

Transform Your Inner Critic Into Your Own Personal Cheerleader

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It's easy to beat yourself up over your shortcomings and failures. ***Your inner critic is attempting to protect you, but like an overprotective parent, it's causing more harm than good.*** Criticizing yourself only serves to make life more challenging. It also robs you of options and puts limits on your life.

Your inner critic provides information, but that doesn't mean you have to listen. Your inner critic is relentless. It's active from the moment you wake up until you fall asleep. It's even active in your dreams! Your inner critic won't be contained easily.

Change what your inner critic says to you and reach your full potential:

- 1. Drown it out.** Fill your mind with positive talk and imagery. Avoid giving your inner critic any room to make its opinions known to you. Keep your self-talk positive and expect the best to happen.
- 2. Recognize the truth.** ***Your inner critic is just a manifestation of your fear.*** Its sole purpose is to stop you from harming yourself. However, it's like a scared child. You tell yourself that you're an idiot or that you can't do something in order to have an excuse not to expose yourself to failure.
 - Your inner critic is a lunatic. Consider treating it as such.
- 3. Empty your mind.** If you need to make a phone call or finish your taxes, keep your mind empty and get started. It's your thoughts that stop you from getting things done. Keep your mind clear and get busy. ***Action is the best way to keep your critic at bay.***

4. **It's all a matter of moving your hands or moving your mouth.** Consider every action at your disposal. They're all a matter of either doing something or saying something. That's all there is to life. You're either physically doing something or talking.

- There's no practical difference between calling your best friend and making a cold call. You're dialing the phone with your hands and speaking with your mouth.
- How can an inner critic exist when every action you take is either moving your hands or your mouth? It's all the same.

5. **What would you tell a friend?** Would you judge a friend as harshly as you judge yourself? What would you say to them in a similar situation? What would you say to your child? There's no reason not to treat yourself just as kindly. ***Be a friend to yourself.***

6. **Say something encouraging to yourself every 10 minutes.** Set a timer on your phone or computer. Get in the habit of encouraging yourself each day. After 18 hours, you will have said 108 positive things to yourself. It won't take long to create a new habit at that pace. ***Criticizing yourself is a habit. Encouraging yourself is also a habit.***

7. **Make a list of your high points.** Think about your greatest successes. It's easy to fixate on a few bad choices, but choose to focus on your highest achievements. Make a long list and review it regularly. You'll enhance your mood and put your critic to bed.

The inner critic in your head limits your life and your opportunities. Remember that your inner critic is no different from a child afraid of the dark. It isn't rational. You don't have to listen.

Take control of your inner talk and lift yourself up. Speak to yourself the way you would a good friend or loved one. Turn your inner critic into your most positive supporter and you'll live a life you enjoy.