Conquer Your Inner Critic

Discover why you should celebrate self-doubt!

DORIS HELGE, PH.D.
CONQUER YOUR INNER CRITIC

Explore proven techniques for quickly turning your inner critic into your best friend

Discover why you should celebrate self-doubt!

Doris Helge, Ph.D.

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PRAISE FOR THIS BOOK

"Dr. Doris helps you master life!"
-Mark Victor Hansen, co-author, the Chicken Soup for the Soul series

"Doris' books touch my heart. So many people are starved for confidence and happiness. Doris shares proven ways to easily and quickly overcome your fears and achieve anything you want to."
-Michael Port, Bestselling Author, "Book Yourself Solid"

"A negative voice lives inside all of us, saying “You’re not good enough.” If you’ve wondered why affirmations and positive thinking don’t work for you, discover how to USE your negative thoughts in positive, empowering ways. I promise this book will help you stop struggling and gain the happy, successful life you want."
-Anell Tubbs, Holistic Health Practitioner for over 20 years

“You’ll gain instant positive results. Discover the magnificent possibilities awaiting your exploration. Learn how to cash in on your strengths. Dr. Doris' books and MP3 programs are always fun and immensely useful. Use Doris’ books to build your confidence and escalate your success and happiness!”
-Bill Uhl, winner of five gold medals for the U.S.

"Without Doris' latest book, I'd never have understood that my desire to get rid of my inner critic was actually making it much stronger. I love how Doris' programs always make me see through the illusions that have been holding me back. If you want to be free of the chains that have been suppressing YOUR success and happiness, take advantage of this amazing resource. You'll laugh hysterically about all the myths we've been taught. I promise that you'll grow by leaps and bounds . . . easily and quickly. Give yourself this gift now. This book is the last self-help program you'll ever need . . . and it's the best!"
-Pat Keller, Mailboxes, Etc.
Pre and Post-Test

HOW IS YOUR INNER CRITIC SABOTAGING YOUR SUCCESS OR HAPPINESS?

Which of the following personal or professional challenges are yours?

1. My self-talk is often self-critical. (T/F)
2. I wish it was easier to promote myself, my accomplishments and my abilities. (T/F)
3. Sometimes I can't focus clearly because I'm so worried about what other people will think. (T/F)
4. Sometimes I'm afraid to take a risk even though I know it would probably lead to a better life. (T/F)
5. Sometimes I say "Yes" when I want to say "No" or "Not now" because I want to avoid criticism. (T/F)
6. Sometimes I do too much for other people. I do things they should do for themselves because I want them to value me. (T/F)
7. Sometimes when people compliment me, I think, "They don't really mean it" or "If they really knew me, they wouldn't say that." When the compliment comes from a friend, I may think, "They're just trying to make me feel better." Within a work environment, I sometimes think, "They're trying to manipulate me" or "They want something from me." (T/F)
8. When I want to achieve a new goal, I often hear an inner voice criticizing me with putdowns like, "You won't succeed," "You don't know enough," or "You're not good enough." (T/F)
9. I want to feel calm and secure when I present my ideas and plans but my inner critic often sabotages my confidence. (T/F)
10. I want to truly enjoy socializing and networking but sometimes I feel uncomfortable or doubt myself. When this happens, I struggle to fit in or I "go along to get along" instead of creating the meaningful connections I need and want. This is frustrating and can be exhausting. (T/F)
11. I dread public speaking. I want to feel more confident selling myself and making presentations. I want to gain, instead of drain, energy when I speak out. I also want to do this on my own terms, after I've had time to absorb and reflect on information. I want my inner critic to shut up. I don't want to feel pressured to immediately blurt out pearls of wisdom just because I've been asked a question. (T/F)
12. I want the quality of my work to be recognized, respected, appreciated, and rewarded. Sometimes my inner critic warns me, "You're not that good" or "You'll look foolish." (T/F)

13. My inner critic suppresses my creativity. (T/F)

14. Deep down inside, I may be a courageous person, but my inner critic zaps my courage to change. (T/F)

15. I often try to please people instead of expressing my true opinions or being My Authentic Self. (T/F)

16. When someone makes a critical comment, instead of taking time to reflect on the accuracy of what they say, I assume the criticism is valid and feel bad about myself. (T/F)

17. I sometimes assume people are being critical of me and later I discover they weren't. (T/F)

18. I want to control unnecessary interruptions that zap my focus and productivity but my inner critic says, "Don't! People will think you're being rude or anti-social." (T/F)

19. I want to reduce overwhelm and stress when I'm working. I want to ask for what I need without feeling vulnerable and exposed. I want to get my needs met without having to schmooze, play political games, or struggle to change my personality. (T/F)

20. I could be and do more if I could stop the voice inside of me that makes me feel inferior by comparing me unfavorably with other people. (T/F)

21. Sometimes I want to try something new but I hold myself back because I fear looking foolish or making a mistake. (T/F)

22. When I think "I just did something really good!" my inner critic often reminds me, "You could have done better." (T/F)

23. Sometimes I'm intimidated by people I think are more confident than I am. (T/F)

24. I want to prevent conflicts and easily resolve disagreements. I want to deal with criticism in a comfortable, carefree way, even when someone's critique is unfair. (T/F)

25. I want to fully develop my "receiving muscles" so I can receive the supportive relationships and income I deserve. I'm ready to tame my inner critic and gain inner peace now. (T/F)

**TOTAL YOUR SCORE:**

How many times did you mark "True?"
Please use the chart below as an indicator of how much you'll gain when you use this proven "Conquer Your Inner Critic Now" program.

1-5 “True’s”

Congratulations! You've done a wonderful job of making friends with your inner critic. Now it's helping you instead of holding you back.

6-14 “True’s”

You have some tools for managing your inner critic but you often suffer from the assaults of a crippling inner voice that puts you down and creates feelings of insecurity. The proven "Conquer Your Inner Critic Now" program will help you let go of unnecessary anxiety and stress so you can meet your full potential.

15-25 “True’s”

Your inner critic has a strong negative voice that is creating unnecessary worry. Sometimes you self-sabotage. Your inner critic is suppressing your ability to enjoy the level of happiness, confidence and success you want. Use the tips in this program to blast through your inner blocks to complete confidence.

When you've completed this program, take this test again.

You'll enjoy noticing the rapid progress you've made.
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**MORE BESTSELLING BOOKS by Doris Helge, Ph.D., MCC**

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**DEDICATION**

**EASY ACCESS TO YOUR SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISES**

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**MORE TESTIMONIALS ABOUT THIS BOOK**
WHAT’S DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS BOOK?

What Advantages Will You Gain When You Read It?

If you've ever longed for more confidence when you face indecision, tough challenges or difficult people, this book will become a trusted resource you'll refer to time and again. Below are just a few of the benefits you'll enjoy when you take advantage of the proven tools I'm sharing with you.

• Once you explode the surprising myths about your inner critic, you'll bask in the peace and confidence you deserve. Let's probe one of the most common inner-critic myths. It's not your negative inner voice that has been holding you back. Your challenges have been caused by lack of awareness. You haven't yet perceived the amazing resources your inner critic is poised to provide you. Right now, you have the ability to turn a confused, misguided voice into a friendly force that fights fiercely for your happiness and success.

• Your inner critic can become the most loyal servant you could possibly imagine. Pause to ponder this idea. Your internal censor is already diligently slaving away, usually 24/7. Your inner critic will go to any length to gain your attention when you feel challenged or uncertain. Discover how to harness this powerhouse of energy. Use this book to begin right now to transform your critic from a detractor into an amazing resource for your personal and professional empowerment.

• You'll gain inner peace and the comfort of elevated self-awareness. When you use the new tools in this book, every time your inner critic appears, you'll painlessly perceive delightful truths about yourself and your life. You'll understand at a deep core level that fear and other negative emotions are just opportunities to become experientially gifted. You'll know, "Each time I'm afraid or I doubt my ability to succeed, I have a valuable opportunity to empower myself to enjoy an even greater level of calm and confidence. Now I have all the tools I need!"

• Once you know how to turn your gremlin into a trusted ally, you'll enjoy a distinct, special advantage that most people never discover. You'll have tamed your inner tyrant. As soon as you convert your gremlin into an internal employee who works 24/7 to create the life of your dreams, another advantage will spontaneously appear. You'll automatically enjoy a new leadership position on Earth. Your new role is essential to the evolution of our planet. You'll spontaneously inspire everyone in your presence to gain your new level of calm and confidence.
Just read the book and enjoy doing the proven exercises that hundreds of my clients completed during the field-testing stage of preparing this book for you. When times are tough, close your eyes and practice the multisensory experiences I'm sharing with you. Notice how every carefully designed and tested exercise helps you align with your life purpose, values, passion and inner strength. After each exercise, you'll feel a warm soft glow in your heart. Allow that blissful sensation to expand into every cell of your body.

Sink into the joy of a deeper connection with Your Authentic Self. You'll breathe a big sigh of relief when you realize you're not alone. You are a key component of a vast army of other courageous Souls around the planet. All of us are destined to help elevate the people on Earth to a new level of consciousness and daily delight. Like you, your peers around the globe are committed to being all they can be. No more settling for a mediocre life! Total joy and abundance have been patiently awaiting your discovery.

Begin reading the next chapter now so you can bust the myths about the inner critic that have been holding you back. Enjoy exploring this complete toolkit for taming what you thought was your worst tyrant.
"Oh, I always think I'm going to give up . . . I don't have to do this . . .
You think, 'Why would anyone want to see me again in a movie? . . .
I don't know how to act anyway!'"

Meryl Streep

Do you sometimes hear an internal voice that belittles your abilities and criticizes even your best work? Maybe you're related to actress Meryl Streep or author Mark Twain, who once planned to burn *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* because he didn't think it was a very good read.

**THE ENEMY AS A GUARDIAN**

Your personal critic is usually described as a racket in your head, nagging voice or harsh judge that was created when disapproval was flung your way by nitpicking parents or teachers. The story goes that such individuals downgraded your finest efforts and taught you to criticize yourself. This chapter provides an additional point of view that will expand your peace of mind.

