



Module 4

Free yourself from self-sabotage





The Inner Critic

- *“The force inside that constantly evaluates and assesses our worth as a human being and thus limits our capacity to be fully alive in the present moment.”* Byron Brown
- What Sigmund Freud called the Super Ego... a much better translation from the German of *Über Ich* is *Over I*... and that is exactly what it feels like, and I sitting over us constantly judging and assessing our value as a human being
- In popular psychology it is more commonly known as the Inner Critic



Imagine...

- What would your life be like if you had no self-judgment, no voice inside of your head judging you or telling you you are not good enough?
- What is the difference between someone that is happy and fulfilled and someone that isn't? It is rarely the events of their life, it is usually what they are making them mean...
- Having total access to your greatest potential



The link...

- Spiral dynamics determines the values we have and the kinds of things we tend to judge as important
- Meditation gives us the capacity to get the distance to see the patterns
- Beliefs are the structures that inform our judgments
- The Inner Critic is how this all plays out moment by moment



Examples...

- *“You are the only person on this programme who doesn’t get this”*
- *“If people knew what you were really like they wouldn’t even talk to you”*
- *“You are stupid to even think you could make these changes”*
- *“I can’t believe you just said that, now everyone knows how stupid you are”*



Different styles

There are three main different ways we experience our Inner Critic, and we all do all of them to varying degrees

1. In our own heads towards ourselves
2. Projected onto others towards ourselves
3. Outwards judging others

Everyone has an Inner Critic, but for some people there is so much judgment about not being good enough, they don't even feel safe enough to admit they do as it is considered another vulnerability



It evolves over time...

- If you have done work with the Inner Critic before, it is immensely helpful to regularly revisit it, because it tends to evolve and change overtime
- Some people have a very “spiritual” Inner Critic, but it is still an Inner Critic nonetheless!

Remember...

“If you can see it, you don’t have to be it”



What is realistic?

Our aim is that over time...

Our Inner Critic becomes more and more exposed so we can see it more easily

We get more and more skilfull and disengaging from it and so freeing ourselves

And so...

It loses more and more of its potency

And we feel less and less impacted by it

It increasingly becomes like a quiet noise in the background that we pay less and less attention to... but, we have to consciously tune it out, and that is what we are learning



Your Inner Critics...

- What are some of the ways that it attacks you?
- The clearer we are, the more effectively you can learn to defend yourself
- List your top Inner Critics attacks so you can start to look out for them



3 Typical Responses

1. Giving in
2. Rationalising
3. Fighting back

None of these ultimately work, because they all ultimately keep us engaged with the attack

Any effective response must disengage us from the structure of the attack, rather than get pulled into the content...



Effective responses 1

Strength based responses

Aggression: *"Fuck off"*

Indignation: *"How dare you speak to me that way"*

Exposing the judge: *"Who cares what you think"*



Effective responses 2

Head-based/distraction based responses

Changing the subject: *“Did you watch Eastenders last night?”*

Exaggeration: *“Yes, I’m the most xxxx in the whole wide world!”*

Exposing the judge: *“Who cares what you think?”*

Surrender: *“Now you’ve made me feel guilty”*



Effective responses 3

Heart based responses

Truth: *"That hurts me when you speak that way. Stop it"*

Agreement: *"You are right, I don't know what I'm doing"*

Compassion: *"If I'm acting that way, it must be really painful for you"*



Effective responses 4

Other

Breathe

Active Visualisation – visualise yourself doing something such as hitting your Inner Critic out of sight with a tennis racket!



RIDD Model

- Recognise
- Identify
- Defend
- Disengage



Steps to Defense..

- **Recognise:** notice you are being attacked – feeling of being smaller, squashed or deficient in some way
- **Identify:** what is the actual attack – name it clearly
- **Defend:** use one of the responses
- **Disengage:** feel yourself freeing yourself from the attack and allow your focus to go elsewhere

Has it been effective... do you feel bigger or smaller?



Homework

- Go through each of your Inner Critic attacks and practice the new responses
- At the end of your meditation each day, take a further 5 minutes to practice doing this. Ideally also do this several more times a day
- Start to practice catching it in action – make a commitment to yourself to do so



Homework questions

1. How are you doing at this point in the programme?
2. How did you find this module?
3. What questions do you have?
4. Where do you feel you are at with your “personal power”?