

Accept Yourself by Letting Go of Criticism

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Many of us carry around an inner voice, a critic who is judgmental not only of ourselves, but of others. Very often though, our judgment of others is usually a reflection of how we feel about ourselves. We've all been guilty of judging others too harshly at one time or another. Unfortunately criticism can become a nasty habit that leads to a cycle of negative thinking. It's also a defense masking the unhappiness and secret anxieties that we may possess. In the process of being judgmental, we lose our ability to empathize, to be compassionate and tolerant, and we cut ourselves off from belonging. It is during times when we are feeling bad about ourselves that we are at risk to look for targets to project our tensions, negative feelings, and anxieties onto.

Do you often find yourself criticizing others relationships or successes? It may be that you haven't been as successful as you would like or that you haven't been in a relationship for a while. How does this "critical self" impact our well being?

It is clear from the research that holding negative automatic thoughts promotes depressed states in people. Releasing these is a primary aspect of treatment for depression. CBT or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can help people restructure their thinking. Therapy aims to liberate the "critical self", leading us on a path to compassion, kindness, and allowing peace and happiness.