Your internal censor has not been treated fairly.

You originally gave birth to this annoying, judgmental part of your personality as a young child because you needed an internal guardian. Your critic began as a defense mechanism. It shielded you from physical harm and social disapproval by convincing you that you weren't powerful enough to do certain things. In the guise of protection, your guardian kept you from fully experiencing life until you
were big enough and strong enough to confront new challenges.

For instance, as a young child, when you wanted to stand on a wobbly stool to steal a treat from a cookie jar on a shelf, your guardian warned, "Don't try it. Remember, you're not big enough." This protector kept you from hurting yourself and from getting into trouble with adults.

As time passed, your guardian's message magnified. Now, instead of hearing a kind voice remind you, "You're not strong enough or powerful enough to reach the cookies on the high shelf" your inner critic screams, "You're not good enough!" Your inner critic is now part of your core identity. This protector-turned-critic still fears that you're not powerful or deserving enough to have everything you want. In too many ways, your faithful childhood servant has assumed the job of master controller.

Your guardian is an avid cheerleader for the status quo, even when your present circumstances feel unpleasant and it's clear change would be to your advantage. Your guardian reinforces your misperceptions that you are incapable or powerless. This distortion allows your "protector" to function in its familiar zone. It gets to feel in control of your life. Your guardian's resistance to positive change can even cause you to push away the very things you desire.
Now, for the good news. Since you personally created the early version of your critic (the guardian), you can manage what has emerged . . . today's chattering censor. As a child, you believed what you were told about yourself and your abilities. Now you’re an adult with choices. Your inner critic will only cause you grief when you’re unaware of its surprisingly positive intentions and its persistent, wily ways.

As you continue reading this book, you'll assign a brand new job description to the loyal servant who is also known as your inner critic. Yes, you read that correctly. It cannot be overemphasized that your nagging inner critic is really your loyal servant. When you’re hearing putdowns like “You’re not good enough,” it’s difficult to remember that this misguided part of yourself has been slaving away, nonstop, for most of your life. Its intention is so pure and positive that most people eventually tear up with gratitude once they fully understand this part of themselves.

The inner critic you gave birth to in early childhood has no idea how capable you have become. Until you re-educate it, your internal censor will continue its daily drudgery of struggle and toil, constantly laboring to protect you from harm, disappointment, disapproval and failure by putting you down. Isn’t it time for a job description do-over for your inner critic? Use the next two chapters of this book to discover how to gain the inner peace and freedom you’re craving.

**ADVOCATES FOR THE NEGATIVE VOICE**

First, let's further explore the potential value of your internal critic. Even if you believed and integrated harsh messages from your childhood, your critic is not a fearsome adversary. It’s time to learn to use the strong-arm antics and derogatory voice of this high-energy, powerful part of yourself to your advantage. Most famous athletes, actors, and authors derive as much value from their internal censor as they receive from external coaches who critique their work and help them improve. Successful people have discovered the secrets of embracing their inner critic and re-channeling its efforts in positive ways.

The myth is that banishing your inner critic would instantly transform self-judgment and self-doubt into self-confidence.

David Guterson, author of the bestselling book that eventually became a box office hit, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, is certain his self-confidence was not gained from external recognition. He credits years of practice in which he constantly critiqued his work. Bill Uhl, an enduro-racer who won five Olympic gold medals in
Europe, sums up the value of his internal critic, "If I'm not always evaluating my performance, how will I keep getting better?" You harness a powerhouse of energy when you face your shadow side. You discover that your doubts, fears, and insecurities are tools to help you become more competent and complete.

Trying to get rid of your inner critic is not the solution. Just keep your critic's feedback in perspective.

When managed effectively, the barbs of your inner critic prevent complacency and boredom while nudging you to improve your life and your chosen profession. If there are any magical keys to elevating your self-confidence, they are:

• preparation,
• practice and
• passion.

When you allow yourself to discover and honor your life purpose, including the vocation of your choice, you take risks without fearing humiliation. Your self-esteem soars. The joyful state of flow emerges because you face challenges with a bold new level of confidence.

No matter what you take on, insecurity is part of the job description. It's not possible to forge your own path while remaining on familiar ground. Serious doubt is actually a very good sign. Just recognize that self-doubt is a whole lot of hot air you've cooked up for absolutely no good reason. Muster the courage to trust yourself for five minutes. Your dream is yours and yours alone . . . the chance for perfect freedom . . . your chance to fly.

Suzanne Falter-Barns

SEPARATE THE WHEAT FROM THE CHAFF

A little negative self-talk—healthy evaluation—is fine because it helps you improve. You gain freedom when you distinguish a pathological internal critic from your essential critical thinking abilities.

You can easily recognize the potentially damaging voice of your critic. It attempts to control your behavior. It is fear-based, harps on your faults, and demands perfection. The critic never notices your strengths and achievements. It insists you're a failure and compares you unfavorably to other people.

The critic is unaware that we all make mistakes. It doesn’t know that errors are so essential for achievement and personal growth that many savvy companies now formally honor failures. It’s their way of rewarding employees for
taking healthy risks.

The internal critic's voice can sound so credible. Its messages can become so automatic and subtle. You may not realize its communications are irrational and untruthful. There are reliable ways of detecting the expressions of your inner critic. If its voice sounds like an insecure child, you’re hearing messages from your childhood guardian-turned-critic. Treat this voice with caution.

Remember, the critic is only in power when you believe its messages. Even if a part of you is fearful, you are not your insecurity, so make a decision right now not to allow fear to become your primary identity. Insecurity is just a habit and habits can always be broken.

There are some easy ways to separate useful feedback from the dysfunctional voices that ramble through your consciousness. Messages that are rational, mature, and reasonable are input from your adult self.

Statements that are insecure, childish, or inappropriately emotional are expressions of your critic. Truly listen to the untamed critic and you'll notice how ridiculous it sounds.

Why would you accept the advice of a child's voice that sounds controlling but is actually panicked one moment, impulsive the next, and then feels helpless?

Joseph Luciani

Make a decision to discover your truth. You are a highly developed species called *homo sapiens*. Encyclopedias say we are the wise branch of the primate family because our brains are more developed. Even in our dream state, we can use our rational abilities for productive thinking. You'll discover exactly how to do this before you finish this book.

The first step toward more productive thinking is to separate truth from self-criticism. Your critic's incessant desire to control your life is one of its most distinguishing characteristics. Just notice when you compare yourself to other people in negative ways. Remember, other people serve as mirrors so you can perceive yourself more clearly. *If you feel self-doubt, they do, too. The positive*
attributes you recognize in other people also exist within you, even if these characteristics are just now beginning to sprout.

Enjoy the light-hearted way the next exercise provides you with new clarity, insights and less stress when you're confronted by your inner critic.
EXERCISE ONE

GET TO KNOW YOUR GREMLIN

If someone on the street yelled at you, you wouldn't charge at them without first checking out the situation and their size. We usually behave differently when our inner critic encourages self-doubt. Most of us struggle to banish the negative voice instead of searching for the personal and professional growth opportunities that are always present when we hear our inner critic speak.

Make a commitment to get to know your gremlin. Our self-judgments and fears are treasure chests filled to the brim with every essential ingredient for creating more confidence and joy. We just need to be willing to explore them.

Harsh approaches that attempt to crush the critic create internal resistance to change. The activities that follow are highly effective because you combine levity with self-awareness.

Accepting the parts of yourself that you're uncomfortable with is the only way to transform them into greater self-respect. Habits such as putting yourself down begin to change when you observe your old mental ruts and routines, without criticizing yourself for having this human tendency. Enjoy the playful techniques I'm sharing with you. They'll soften the internal voice you have found so challenging.

• Imagine your critic's theme song and sing it.
• Draw sketches of your critic with your nondominant hand.
• Notice and label self-defeating thoughts. Release unnecessary stress by playfully drawing cartoon characters with names such as Yabut, ShuddaCuddaWudda, Faultfinder, If Only Ida, and Doubtful.

The exercise you just completed helps you recognize the unfounded nature of your critic's fears and concerns. You develop compassion for this misguided
component of your character. This creates clarity. The next time self-doubt emerges, you’ll easily resist any temptation to battle your negative feelings. When you stop resisting what exists and you aren’t emotionally attached to distorted thoughts, they gently vanish from your consciousness like a feather in a windstorm.

JUST A THOUGHT FORM

Because you have the power to change yourself, you have the power to change the world.

Your inner guardian is merely a thought form. It was originally designed to protect you until you became big enough and strong enough to meet life’s challenges. Over time, it developed a life of its own. It became your dreaded internal critic. Left unsupervised, your critic thrives on controlling your behavior while encouraging the misperception that you are incapable or powerless. The good news is that you are the one person whose thoughts and attitudes you can control.

Simple, easy actions, like differentiating the voice of the critic from your authentic internal feedback system, will help you use the critic to your highest advantage. You’ll begin to perceive its input in ways that truly empower you so you can enjoy more happiness and success. In the next two chapters, you’ll discover exactly how to give your hard-working inner critic a new job. You’ll assign your critic a series of tasks that will help you gain the personal and professional life you want.
CHAPTER 2
HOW TO GAIN COMPLETE SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Our entire life and our freedom consist ultimately in accepting ourselves as we are.
Jean Anouilh

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS CAN DELAY YOUR SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Positive affirmations, such as "I love and accept myself right now," are usually prescribed as the antidote to self-criticism. Affirming the positive is truly empowering . . . when you actually believe the message. Unfortunately, trying to substitute positive words for negative feelings can delay your self-discovery and problem-solving. This is particularly true when you use affirmations to hide feelings of inadequacy or to gain social acceptability.

Consider the affirmation, "I believe in my abilities. I know I can achieve anything I want to, right now." Ultimately, you may sincerely believe this statement, but if your critic is taunting you, it’s not currently your truth.

