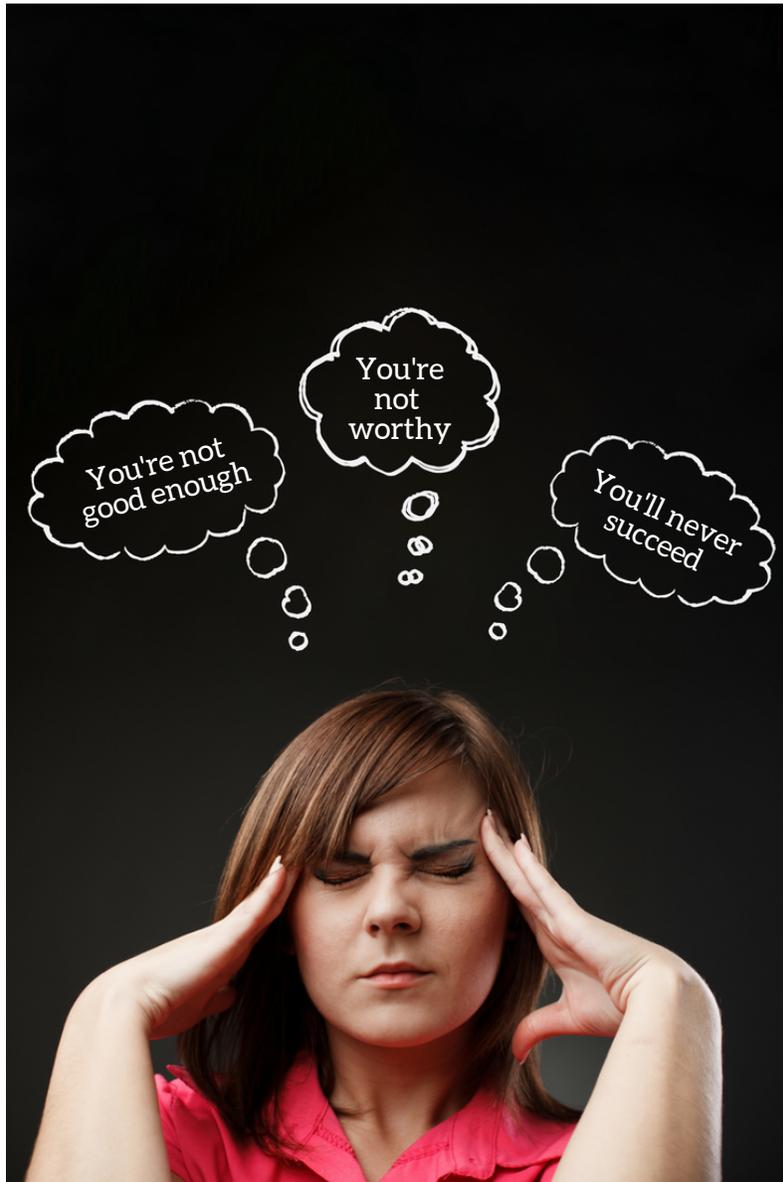


MAKE FRIENDS WITH YOUR *INNER CRITIC*



Alison Deutsch and Wendy Van Besien are Certified Professional Coaches who have each experienced significant transitions, multiple times. For Alison, it was the challenge of relocating with her young family – four times over a period of ten years, both domestically and overseas. Wendy, a 3-time cancer survivor found her life in upheaval and crisis which led her on a quest for acceptance, forgiveness, and purpose.

Utilizing research-proven assessments, tools, and practices, Wendy and Alison help women overcome the stress, fear, and uncertainty that occur when going through transition. Clients gain peace of mind as they develop confidence in their ability to handle anything that comes their way.

WE ALL HAVE AN INNER CRITIC LIVING IN OUR HEAD - THAT INTERNAL CHATTER THAT TELLS US

- Our idea is not worth sharing
- Our opinion isn't important
- We're not ready to take the next step

It's an evolutionary hardwired safety instinct that triggers automatically to protect us from emotional risks like hurt, failure, criticism, or disappointment.

TO GAIN OUR ATTENTION, THE INNER CRITIC CREATES HARSH ARGUMENTS THAT CUT TO OUR CORE:

- You're not good enough
- You're not worthy
- You'll never succeed

If we're not aware of the true purpose or underlying power of this inner critic, it causes us to withhold our ideas, suppress our true feelings and conceal our deepest desires.

This voice speaks most loudly and harshly when we expose ourselves to a real or perceived vulnerability – something that triggers fear of embarrassment, rejection, failure or pain. **When this inner voice moves from realistic protector to harsh critic it causes us to ruminate over risks and worst-case scenarios, making us paralyzed by fear and self-doubt.**

According to Tara Mohr in her book "Playing Big" there are guideposts that can help us to differentiate between the harsh inner critic and realistic thinking.

Inner Critic	Realistic Thinking
Makes definite pronouncements about the situation	Asks curious questions about the situation
Has no interest in actual evidence	Interested in gathering evidence to inform conclusions
Thinks and speaks in black and white terms	Is able to deal with complexity and gray areas
Asks binary yes/no questions	Asks helpful open-ended questions
Is repetitive, keeps you stuck	Is forward-moving
Focuses on problems/areas of lack	Seeks solutions
Speaks in an anxious tone	Speaks in a calmer tone
Speaks from a fundamental stance of self-critique	Speaks from a fundamental stance of self-support

The good news is you don't have to dig deep into childhood wounds to find the roots of your insecurities or figure out how to permanently banish that critical voice in your head.

All you need to learn is to say to yourself, "I hear that voice, I know it's not the voice of truth, and I choose not to take direction from it."

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE VOICE OF SELF-DOUBT ARISES



1 | Notice and Name It.

The most important step is to elevate your awareness that the voice you're hearing is your inner critic and separate it from your core true self. When you perceive it's not your realistic voice, but your overactive protector trying to get your attention, simply say to yourself, "Oh my inner critic is having a little freak out right now". Noticing and naming the voice of self-doubt helps train your mind that this harsh inner critic is one of the many voices within you - not the primary one.

2 | Don't Argue With It.

Though your initial instinct might be to make the inner critic the enemy and get angry at it - this strategy often backfires. Not only will you be fighting with a part of yourself, it often strengthens the critic's power because what it's really trying to do is to get your attention. Think about how many times you've yelled at that voice "leave me alone" or "be quiet" - how well has that worked? By getting angry, you often inflame it because it's feeling ignored.

3 | Compassionately Listen To It.

As you hear what it's saying, try to understand its motives. Remember the intentions of this voice are pure – it's seeking to protect you from harm, its harshness is a result of overzealousness. So take time to check in and compassionately ask it-

- “What are you trying to protect me from?”
- “What are you most afraid of?”

4 | Acknowledge and Validate It.

Getting in touch with the root of the critic's aims, you can assuage its fears with a compassionate response “Thanks for your concern, but I've got this.”

Acknowledging and validating gives the inner critic reassurance you've received its message allowing it to calmly recede into the background because it feels there is nothing to fear.



As you follow these steps over time, you'll find that your relationship with your inner critic will begin to change, but it will never truly go away. However with your new level of understanding that it's a well-intentioned ally, one day you might even learn to value its friendship.

If you want help navigating your own reset, please contact us for a complimentary consult.

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