



Taming the Inner Critic

Shhh......be still for a moment...do you notice that little voice inside your head? Do you notice what it's saying? Can you observe the background conversations that are going on? (No, this isn't you losing your mind, however, crazy it may sound) What it is is the ego. Whenever you notice that voice, you may consciously realize that you are not the voice, but subconsciously that voice is always running the show.

This particular voice is different from voices of sensible caution - the voices of ego or doubt are usually generalized, are always negative and tend to show up in our most vulnerable moments (e.g. at 3am, or just before you walk on stage, or are about to go for a job interview). It may say nasty things like:

'You can't do that.' **'You aren't good enough.'**
'Everyone will laugh.' **'You're not smart enough.'** **'You're not creative.'** **'Nothing I do works out right'** **'If I try that, I will fail.'**

See if you can start to catch the voice in your head. Start to notice the patterns of your inner voice (e.g. are you most open to your inner critic when tired, hungry, stressed? when you are alone/lonely). Start to notice if it complains about something, if it starts to make up a story about you or what's happening around you. Start to recognize it for what it is: the voice of the ego, no more than a thought.

When you are aware of a voice of doubt, notice as you would a stranger offering advice. Thank it for giving you its opinion and politely ask it to leave. Point out that it is not the boss of you and you are capable of taking it from here.

You can try journal writing... writing down your thoughts, or dialoguing with the critic. Many people have great success with affirmations such as 'I am a fully creative being.' Write or say your affirmation, and notice if an objection comes up ... "You're not creative." "Nothing I do works out right." or whatever. All of it is just a story.

Write it out, all the comments, voices, and feelings, however, silly they sound. You can do this once or twice a day for as long as you like - eventually the critic gets bored, all the objections are exhausted and you are free to live your affirmation.

Physical work (cleaning out cupboards, washing windows, gardening) or movement (walking, gym, swimming, dance) can be very effective.

Make a list of 5 things you are grateful for today, 5 skills you already possess and 5 things that are good about your life right now.

You can also dispute your inner voice by pointing out evidence that contrasts what it's saying. Note the occasions when you did display creativity, or when your project did succeed...just avoid getting into a long point-by-point argument with it (this will only re-establish its power over you).

Experiment with what works for you. However you handle it, make it clear that the voice no longer dominates your decision making process. Practice, practice, practice and peace can be yours.

If you want to take this further, try Hal & Sidra Stone's books, 'Embracing your Inner Critic' and 'Embracing Our Selves'. They are both excellent. Others are 'Taming Your Gremlin' by Rick Carson or for deeper learning 'Oneness With All Life' by Eckhart Tolle.

To your success,

Coach Christine

Bio:

The author of this is Christine Silvey. As a certified Life, Career and Personal Development Coach, Christine is passionate about empowering YOU to actively create exactly what you want for yourself and for your life without struggling! To find out more about coaching or to contact Christine, please go to <http://www.empoweredyou.com>