You’re too smart to lie to yourself. Mouthing an affirmation when you're struggling with self-doubt escalates your emotional turmoil. Your critic pipes up with a new round of invalidating messages. The original negative self-talk you were trying in vain to subdue has intensified.

Cognitive restructuring is a technique in which you substitute a positive for a negative thought. *It is only effective when you have no subconscious desire to hold onto a negative thought.* "Subconscious" is the key word. How many people consciously want to hold onto a negative thought?

Positive affirmations often fail because they don't investigate or confront the
source of negative self-talk. The next exercise is much more effective.
EXERCISE TWO

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

1. Using your dominant hand, ask your critic, “What do you want?” If you’re right-handed, your dominant hand is your right hand and your non-dominant hand is your left hand.

2. Record the critic’s answers with your nondominant hand. For most people, using the nondominant hand triggers their brain to access information that’s unconscious, so they receive new insights. This is also the way many people consciously create new neural networks in their brain.

3. Review your list. Notice and write down any patterns such as “I want to be respected just the way I am” or “I want to feel worthy.”

4. During the next few days, observe the patterns you identify and acknowledge self-doubts and insecurities that arise. Notice any tendency to resist them or to judge unpleasant feelings as "bad." All of us have self-doubts and insecurities. Set the intention to accept these "shadow" parts of yourself as part of the human condition.

5. During the next few weeks, notice how acknowledging the desires of your critic calms its chatter. It's easier for you to detect distorted perceptions.

Used in isolation, verbal affirmations lack the power necessary to counteract a lifetime of negative programming. This is because the affective (emotional) component of your subconscious is critical to any real change in beliefs and behavior. Insecurities are experienced in the emotional realm, but positive affirmations engage only the cognitive part of your brain. In addition, your brain processes and reacts to strong emotions much faster than to words. To make a long biochemical story short, changes in your self-esteem and behavior require emotional impact. The most effective ways to tame your inner critic's painful assaults are multisensory and holistic, and that's what you're reading and practicing as you read this book.

Even though we often dread feeling negative emotions, they eventually run their course when we simply acknowledge, instead of attempting to deny, them. When we try to avoid uncomfortable feelings, they return time and again, in an amplified manner, clamoring for our attention.

The foundation for your future self is your current self-image. As soon as you discover what that is, you take a giant step toward creating the destiny of your dreams.
Many advocates of positive thinking don’t understand how to use unpleasant feelings like fear and insecurity as a pathway to their opposites: the confidence and peace of mind we all want to enjoy more often. The uncomfortable emotions we try to dodge with directives like "Just think happy thoughts" disappear when we adopt an honest approach. The positive mental attitude we’ve been seeking happens spontaneously. Enjoy the benefits of productive thinking instead of struggling to achieve positive thinking!

The next exercise provides you with a proven tool and a way to practice your new technique.
EXERCISE THREE

PRODUCTIVE THINKING

Productive thinking involves being truthful and realistic. Instead of saying, "I'll do the job perfectly" tell yourself, "I'll stay as calm as I can and do the best job I can. I don't have to be perfect." When you say, "I'm going to do my best," your brain knows this is a true possibility. Because you haven’t created internal resistance by making unrealistic statements, you've significantly elevated your probability of success.

Instead of struggling to engage in positive thinking, simply replace critical comments with realistic remarks and encourage yourself to stay focused. When you make mistakes, be as kind to yourself as you would be to your best friend. Make a statement like "I won't beat myself up about this. Instead, I'll stay calm. Next time, I'll make sure I ______ (e.g., am more prepared, think before I speak, leave 15 minutes earlier so I arrive on time, etc.)." Focus on the solution instead of the problem. A solution focus is always constructive and positive.


High self-esteem flourishes with self-acceptance, which occurs when you accept yourself exactly as you are, warts and all. Self-knowledge is empowering. Your confidence will grow like a clump of healthy green grass after a rainstorm when you don't bury your feelings or say you already are who you would like to be.

*When you know who you are, you are powerful. When it comes from within, it*
radiates outward, and there is no need to "affirm" it methodically or mechanically.

Naomi Steinfeld

THE POWER OF SELF-ACCEPTANCE

I once interviewed over fifty CEOs from small, mid-sized, and large companies. Each successful individual, regardless of their career path, had independently come to the same conclusion: It is self-acceptance—not monetary success or worldly achievements—that gives birth to workplace happiness and success. Each CEO discussed numerous significant setbacks during their travels toward joy on the job. All of them now welcome challenges. They are convinced they owe their strength and capabilities to having been forced to overcome one adversity after another.

Many of the CEOs had experienced multiple bankruptcies. When asked, "If you could name only one thing that saved you when the world or your internal critic said you failed, what was it?" their responses were consistent. No matter how valuable their external support systems, self-acceptance had been their mainstay. When relationships with friends or families dissolved, they gained solace to the degree to which they accepted themselves.

Neither their self-esteem nor their comfort was dependent on when or if they pulled themselves or their company out of a problem situation. Self-respect gave them the courage to be fully present with themselves and their lives, whether the world applauded them or pelted them with rotten tomatoes. Self-acceptance allowed their energy to be fully available to them so they could stand up to each test that came their way.

Today's achievement-oriented culture declares that you have no merit separate from your accomplishments. This is far from the truth. If you didn't have value, you wouldn't exist because our Universe makes no mistakes.

Your life is a purposeful, unfinished masterpiece.

Self-acceptance means accepting yourself just as you are, right now, before you achieve anything new. When your self-acceptance is related to your performance or when you reject some aspect of yourself, you invite your inner critic to stop by for a chat.
Saying "I love and respect myself" when you don't invites your critic to call attention to the lie. Use a different, more effective approach. Just notice the areas in which you still judge yourself. Trying to fix, rather than accept, yourself leads to a vicious cycle in which the critic's voice prevails. Simple awareness, on the other hand, creates spontaneous change.

Self-acceptance does not mean losing your interest in self-improvement. It means your desire to change is no longer fueled by self-criticism, guilt, or shame. Instead, growing self-respect causes you to graduate from one level to the next of your personal self-actualization ladder. You are driven by two very precious factors: the innate human craving to discover more about your abilities and an unquenchable curiosity about the process of your life.

Because you radiate self-respect, positive changes are spontaneous and rapid. You recognize that a simple, splendid secret has been awaiting your discovery. As soon as you stop trying to fix yourself and no longer resist who you are right now, you've already begun to change. The delights of self-discovery are always available to you.

Refusal to accept your faults and limitations is based on false grandiose beliefs bolstered by unrealistic expectations that you should not possess imperfections. This creates self-torture because you tune into screechy internal radio frequencies that feature the carping of your inner critic.

Make another choice. Accept your personal freedom by surrendering to reality. Acknowledge that humans must make mistakes in order to learn. Admit that we always have something new to master. Recognize that we cannot control the whims of the world.

If you are not “failing” on a regular basis, you are probably not learning or growing. Almost anyone can have a perfect performance if they are willing to settle for only doing tasks in which they are already proficient. Dance away from
social programming that says you must be perfect in order to be accepted, respected, or loved. Glide toward self-acceptance with grace and joy.

You're already perfect.
You're as perfectly flawed as the rest of us.

Instead of struggling to maintain the status quo, allow life to mold and shape you with immaculate precision. You’ll receive plenty of payoffs that will make you smile, including less stress, more joy, and a big boost in self-confidence. The rewards are profound when you surrender to the process of your life. You finally allow yourself to receive a backlog of insights and wisdom that life has been poised to provide you.
EXERCISE FOUR

SELF-ACCEPTANCE WITH PERSONAL INTEGRATION PHASE ONE

This life-changing exercise helps you accept and integrate what you do and don't like about yourself. You'll need colored markers, pens or crayons, and paper.

1. Close your eyes and think about aspects of yourself and your life that you do and don’t like.
2. Open your eyes and pick up a pen or pencil.
3. Draw a vertical line down the middle of a piece of paper.
4. On the left-hand side of your paper, draw figures, symbols, or words representing the aspects of yourself and your life that you don’t like.
5. Using a different color, draw figures, symbols, or words on the right-hand side of the page. What you draw on this side of your page should represent aspects of yourself and your life that you do like.
6. Use a new piece of paper and draw a large, simple figure that represents you.
7. Add all of the pieces from your previous two drawings to your new picture.
8. Draw links between the positive and negative characteristics you’ve drawn. It isn’t necessary for the traits you link to be opposites. The objective is merely to accept that you have favorable and unfavorable attributes. Breathe deeply while you say, “Acceptance creates freedom.”
9. We all have shadow material—qualities we aren’t proud of—as well as characteristics we like about ourselves. How do you feel when you realize that the fully integrated you has both favorable and unfavorable characteristics.

The next exercise can be completed immediately after you complete "Self-Acceptance Through Personal Integration—Phase One." Another option is to allow time for reflection and note the rich new insights you gain.
EXERCISE FIVE

SELF-ACCEPTANCE WITH PERSONAL INTEGRATION PHASE TWO

1. Name your negative qualities. Examples: The Judge, The Martyr, The Blamer, or The Know-It-All.
2. Draw these qualities as cartoon characters.
3. Have a conversation with these characters so you can get to know them better.
4. Answer the following questions:
   • Under what circumstances do your negative qualities appear? How do they serve you? What needs do they meet?
   • What would you feel was missing in your life if these negative qualities disappeared?
   • What would happen if you breathed a big sigh of relief and accepted that you’re a student of life . . . like all of the rest of us?
   • What have you learned from this exercise?

Carl Jung once commented that the shadow side of our personality, which we normally try to squelch, is actually 90 percent pure gold.

Once you accept your shadow material, your critic loses its power.

BECOME YOUR OWN HERO

*Just remember, we’re all in this alone.*
*Lily Tomlin*

Although Tomlin’s comment was made in jest, you’re the only person who
can give yourself the self-acceptance that's essential if you are to thrive in the world. Self-respect unleashes a flood of approval within a very fickle world.

