic and some disengagement statements. And I want you to practice using both. When you find Sabby speaking up, practice these strategies and take note of what worked best in what situation.

And remember, this is practice! You are just starting to learn and apply these skills, so don’t expect a 100% success rate. Even if you succeed 25% of the time, that’s 25% more than you did before, and that is an amazing step forward! After all, you fail until something works!

Now, it’s time to create some logical responses. Use the worksheet on page 94 to take some common Sabby statements and create your own logical responses. Then come up with your go-to disengagement statement for when you just need to shut Sabby down.

**Logical Fighting and Disengagement Plan**

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<th>Sabby Comment</th>
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My Sabby Disengagement Responses:
Example: “I’m not going to listen to you”; “Shut up and leave me alone!”