The same Mark Twain who considered burning *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* because it "wasn't a very good read" eventually commented to a potential publisher, "and I shall like it, whether anybody else does or not." Twain grew to accept himself and his work by recognizing the value of his internal critic and befriending this aspect of his personality. He learned that we're never comfortable in the world until we travel with a healthy dose of self-approval in our pocket.

Radical self-acceptance is a profound ingredient for creating happiness at work because positive change is impossible without it. Just hold a sincere intention to discover who you are and you'll allow yourself to meet your full potential.

Remember, everyone around you has an inner critic. Other people are busy judging themselves for their own weaknesses. This means that other individuals have far less energy, focus or time to downgrade you than you may have thought. The people who criticize you are usually avoiding feeling their own self-criticism, so just focus on your own feelings and insights. So much peace and bliss await you that it's well worth setting the intention to make this positive shift in your consciousness.
CHAPTER 3
HOW TO TURN YOUR INNER CRITIC INTO A LOYAL EMPLOYEE

The first rule of holes:
When you’re in one,
stop digging.
Molly Ivins

Since there is a time and place for the well-honed skills of the critic, how can we use it to our advantage instead of being stressed by its negativity? The proven techniques in this chapter will help you eventually transform your critic into an internal cheerleader. Although every strategy has potential value for you, I'm sharing a wide array of techniques with you for the two very important reasons:

• In a given situation, you may respond better to one approach than another.
• While you're learning to manage your inner critic, it will act like a chameleon. It will wear many disguises, trying first one technique and then another to distract you. By the time you complete this chapter, you'll be equipped to confidently and continuously counteract your critic’s cunning ploys.

DON'T RESIST

Befriend, instead of battling your critic. When you try to get rid of the inner critic, you set yourself up for additional self-judgment because your attention and
focus magnify the power of the negative voice.

Since what we resist, persists, rather than trying to squelch the critical voice, simply acknowledge it. "Oh, that's the voice of my critic. Hello!" Then continue with your life by shifting your focus.

Most of the time, this works quite well. You're not labeling the inner critic as an evil force. Nor are you tormenting yourself for engaging in negative self-talk. Because you're not denying the critic's existence, there is no battle. Usually, your critic will silently and softly drift out of your consciousness.

The best defense is often no defense. A skilled martial artist often defuses opposition by stepping out of the way when an opponent attacks.

MANAGE THE TIMELINE

If your critic's voice persists with a message like, "But your idea is awful," be as precise as you would with a two-year old who's throwing a tantrum to gain your attention. Briefly tell the critical voice, "I promise I'll attend to your concerns later. Right now, I'm doing something else." You can do this without much effort. You multi-task every day, so you're perfectly capable of placing your inner critic on the back burner without a battle.

As Uhl and Streep indicated, the voice of your internal critic can be a valuable tool for your personal and professional growth. Engage its energy in a positive way until you truly need a critical evaluator to judge your work. Think of the critic as a small, high-energy child who is babbling away while you're trying to complete a project. Occupy its attention by giving it something else to do. Direct its attention to a low-priority task.

In case you want to understand the neuroscience of why this works so well, just know that part of your brain is wired to ensure your survival by blasting you with a dose of heavy criticism, on a moment's notice. When you assign a new task to this part of your brain, you distract it, so you end a torrent of unnecessary criticism. You and I can discuss this for hours because understanding how we're hardwired is fascinating and fun . . . or you can move forward right now, using the proven, playful approaches I'm recommending.

Here's an example: One of my clients created a mental mural of her "Seven Self-Defeating Thoughts." She visualized them as dwarfs under the care of Snow White. Each time a negative thought appeared, she recognized it with respect, "Thanks for trying to help. I'm okay right now, so go play with your buddies."

When you read the bullet statements below, think about why this strategy could also work for you.
When you casually acknowledge the existence of a negative voice, you don't create a civil war inside of your consciousness. Why? Because you're relaxed. When you're tense, you feed your critic's voice.

When you observe your critic from a neutral stance, like an umpire who’s not attached to which team is ahead, the inner critic can never control your life.

When you patiently respond to your inner critic, as if it were a troublesome two-year old who lacked social skills, the negative voice doesn't fight to gain your attention. Then all of your precious energy is available to focus on what you want. Since what we focus on magnifies and then manifests, if you try to push your inner critic away, your focus empowers it.

Discover the joy of realizing that you're truly in charge of your life.

**EDUCATE YOUR CRITIC**

Remember, the critic is simply an old voice inside of you that's trying to protect you from your fear of other people's harsh judgments. Tell your critic (yourself) the following.

- I am now an adult, and I **value** constructive criticism and feedback.
- Because I am no longer a child, I don't believe every negative comment I hear about myself or my performance.
- When I make mistakes, I learn how to take healthy risks and succeed.

When the voice of self-doubt nags at you, "Something bad might happen!" firmly and simply counter what you hear. "By definition, this means something good can also happen." Set your intention and keep moving forward while you practice the techniques in this chapter.

- Your brain responds more to pictures than words.
- You are always feeding your brain. Your subconscious mind strives to manifest the pictures you provide.
- Post a visual reminder of your goal and keep it in plain sight.
KEEP IT CLEAN

Your inner critic thrives on clutter and disorganization. Help yourself stay on target:

• Post your goals in a prominent place and hold your focus on what you want to achieve.
• Clean up your environment, particularly your work area.
• Carefully prioritize.

CULTIVATE COMPASSION

Since negative self-talk unconsciously reinforces feelings of unworthiness and inadequacy, practice self-acceptance. Notice and acknowledge your positive intentions as well as your actual achievements. Cultivate patience, compassion, and understanding for yourself.

You have a guarantee that you'll spend the rest of your life with one person—yourself. Use the next exercise to ensure that you'll be happy with your own company.
EXERCISE SIX

COMPASSIONATE COMMUNICATION
PHASE ONE

When you notice self-talk like, "When will you ever learn?" or "How stupid! You did it again!," ask yourself, "Would I say that to someone I really care about?"

Then respond as if you’re speaking to a child you dearly love or an adult you want to help. Convey an empathetic message to yourself like, "The truth is I really do care about you." Rather than judge your critic (yourself), make a new start toward becoming a better friend to yourself. Recognize your strengths and your unique talents.

Why does the compassionate communication technique work so well? You’re not beating yourself up for judging yourself and you’re not trying to reverse a life-long habit overnight. When you become aware of a negative pattern, it eventually changes on its own.

The next activity can be completed immediately after "Compassionate Communication -- Phase One" or after allowing time for reflection.
EXERCISE SEVEN

COMPASSIONATE COMMUNICATION
PHASE TWO

One way to rewire the old negative feedback loops in your brain is to use new ways to delete comments that dis-empower you. Explore Options One and Two below. Then boost your confidence even higher by designing your own new technique.

Option One
Consciously experiment with your self-talk by varying the tone, pace and pitch of the voice you hear. Turn down the volume. Dramatically modify the quality of the voice. Do this until the voice sounds so much like someone else talking that it seems impossible that the words came from within inside you.

Option Two
Now, enhance the appeal, peacefulness, and pleasure of your internal voice. You'll discover what parents know who sing nursery rhymes to a child. What you say is often not as important as how you say it.

Option Three
Enjoy designing a new option. Have fun playing with bold new ways to celebrate a new you.

When you experiment with the tools in this book, you'll begin to have fun playing with your critic. Move toward pleasure and away from pain. Focus on what you want, not on what you don't want, because two strong opposing forces or beliefs cannot co-exist in your consciousness.

Pleasant experiences and feelings are evidence of your progress. Escalate your confidence by emphasizing your strengths while you manage your weaknesses.

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Since the critical voice is only powerful when you accept its messages at face value, it’s sometimes helpful to identify the source of the negative voice. The verbal abuse is usually a verbatim quote from an old authority figure.

Use the next exercises to begin rewiring negative neural loops in your brain
that support your critic’s voice. My clients are always surprised about how quickly such a simple exercise can produce positive results.
EXERCISE EIGHT

SPEAK TO THE SOURCE

1. Reflect on the image of a person from your past who said negative things about you or your performance.

2. Answer their negative comments out loud. You'll begin to create a richly rewarding new neural association in your brain when you use empowering phrases like, "You're just a blast from the past! I no longer need your approval."

3. Now picture the person who put you down in the past wearing a clown suit and a sad face. Notice that you've exposed their ridiculous game. They have no control over your life unless you grant your permission.

4. Record your new insights.

5. During the next week, notice when you unconsciously accept someone else's critical statements as the truth.

6. Consider a couple of cure-alls if your inner critic is particularly strong: (a) compassion and (b) observing from a neutral state of mind.
   • Call forth your compassion.
   How can you develop compassion for people who are feeling so stressed, distraught or inadequate that they lash out at you? People who love themselves very seldom judge other people as inadequate. They understand that we're all students in The School of Life.
   • Engage your "curious witness."
   As we previously discussed, when you observe your inner critic with curiosity instead of harsh judgment, fear, frustration and anger cannot gain a foothold in your consciousness. Write an example of how you can be as curious as a small child when your inner critic screams for your attention. Examples include deleting dis-empowering questions like, "Why is my inner critic bothering me now?" or "How can I get rid of my critical voice?" Notice the difference in focus when you ask questions like:
   i. "I wonder what I'm learning right now?"
   ii. "I wonder how I'll resolve the challenge that the inner critic is concerned about?"

ARE YOU READY TO ENJOY TRUE PERSONAL POWER?

If you really value peace of mind and personal freedom, take the next step. One by one, forgive every single person who has ever hurled negative comments
toward you. Once you heal these old wounds, they won't fester again. You'll also be amazed at how much energy you gain for your next adventures.

Many valuable new understandings will emerge when you stop dragging your past into the present.

DIRECT YOUR OWN MOVIE

You are in charge of your life now. You can hand your inner critic a new narrative while you choreograph each scene of your personal movie. Assume the internal critic is as tired of the old script as you are. The more creatively you use the next exercise, the more fun and lasting effects you'll experience. You'll distract the critic from its original objective and line of thinking because tremendous focus is required to maintain a state of anxiety.
EXERCISE NINE

WRITE A NEW SCRIPT
STAGE ONE

Neurologically, it’s impossible to experience anxiety and fun at the same time. In this exercise, you'll interrupt a state of anxiety so it can disappear.

1. Listen to your self-talk. As soon as you notice comments like, "How dumb! I can't believe you did that!" add a new sentence such as, "I like the fact that you keep going when the going gets tough!" Write two examples.
   a.
   b.

2. Continue this thread of inner dialog as if you're engaged in a fabulous improvisational theatre experience. Write some additional comments you can make like, "Henry Ford made mistakes, too. He forgot to put a reverse gear on his first automobile, but later he revolutionized the entire auto industry."
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.

Next comes an even more fun part of this reframing exercise. You'll be erasing old negative memories and creating new neural pathways that are packed with pleasant memories. To fully empower your new scene and create lasting changes, remember that your brain is a pattern-recognition machine. It will implement your orders more efficiently from pictures than from words.

Your brain is your faithful servant. It will run whatever software program you feed it when you follow these three guidelines.

• Send vivid, specific, clear messages and pictures to your brain.
• Fully engage your imagination and emotion (your enthusiasm).
• Truly believe that it's possible for your desires to come true.

Exercise 10, "Write a New Script -- Phase Two," will help you integrate this important, life-changing skill. As soon as you begin to write a new life script, you've made a significant, new commitment to yourself.
EXERCISE TEN

WRITE A NEW SCRIPT
PHASE TWO

1. Set aside at least ten minutes. Find a place where you'll be comfortable and undisturbed.


3. Take a few deep breaths to relax and clear your mind. In your imagination, place the person you have envisioned in a supportive environment. (The setting can be personal or professional.)

4. Now, enhance the effectiveness of your creation. Add more and more vivid, clear, and specific imagery. Keep adding and perceiving pleasing details while you hear enjoyable sounds. Finger the textures of your clothes and nearby objects. Smell alluring fragrances. Notice the temperature of the air. Relax and breathe deeply as you continue to intensify your senses and feel your satisfaction with the new scene. Incorporate other physical movements and actions to enhance the new neural pathways you are establishing.

5. You have now reprogrammed your memories. You've constructed a new backdrop for a scene that originally distressed you. Make sure any old disagreeable memories are dull, fuzzy, and insignificant. They should be as boring to watch as a C-grade movie. Reform negative characters from the past (old unpleasant memories) until they are one-dimensional. Make sure their voices are extremely difficult for you to hear.

6. Ensure that the new memories you are building are action-packed, exciting, pleasant, and vivid. Fill them with imaginative, vibrant characters that fascinate you. Saturate the scenes with interesting details and multiple sensations. Continue until only your positive feelings remain.

7. Keep using the methods described in this chapter to secure your critic’s assistance in miniaturizing and storing any remaining unpleasant memories in a file.

8. Close the file and store it in a remote location while you enjoy the new scenes you have created.

9. You have now created positive new neural associative pathways. Anchor your new level of confidence by closing your eyes and feeling your new level of inner peace and confidence as it circulates throughout your body.

You are never limited to acting out someone else’s script.
Why is the last exercise effective? Your critic is just part of you. When you offer choices to your critic, it will choose pleasure instead of pain.

OWN YOUR PERSONAL POWER

We’re all so much more capable than we believe we are. We have incredible power to change our lives in positive ways by making decisions that serve us. Because we can choose our thoughts, we have the capability of being serene and enthusiastic about our lives in spite of almost any circumstance. Instead of judging situations as negative, we can label challenges "learning experiences." This label short-circuits dread because we cultivate curiosity. We become engrossed in the adventure of discovering solutions. We choose to act, instead of reacting. We no longer respond in a socially programmed or unconscious, habitual manner. Instead of being immobilized by emotions, we simply notice them.

The critic thrives when we don’t recognize the choices available to us. The next exercise removes the critic from the driver's seat so you can focus on solutions instead of problems.
EXERCISE ELEVEN

PLAN YOUR OWN ITINERARY

1. Find a place where you won't be distracted.
2. Close your eyes and breathe five deep breaths.
3. Breathe three more deep breaths while you concentrate on making your exhalations longer than your inhalations.
4. Hold a symbol or image of your current challenge in your mind.
5. Breathe deeply again, exaggerating your exhalation. Then imagine exhaling your current reality and inhaling a new scenario. With your eyes still closed, hold an image in your mind that you are the hero or heroine of your life.
6. Envision, in vivid detail, that you are excelling in every test life presents. Notice how good it feels to be taking charge of your life.
7. Feel satisfied with your efforts and breathe deeply again before you open your eyes.

During the next few days, be curious about how positive changes in your life will unfold. Jot down notes when the magic emerges. This will enable you to perceive clues regarding the best actions to take. If you feel anxious, close your eyes and breathe deeply. Recall the images, feelings and other positive sensations related to meeting life’s challenges. This will re-stimulate the new neural pathways you developed in steps six and seven.

During the next few weeks, notice that you're more likely to observe the journeys of your life rather than becoming emotionally distraught about them.

To boost your progress, repeat the exercise above as often as you wish.

QUIET YOUR MIND

Why do the critic's messages cause us so much distress? Our brains tend to magnify negative incoming messages and minimize positive ones. Robert Cooper, author of High Energy Living, concluded that criticisms are shouted to our higher brain center. Compliments, on the other hand, are merely whispered.
Your best defense is to quiet your mind by using the Emergency Mind-Calming Technique in the next exercise. When you're relaxed, the critic has very little access to your consciousness.
EXERCISE TWELVE

EMERGENCY MIND-CALMING TECHNIQUE

In just a few minutes, you can quiet your mind so you can handle critical messages that come into your consciousness.

1. Sit quietly with your eyes closed and your feet flat on the floor.

2. Place your hands in your lap with the end of each finger touching the corresponding finger on your opposite hand. (Your left thumb touches your right thumb, your left index finger touches your right index finger, etc.)

3. Breathe slowly, rhythmically, and deeply.

4. Notice how quickly you feel calm enough to handle challenges.

Why does the last exercise calm your mind so quickly? This technique re-channels neurological energy in a way that causes you to communicate with your authentic self. Because your connected fingertips channel your own energy into your consciousness, the technique also prepares you to handle any criticisms sent your way by other people. This is particularly valuable for sensitive individuals who tend to internalize the negative comments or intentions of other people. (Scientists, including Dr. David Hawkins, author of the groundbreaking book, “Power vs. Force,” have confirmed the effects of an electrical field of up to ten feet away from our body. This field is influenced by the thoughts and intentions of others.)

After you practice the Emergency Mind-Calming Technique a few times, you'll be able to use it standing or sitting, while in a crowd and with your eyes open. You'll be able to calm yourself in the midst of chaos. No one will even notice the process!

IDENTIFY YOUR AFFINITY

It’s easy to identify your aversions to your critic because it grates on your nerves to hear a harsh, negative voice that questions your capabilities. You may not realize that we also have an attachment to our inner critic.
Our inner gremlins have been around for a long time. They reinforce our needs to feel secure and socially accepted. They also support the illusion that we can be totally in control of our lives. This distortion squelches our natural curiosity about how our lives will unfold. Then we cheat ourselves out of experiencing the joy that is always available to us.

Psychologists call the affinity to our inner critic's voice a secondary gain. For example, sometimes we believe the myth that we are incompetent. This gives us a way to rationalize why we avoid taking a risk. We wail, "I might fail!"

We often allow a "Yeah, but . . . " voice to keep us from accepting total personal responsibility for our lives. We don't want to acknowledge how capable we truly are because, when we do, we lose the excuses we use to hold ourselves back.

Much of this challenge is because we are aware of only about 10 percent of our thoughts, beliefs, assumptions and emotions. To illustrate what's going on, imagine seeing a huge iceberg floating on frigid waters. Most of us are quite impressed by the size of the massive chunk of ice. This 10 percent of the visible iceberg represents our conscious mind. The illusion is that we cannot see about 90 percent of the iceberg. It's located below the surface of the water.

In a similar way, most of us focus on our surface emotions, thoughts and beliefs. We fail to gaze beneath the waterline of our conscious minds. We improve our lives when we gain access to what is not conscious. Imagine the enlightenment you'll gain when you can explore the immense number of beliefs, emotions, thoughts and assumptions of which you are unaware. That's one reason I'm sharing multisensory exercises with you.
The next exercise will help you identify your unconscious attachments to the put-down voice of your inner critic.
EXERCISE THIRTEEN

HOW CAN I LIVE WITHOUT YOU?

Write your answers to the following questions. Use your nondominant hand and scribble the first responses that come into your mind, without editing them. Keep your hand moving on the page.

1. What do you think you would lose if you could never—ever—criticize yourself again?
2. How does this relate to your fear of being as capable as you truly are?
3. How does it relate to fear of accepting total personal responsibility for your happiness and success?
4. What would you lose if you could never again criticize other people?

Use the questions in the last exercise to discover any hidden attachments to your critical voice. You'll love the freedom you'll gain. Your awareness will create a spontaneous change process.

FLOW PAST THE CRITIC

If you're giving less than 100 percent to a task that requires your full attention, your critic is probably on stage. Ed Strachar, author of Reading Genius, trains people like you and me to read and comprehend over one hundred pages a minute by helping them silence the critical voice that screams, "That's impossible!" Since humans routinely underutilize their brain cells, up to 95% of their cells may be "unemployed" and function as critics because they have nothing else to occupy their time. As Strachar says, "If you were unemployed, you'd probably lie around watching old movies and chattering, too."

The solution, of course, is to fully employ your brain cells so energy is not available to sabotage your performance. It is the performer within us that takes action and moves toward our goals. The critic procrastinates by analyzing and judging. (Channing Pollack once commented that the critic is a legless man who teaches running.)

Strachar advocates a brain overwhelm strategy to get your inner critic out of the way so all of your brain cells can work toward the same objective. World-class athletes prove the effectiveness of this idea. I've watched gold medalist Bill Uhl compete. As the moments grew closer and closer to his signal at the starting line, his physical appearance altered to the degree that he could have been
mistaken for a distant cousin. His attention was so sharp that you could have stood in front of him, wildly waving your arms and screaming. He would have paid no attention to you. I’ve seen people talk to him or try to massage his shoulders before events. He didn’t even notice. Nor was he aware of encouragement from crowds of spectators.

When Uhl fastens his helmet before he competes, his breathing is deep and steady and his mind is calm. The steady gaze of his eyes portrays 100 percent focus on his sport. There is not a single thought regarding whether he will maintain his Olympic record. The critic doesn’t exist because Uhl is in the zone. He’s in the state of flow that is the best deterrent to self-criticism.

In each moment, all of Uhl’s available brain cells are consumed with his actions. There is no past and no future. He never takes his eyes off the path ahead to check on the progress of his competitors. He wastes no energy chastising or congratulating himself regarding his progress. This intense focus is what empowered him to endure six consecutive days of grueling competition during drenching rains, snowstorms, sleet, and hail in some of the world’s highest mountain peaks, where over 80 percent of the world’s best athletes are usually disqualified on the first day.

You can prove the value of fully employing all of your available brain cells to yourself. Observe competing teams at any level. Notice that the moment they interact with the critic by checking their progress or congratulating themselves, they lose their concentration and must refocus their attention. When we’re concerned with how well we progress, the critic always holds some power over our actions. Uhl’s process illustrates a more effective technique.

When we focus only on the details of acting in each moment, the final outcome does not enter our minds. We are in the zone—a state of flow. Self-judgment cannot enter our consciousness.

HELP THE CRITIC MEET ITS NEEDS

The best business leaders determine what employees need and want and how to use their skills for the good of all concerned. In the case of your critic, you are the team leader. The following story illustrates one of the most effective ways you can deal with your critic.

A young boy named Tim had nightmares of a huge green monster chasing him. Night after night, Tim cried out until his father came to comfort him. At first, Dad tried to convince Tim that the beast didn't exist. When that didn't work, Dad asked, "What if you ask the monster what he wants?"

The next night, Tim mustered his courage and asked the creature, "Why do
you keep coming into my dreams?"

The answer amazed Tim. "I don't want to scare you. I'm just lonely. Can't we play?" The monster instantly became a wonderful imaginary playmate. For years, he and Tim shared fun adventures.

Many of my clients have used a similar procedure, asking their internal critics, "What do you want from me?" These clients then formed a friendly pact with their former enemies. Eventually, they assigned them different job descriptions. One client complimented his critic, "You're quite a powerful force. Instead of criticizing my work, I could sure use your help thinking up new ways to do my project." Although he was amazed at such an easy solution to his problem, it makes perfect sense.

Because your critic originated as a defense mechanism attempting to shield you from the criticism of other people, it is your strong and loyal servant. Begin right now to program your critic to become one of your most valuable resources. It's unfortunate that people have been conditioned to waste precious energy trying to squelch the dramatic strengths and vitality of the critic.

**UNLEASH YOUR INNATE INNER COACH**

Consider the critic to be a well-intentioned friend who hasn't yet learned how to word its criticism in a constructive fashion. Ask your naysayer, "What are your positive intentions?" Since you want your critic to be nonjudgmental, give it the benefit of a doubt. Listen to its concerns without finding fault. You may discover that your negative voice is simply trying to gain your attention. It's probably trying to help you or encourage you to be more careful as you work toward goal achievement.
EXERCISE FOURTEEN

TURN YOUR CRITIC INTO YOUR INNER COACH

You can reframe your inner critic into a wonderful coach who lives inside of you and communicates with you by using kind, supportive language. You can assign specific tasks to this part of your consciousness.

- Begin by changing your definition of the critic from a nag to a powerful, faithful ally.
- Ask your critic to identify and lead you to new resources.
- Invite your new inner coach to feed you positive suggestions for accomplishing your goals.
- Imagine that your internal coach has become the best friend you could ever imagine.
- Listen when your new helper describes your strengths and capabilities. This is firm evidence that your shift in perception worked!
EXERCISE FIFTEEN

DISCOVER THE POWER OF STRENGTHS-BASED LANGUAGE

You are so powerful that the words you choose to use will either pump you up or deflate you. To gain control over your future, become conscious of the language you think and speak. When you use words that reinforce your abilities, you implant the suggestion in your mind that you are a very capable person with the ability to make choices.

When you say, "I'll try to do this task," you're telling yourself, "I may or not follow through. I'm supposed to do this but I really don't want to." You're telling yourself to keep trying instead of achieving.

Scientists have proven that using the word try makes your body weaker than using words like can and will. Say sentence #1 below out loud. Record how you feel in your shoulders, gut and heart before you exhale deeply. Then say sentences #2 and #3 out loud. Notice the difference. What is your body telling you?

1. "I'll try to complete my task."
2. "I have a plan to complete my task and I'm committed to my plan."
3. "I can and will complete my task."

Your subconscious mind functions in a very literal manner. It follows your directions in precise detail. Therefore, in spite of your conscious intentions, when you tell yourself you'll try to do something, your faithful unconscious sets up a situation in which you keep trying . . . and trying . . . and trying. Do you see how we frustrate or empower ourselves with specific words and phrases?

Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right.
Henry Ford

Another great example of the power of language concerns words that indicate personal choice. When you pepper your speech with should's, could's, ought to's, and have to's, your subconscious perceives that you aren't choosing to complete an action. The result? You feel dis-empowered, stressed, and guilty.

You don't have to lie to yourself to get things done. If "I can't" is accurate right now, insert a sense of future because this will empower you. Instead of saying "I can't do this assignment," you can say, "I haven't yet done the assignment." The future-oriented phrase, "I haven't yet . . ." introduces hope while retaining honesty.
Use language that supports your highest intentions instead of inviting your critic to participate in the dialogue.

The next exercise will help you identify and avoid "absolute phrases" that your critic uses to dis-empower you.
EXERCISE SIXTEEN

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

1. Notice and record common negative phrases your critic throws your way, like, "You're always late" or "You never think quickly enough on your feet."

2. Identify the absolute words in the phrases you wrote in #1 above, like always and never.

3. Make a decision to change dis-empowering absolute phrases when you talk to yourself. Practice inserting "exceptions language" by using words such as sometimes and occasionally.

4. Record how you feel different when you change the examples above to "I am only late sometimes," and "I sometimes think quickly on my feet."

5. Continue to explore this technique during the next few days. You'll discover the advantages of abandoning absolutes. Your self-talk will become much more positive.

RECOGNIZE THE LINK

Since your critic is an integral part of you, there is a direct relationship between the degree to which you judge other individuals and the degree to which you judge yourself. In fact, one of the best ways to dis-empower your negative voice is to stop rating other people harshly.

This is not as difficult than it may sound. Since what you resist persists, simply observe your negative evaluations of other people as well as your self-judgments.

Don't try to change your patterns and don't beat yourself up for being critical. Just recognize your behavior. Situations change spontaneously once we become aware of them.
Use the next exercise to gain an elevated level of self-awareness. Once you discover your human "mirrors", you'll spontaneously shift your patterns over time. This will encourage your inner critic to take a long nap.
EXERCISE SEVENTEEN

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

Criticism of other people reflects our own lack of self-acceptance, so use the instances in which you judge other people as an opportunity to gain more self-awareness. When I notice I'm judging someone else, I use it as a trigger to respond in this way.

"Oh, I'm still judging other people for being ________. Since we're all mirrors for each other, this must be a reminder that I'm sometimes still ________. I appreciate this reflection. Now I don't have to waste energy denying that I'm sometimes still _________."

Fill in the blanks above with the names of things you judge about other people. For example, we often judge and label others as:

- insecure
- thinking in a rigid, in-the-box, stuck manner
- frightened
- angry
- unmotivated
- insensitive
- arrogant
- projecting personal issues on others
- easily offended
- etc.


Remarkable positive changes occur when we stay open to the wisdom available in all of our experiences, even when a situation is unpleasant. The insights we gain eventually create bliss.

Although we have little or no ability to change other people's behavior, we can be grateful to them for helping us perceive ourselves more accurately. We can remind ourselves not to criticize other individuals.

REFRAME

Assume that interacting with your critic is similar to interacting with someone
who is constantly critical. One secret of thriving when you’re around difficult people is to elevate your own energy by having a clear intention to learn from the experience. You turn adversity into opportunity when you focus on your own behavior instead of trying to change another person (an impossible task).

This nonjudgmental attitude changes the energy involved in the situation. Those who play the role of a difficult person begin to relax and feel secure. This is important because people are often difficult because they don't feel at ease. It only makes sense that this technique will also work with your internal critic. It's worth repeating that we created this part of our personality because we wanted to avoid being criticized or punished by other people. (We didn't feel safe and comfortable.)
EXERCISE EIGHTEEN

DISCOVER THE TRUTH

1. Imagine that you've just finished a delicious picnic lunch by a crystal clear lake in a beautiful mountainous setting. The surface of the water fascinates you. You have never seen more accurate reflections in a body of water. The lake is so still that it is virtually impossible to tell the difference between the live trees and wildflowers that border the lake and the perfectly detailed, reflective picture shown in the water.

2. Close your eyes. Imagine looking at your own image mirrored in the surface of the pristine water. For the first time in your life, your self-image is totally accurate. You perceive your current and potential abilities as well as your physical characteristics.

3. Inhale slowly and deeply. Declare out loud, "The inner critic isn't present so I finally see my true self!" (Making a positive statement out loud begins to transform a negative thought pattern in your brain to a positive one.)

4. When you exhale, say to yourself, "I also perceive situations in my life as they really are."

5. Continue this activity for several minutes and then sit silently. Concentrate on breathing deeply.

6. Repeat the above exercise during the next few days. Notice differences in how you perceive yourself, your life and your choices.

Our inner critic's carping ceases when we focus on what we can learn from every challenge. We feel safer and we're more aware of our capabilities.

DO NOT LET PRIDE INVITE THE INNER CRITIC TO YOUR PARTY

Your inner critic thrives on self-doubt and insecurities. Many people don't understand that a need to convince other people that we are a cut above average is based on a nagging fear we are substandard. Acting better than other people backfires. This "superiority" state of mind attracts your inner critic. It prevents the level of joy and success we all want.

A state of humility produces personal freedom. It is so rewarding to comprehend that we are all on an equal footing. When we know we're all both students and teachers for each other, we're filled with curiosity about what life will present next.

Excessive pride is truly a red flag. It indicates feelings of inferiority that are
ineffectively masked by a façade of superiority. Like a gang member who has newly won a battle, we must constantly fight to stay on top. All the while, we’re painfully aware that we'll inevitably fall at some time from a very fragile pedestal. We deplete our energy by engaging in elaborate postures designed to maintain our image and deny our fear.

When you strive to convince yourself and other people that you already know everything you need to know, your mind is closed. You sacrifice the joy that curiosity produces. A hunger to discover what we don't know is the only assurance that we'll learn new things quickly and effortlessly so we can take our next steps in life.

Pride produces analysis paralysis. It freezes forward motion. When you're afraid to risk failure, you constantly analyze everything you could do instead of enthusiastically participating in the improvisational theatre we call "life."

To combat this problem, turn inward, relax and reach a state of inner harmony that will rebalance you. (Use the Emergency Mind-Calming Technique you learned earlier.) As soon as you calm your mind, your critic's incessant chatter will subside. The answers you crave will spontaneously emerge from the most highly developed part of yourself.

MAP THE NEW YOU
You can also invite new possibilities by creating a mind map. Because this is a multisensory activity in which you use both your left and right brain, your mind will be wide open to solution-focused thinking. The mind-mapping process is also void of judgment. There is not a right or wrong way to proceed. Every thought and idea is worthy so it's very difficult for your internal censor to belittle your efforts. Your inner critic falls asleep and you glean valuable information regarding a path that will lead toward more joy and success.
EXERCISE NINETEEN

CHART YOUR MAP TO THE NEW YOU

Do a mind map now by completing the following sentence stem:
"The best way for me to move forward when my critic is active is to . . ."

Mind maps were originally developed by Tony Buzan, author of *Use Both Sides of Your Brain* (1974, NY: Plume Publishing). Mr. Buzan's focus was to enhance creative problem-solving. I've expanded the mind mapping concept to help you calm your inner critic so you can create a bold new level of self-awareness and joy. For complete examples of how you can do this, see pages 343-353 of "Joy on the Job", [www.JoyOnTheJobBook.com](http://www.JoyOnTheJobBook.com).

Mind mapping is a wonderful way to re-pattern the habits of your critic. Eventually, your critical voice—originally your creation and now an unconscious habit—will no longer be able to cause you difficulty.

USE YOUR INTUITION

There are times when "no thinking" is more effective than thinking. A pleasurable and highly effective way to dissipate negative self-talk is to tap into your intuition. When you’re quiet, still, and tuned into your sixth sense, it's virtually impossible to be upset. You effortlessly receive clear guidance from the free resource of universal intelligence.

To achieve this state, instead of battling when your critic babbles, simply acknowledge a negative comment, "That's one thought." After each derogatory thought, make a statement, "Okay, now I'm ready for a new idea." Focus on your
breathing and critical thoughts will evaporate. You'll achieve a very peaceful state because you'll reconnect with your true self.

**STAY ON THE MOVE**

A good way to invite the critic to criticize is to spend your day on your posterior staring at a computer screen. The ill effects on your body—from back pain to eye problems to repetitive strain injuries—will amplify the noises of the inner critic. Prevent this by adding more movement into your day.

When possible, get up and move around at least once an hour when you’re working at your computer. Also protect your eyesight and avoid tension by blinking often. Occasionally shift your gaze to distant points and then back to your computer monitor. Use part of your lunch or dinner hour to take a walk.

Geniuses have long recognized the importance of movement to oxygenate the body and feed the brain. Legend has it that Thomas Edison worked from two desks at a time. He wanted to make sure his body was moving frequently because he knew movement stimulated his brainpower.

Because physical movement keeps your mind alert, you can easily notice when the inner critic tries to worm its way into your consciousness. When your mind and body are active, you’re much less likely to stall out with doubt. When the voice of doubt begins to emerge, you’ll rev up again without hesitation.

**ALIGN YOURSELF**

The more you physically align your body, the more balanced you are emotionally and mentally. Opportunities for the inner critic to catch you off guard dramatically diminish. Studies have indicated that Pilates, yoga, tai chi, and qi gong create greater self-awareness, which deters the inner critic. Each of these practices also enhance your posture, which also boosts your confidence and well-being.
EXERCISE TWENTY

USE YOUR BODY TO STOP SELF-DEFEATING THOUGHTS

Use this exercise to deflect your critic by decreasing body tension and improving your alignment. Create lasting effects by gradually building your awareness. The superior effects of a slow and deliberate approach are similar to the way steady weight loss outlasts a quick-fix diet.

If you want to obtain the greatest value, be gentle. Be particularly cautious doing any of the stretches or movements described below if you have back problems. In fact, be careful when doing all stretches so you avoid hurting your back or traumatizing any injured or tense areas.

1. Begin this exercise with a few minutes of deep, conscious breathing (as relaxing as possible) while sitting or standing. Although standing is preferable, you can do this exercise while sitting at your desk.

2. Hold your attention on your belly.

3. Invite your body to move in ways that relieve tension. Stretch in feel-good ways, always directed by your body.

4. Inhale and raise your arms toward the sky as you gaze upward. Then relax and exhale as you lower your arms to your sides.

5. Raise your arms at 90-degree angles to your sides. Rotate them in slow, six-inch circles (forward or backward).

6. Increase the width of the circle rotations while you focus on deep belly breaths.

7. Inhale and interlace your fingers behind your neck.

8. With your fingers interlaced, extend your arms as high as comfortable. Stretch your upper torso while leaning to your left side. Relax and then repeat the motion, reaching toward your right side.

9. Disconnect your fingers and lower your arms while exhaling deeply.

10. Then re-lex-x.

11. Bend at the waist and extend your arms toward the ground while you inhale.

12. Hold your breath for a moment. Then exhale slowly and deeply while you imagine each of your vertebrae relaxing, one at a time. If you’re in a sitting position, relax your neck by letting it hang limply between your legs.
Continue to relax by repeating the exercise as often as you like, breathing deeply. Allow your body to direct you to stretch this way and that as you focus on deep belly breaths. Emit deep, soothing sighs. You’re eliminating tensions and reducing extraneous motions that might otherwise take you off center. Notice your awareness growing while you align your body.

Because you’re now calmer and more aware, it will be difficult for the critic to enter your consciousness.

When you’re relaxed and you feel balanced physically, emotionally, and mentally, your inner critic cannot command your attention. You are free.

**BREATHE IT OUT**

Deep abdominal breathing while you focus on each inhale and exhale will also shift your focus away from your inner critic’s negative messages. My clients love the next exercise. As one said recently, "This is such a simple exercise that I was surprised how quickly I saw some pretty amazing results. The first thing I loved is that the exercise is so relaxing! After just a few minutes of doing it, I feel so confident and empowered that my inner critic can't get my attention. Since it’s quick and easy, I use it often."
EXERCISE TWENTY-ONE

BREATHE IN YOUR NEW NOW

1. Observe your breathing while you inhale and exhale from deep within your abdomen. Your objective is to deeply relax.

2. Visualize a ball of energy in the middle of your body one inch below and one inch behind the navel.

3. As you gently and slowly inhale through your nose, visualize the air traveling all the way from your nose to the ball of energy in your belly. Imagine that you're filling a collapsed beach ball with air.

4. When you exhale, visualize the air flowing away from the ball of energy, as if to collapse the ball. At the end of each exhalation, slightly lift your abdomen up and toward your spine.

5. Repeat the process until you notice how much more relaxed you feel with each complete breath.

Here's just one reason you'll find it especially effective to combine a breathing exercise with visualization. Using multiple senses in this way greatly reduces anxiety because you're focusing your attention on the present moment.

Your inner critic's voice is almost always related to the past or future. If you want to calm your inner critic, focus on the present moment because it's the source of your power. You cannot influence the past. It's already over. However, you have total control over what you think and feel in this moment.

EXPLORE MORE CREATIVE TECHNIQUES

You've been reading about how to work with your mind and body simultaneously. Experiment with other ways to silence your critic's negative chatter while you're retraining it to become your loyal employee. Be creative.

For example, if you're healthy, you might consider cleansing your body and mind simultaneously. You can do this while experiencing the heat of a sauna. As long as your doctor doesn't advise you to avoid a sauna, the discomfort caused by the heat can shift your focus from mental chatter to your physical body in a healthy way. This can increase your openness to new insights about how to elevate your happiness.

As you continue to change and grow, your inner critic-cleansing strategies will become easier, faster, and more enjoyable.

We talk to ourselves more than we talk to anyone else, yet much of our self-
talk has been unconscious and negative. Most of us would never talk to other people in the hateful way we’ve unconsciously allowed our inner critics to address us. Set the intention to make choices that will validate and empower you.

Conscious choices are an eternal source of your joy and personal freedom. Begin now to give yourself the gift of conscious choice.
A life of reaction is a life of slavery, intellectually and spiritually. One must fight for a life of action, not reaction.

*Rita Mae Brown*

The two approaches most often recommended for combating the critic are cognitive restructuring and positive affirmations. Both techniques are based on the assumption that your intellect can resolve emotional insecurities. You've been told to correct your "stinking thinking" and "fake it 'til you make it." You've been advised to rip out and shred the heart of your poor, befuddled critic.

Experiences with thousands of clients during many years have made it abundantly clear that telling the critic to shut up and go away could possibly provide short-term relief. However, *this would be the best case scenario.* Until you fill whatever temporary void you create with self-acceptance and positive, multisensory sensations you can recall on a moment’s notice, your inner critic will return for another round of combat.

In this book, you’ve practiced a much wider array of tools than you normally see in a self-help book. Below are the reasons I’ve helped you explore so many cognitive, intuitive, body-mind, and spiritual techniques.

- You are a holistic person with emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual needs and qualities. When you're relaxed and you feel balanced physically, emotionally, and mentally, your critic cannot step into your consciousness.
- Multisensory approaches and techniques that use your imagination, intuition, and physical body are your most powerful and long-lasting solutions.

Unless you enjoy civil war, please don't sap your precious energy battling with one of your own voices. Use the techniques described to befriend your inner...
Your inner critic is such a powerful force. Use the techniques you’ve explored in this book to harness this awesome power to your advantage. Your inner critic has already demonstrated its ability to work long and hard on your behalf. Discover how much fun it is to turn your critic into a faithful internal assistant.

Identify your attachments to the negative voice of your inner critic. Once we become aware of how we unconsciously cling to derogatory comments by our internal critic, we make a very powerful positive shift. We become more willing to own our greatness. Then self-sabotage vanishes like a feather in a hurricane.

Experiment with a variety of the approaches detailed. Discover what works and repeat successful approaches. Always use solution-focused approaches. They are far more effective than strategies that emphasize problems. Focus on what you want instead of on what you want to avoid.

Give yourself the gift of inner peace by accepting the human experience of having flaws and weaknesses. Then work with your inner critic to enhance your strengths.

Struggling to improve yourself is drudgery. It invites your inner critic to mercilessly poke and prod you. Self-acceptance is freedom. When you lighten up on yourself and enjoy self-discovery, your life becomes an exciting, rewarding journey. You enjoy endless, effortless positive changes. You let go of the nagging compulsion to prove your value to other people. You lose your ability to join hands with your inner critic in a self-flagellation ritual. Self-consciousness transforms into self-confidence. Mountains become molehills.

When you hear your inner critic asking questions like, "What will I do if I fail?" just answer, "I'll gain feedback!" Breathe deeply. Ask yourself empowering questions like, "How can I best use my knowledge, strengths, connections, and skills?" Use the multisensory, mind-body techniques in this book to reinforce the parts of you that perform. You'll automatically stop rewarding the parts of your personality that endlessly critique you.

Pesky internal programs don't have to prohibit you from discovering profound pleasure and success. Patience, practice, and perseverance pay off, especially when you combine them with self-acceptance and humor. One day, you'll notice that your inner critic has become your inner coach. You'll appreciate its superior abilities for critical thinking. You'll also realize that self-doubt is a natural part of every new phase of your personal and professional development.

Most of my clients have learned to celebrate when self-doubt emerges because they know insecurities rear their heads when we inch closer and closer to goal achievement. When we stand toe-to-toe with our self-doubts and peer into our own eyes, we resolve insecurities one by one, on a permanent basis.
Just remember that your inner guardian fights change. It clings tenaciously to familiar unpleasant situations. It’s the part of your personality that is still trying to protect you from your own magnificence! Because your guardian is fear-based, it still doesn’t want you to comprehend just how capable—how powerful—you truly are.

Our worst fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

Marianne Williamson

(quoted with permission by Nelson Mandela in his Inaugural Speech)
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**CHAPTER THREE**


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• Enjoy two case studies with clues for leadership personnel of all types.
• This book is related to the bestselling book, “Joy on the Job.” You gain proven, practical strategies that have worked for thousands of employees and organizations around the world who wanted more fulfillment and happiness at work.
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Doris Helge, Ph.D.

You may have seen "The Joy and Success Coach" interviewed on "The Today Show," CNN, and NPR. Doris Helge, Ph.D. is also author of other #1 Bestselling books like "Joy on the Job" and "Transforming Pain Into Power." She has helped thousands of people like you claim more happiness and success. Some of her books have been published in many foreign languages.

Named “One of the Top Ten Coaches in America” at an event at the FedEx offices in New York City, Dr. Doris, has a unique intuitive ability to perceive the hidden core of what’s blocking your happiness and success. Sign up to attend free teleclasses at www.TeleclassesWithDoris.com.

A licensed, Master Certified Coach, Doris previously served on faculty at three universities before beginning her coaching and consulting career. She also received excellent evaluations regarding training at companies as large as Microsoft and keynoting audiences as large as 3,700 participants. Today, Doris coaches clients around the globe by phone and Skype.

The material Doris presents in this ebook and in international teleclasses is drawn from decades of work with clients like you and research in 21 diverse organizations. Download your free ebooks at http://FreeJoyOnTheJobEbooks.com and sign up for free teleclasses at http://TeleclassesWithDoris.com.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To all of my clients. You continuously inspire me with your courage and your sincere desire to become all you can be while on Planet Earth. Thank you for the privilege of listening to you as you describe your challenges. I'm honored to collaborate with you as you design Your New Life Story. You are all so very appreciated.

To everyone who field-tested the exercises in this book. Your thoughtful efforts guaranteed that today's readers and clients can also stop fearing their negative inner voices. Now, they can gain control over their inner lives . . . easily . . . with rich insights, humor and joy. Like you, they can now soar to even higher levels of success and happiness.

Thank you again for carefully testing each exercise so that people around the world can enjoy the same inner peace and confidence that you gained from using this work.
DEDICATION

This book is dedicated with immense love to my Soul Mate, Life Mate and best friend, William. Even after 20 years of the most rewarding connection I can imagine, the purity of your heart and the breadth of your love and wisdom still amaze me.
Pre and Post-Test: Is Your Inner Critic Sabotaging Your Happiness or Success?

Exercise One
Get to Know your Gremlin

Exercise Two
Consider the Source

Exercise Three
Productive Thinking

Exercise Four
Self-Acceptance Through Personal Integration -- Phase One

Exercise Five
Self-acceptance Through Personal Integration -- Phase Two

Exercise Six
Compassionate Communication -- Phase One

Exercise Seven
Compassionate Communication -- Phase Two

Exercise Eight
Speak to Source

Exercise Nine
Write a New Script. Stage One

Exercise Ten
Write a New Script. Stage Two

Exercise Eleven
Plan Your Own Itinerary

Exercise Twelve
Emergency Mind-Calming Technique

Exercise Thirteen
How Can I Live Without You?

Exercise Fourteen
Turn Your Critic Into Your Inner Coach
Exercise Fifteen
Enjoy the Power of Strengths-Based Language

Exercise Sixteen
Watch Your Language

Exercise Seventeen
Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

Exercise Eighteen
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Exercise Nineteen
Chart Your Map to the New You

Exercise Twenty
Use Your Body to Stop Self-Defeating Thoughts

Exercise Twenty-One
Breathe in Your New Now
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"THIS IS A WONDERFUL BOOK. You'll love having so much essential information presented in a fun way. I also love the illustrations."
Elizabeth Hendricks, Ph.D., Psychologist, Portland, Oregon

"Wow! This book blew me away. This is so powerful. It's like gold! If your inner critic bothers you, read this book and find out how YOUR mind works. I love all the exercises you can do on your own. This book is so easy to read and understand. It's amazing! Great work, Doris!"
Adriana Nicholson, previous client, Gallup, New Mexico

"Conquer Your Inner Critic" is a practical guide you'll use to overcome your fears and achieve anything you want to. I couldn't stop reading it! You'll discover so many new ways to think about your inner critic! I used to think my inner critic was my enemy. Now I have a whole new mindset. Doris' book gave me the courage to finish my most creative projects and do my bucket list. Thank you Doris!"
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"Doris books are in a prominent place in my house. I'm always referring to them because they are packed with useful information. No matter how often I read Doris' books, I always learn something new and see a challenge in a different light."
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Kelly Matthews, Chicago, Illinois

"Doris, you are such a gift! I'm truly grateful and indebted to you for your skill and generosity. Your wisdom was exactly what I needed. Now, when "that old uneasy feeling" emerges in my gut, I know exactly what to do. I am so much happier, more productive and successful because of what I've learned with you. Thank you, again."
Dawn Lewis, CEO, Caffe Craze Company, Malvern, Pennsylvania

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Guillermo Sadde, Analyst, Los Angeles, California

"I can't begin to express my gratitude for helping me discover the tools that I now use to attain success. I am a better person for having you as my coach. Thank you 100 times over!"
Kevin N. Jackson, Jones Lang LaSalle Brokerage, Inc., Florida

"I started my journey with Doris feeling very uncertain that I really could create a successful business. She helped me see my strengths and expand on them. My work is greatly enriched because of coaching by Doris."
Kalia Kelmenson, Founder, Maui Mind and Body, Maui, Hawaii

"Doris, you have a fantastic knack for steering me down the road where I wouldn't be able to go alone. Your coaching is far beyond what I expected! The seed you help me discover causes the ripple in my mind. Then it grows and flows out to become something more. I'm truly grateful!"
Michael Bowen, MBA, Engineer, Doha, Qatar

"With her amazing compassion, intuition and caring, Doris helped me transform the painful parts of my life into happiness and loving relationships. Negative people no longer knock me off center!"
Michelle Easton, City of Boston Public Works Department

“Working with Doris is like taking a magic carpet ride. Sometimes when I peek over the edge, it's breathtaking, but I never, ever feel as though I'm going to fall. With her sincere compassion and incredible intuition and insight, Doris provides a safe haven from which to explore potential and possibility. What a gift she is to you and me!"
Clare Seffrin Bond, "The Road to Clarity"

“When I worked with Doris, I got a promotion I’d wanted for a long time. Now, each day at work is more exciting.”
Jeanette Geiman, CPS, Office Manager, Shell Oil, Houston, TX