

FREEING THE CRITICAL MIND INTO SELF ACCEPTANCE

"Releasing critical mind is a door that, once opened, can lead to great healings in your life." Maggie Adkins

If you hear yourself judging others, you DO judge yourself also!

If you are critical of yourself, you may as well be driving through life with your brakes on!

One of the challenges of working with the critical mind is that quite often we don't even hear it until it has already done its dirty deed. It is inside us, just beyond reach, and we are so used to it that oftentimes we don't even hear it. Then we wonder why we don't feel so good. Critical mind can affect every area of our lives and over an extended period of time, I believe it can actually make us sick. As a by-product, it also costs us our self esteem. In case you haven't noticed, most therapies fail miserably at getting inside that voice and shifting it into self acceptance. EFT excels at discovering, acknowledging and changing that critical mind. Read on.

Where does the critical, judging mind come from?

For many of us, critical mind has taken on the voice of a critical parent, sibling, friend, authority figure, or other significant person - usually in childhood. We don't have the tools as children to discern that someone else's criticism may have nothing at all to do with us and everything to do with that other person.

If we are judged often enough as children, there is a good chance we will take on those judgments as truth and repeat them in our own mind over a lifetime – or until we discover and apply EFT. We can become so good at being hard on ourselves that we often do a better job than the original person.

Can you have critical mind without having low self esteem?

Each of these conditions adds fuel to the other. I can assure you that if you have a significant amount of one, you have both. I can also assure you that if you have an active critical mind, it is holding you back in at least one area of your life.

Can we just judge others and not ourselves?

A resounding "NO!" An interesting thing about critical mind is

that it may tell us that we only judge others or that we only judge ourselves. If you judge yourself, you DO judge others. If you judge others, you DO judge yourself. The judging mind has no way to separate you from anyone else. There is a third piece to this triangle that most people don't realize and that makes it even more interesting. If you judge, you are also looking at others to see if they are judging you. You can now add rejection and abandonment to the possible consequences of an active critical mind.

We may never know how critical mind has held us back from being all we can be. The good news is that EFT can replace the voice of critical mind with kindness and self acceptance. I have used the following program and programs similar to it with many of my clients with excellent results.

This is an EFT gentle awareness practice that can shift that critical, judging mind fairly easily. There are two main components - tapping consistently for a designated period of time and keeping track of what comes up in a journal. You can probably do a lot of this program on your own, however, there is usually a stumbling block that is difficult to discern on your own. You may want a skilled EFT practitioner to guide you through those portions of this life changing program.

The first step is to make a commitment to yourself to do this practice for at least two weeks. Have a beginning date and an ending date. You can always extend the ending date, but it helps some people to know that there is an ending date out there. After the initial two week commitment, you can evaluate your progress and alter the program to fit your needs.

Get a small journal and label it "Judging Journal." It has to be small so you can carry it everywhere you go.

Every time you hear yourself judging yourself or others you do 2-3 rounds of EFT (I use the Short Cut version) on whatever the judging voice has just said. Here are some examples:

“Even though I am being hard on myself.....”

“Even though I’m judging myself again.....”

“Even though I said I was stupid again.....”

“Even though I just said I was worthless again.....”

“Even though I just told myself I couldn’t do anything right again.....”

“Even though I get so angry when I tell myself I’m stupid.....”

“Even though I’m judging (her/him/whoever) again,.....”

“Even though I’m my worst nightmare, just like (name that person).....”

After doing 2-3 rounds of EFT, you write whatever the judging voice said in your journal. If you can’t tap immediately, you can write it in your journal first. Just make sure you do both – tapping and writing it down - each time.

One client told me that this practice made her judge herself. Tapping on the critical mind simply makes us more aware of the judging we have been subjecting ourselves to. The judging was already there – you are just catching it at its game. And the good news is that the more conscious you become of that judging voice, the sooner you catch it and the sooner you can tap it away and discover and cancel out core issues.

You may remember things that happened as a child. Either tap on them when you remember them or write them down in your “Judging Journal” for later. As always, the more specific you can be with EFT, the more powerful it can be. If you remember specific times that these criticisms were thrown at you, please tap on them as time allows. It is important to write them down if you can’t tap on them right away. If you remember several, ask yourself which is the most intense and tap on that. Then see what happened to the others – tap them away one at a time. This is one of those important plateaus where it can be very helpful to have a professional EFT practitioner guide you through the maze.

After at least a week of tapping and making notes, you will want to study the hidden gems in your journal. As you uncover important contributions to critical mind, make notes regarding what influences and circumstances have led you to these criticisms. As you go through the journal, ask yourself probing questions such as the following:

Is there a pattern?

What judgments are you laying on yourself most often?

Which judgments hurt the most?

Whose voice originally said those things?

Where did I learn that?

What or who does that remind me of?

What circumstances brought me to this judgment about myself?

Can I recognize the source of this/these judgments?

The answers to those questions can give us some very rich tapping.

You have now made some discoveries about that critical mind of yours – it is not really yours at all. You have been led to believe it is who you are, but it is really conditioning. As Gary Craig might say in his Palace of Possibilities, it is simply the “writing on your walls.” It is not who you are!!

It may be that you now recognize someone else’s ideas or voice. If you recognize that someone else’s critical voice has taken residence in your mind, you will want to tap on that, being as specific as possible where and when you can. If there is more than one person, please tap on each person individually. The more specific you are, the more powerful this can be. If both mom and dad contributed to critical mind, tap on each in separate EFT rounds. It may be that you can’t heal one of them totally until you tap on the other, though. In this example, mom and dad are different aspects of a bigger picture. Here are some suggestions:

"Even though I have this mom voice in my head....."

"Even though I have this dad voice in my head....."

"Even though I have taken on mom's criticism so well, I'm actually better at it than her....."

"Even though mom taught me this, she was probably taught the same thing....."

"Even though dad screamed at me that I was stupid....."

"Even though mom didn't make dad stop screaming and just stood by and let it happen....."

"Even though I don't know where this came from and I want to know....."

"Even though I took this on as a child, it does not serve me anymore and I choose to feel good about myself."

"Even though I believed her/him, it isn't the truth. It is safe to let this go now."

After the initial two weeks, I suggest you take a short break in the process and then determine if you want to continue for another two week commitment. The reason I suggest two weeks is that most people can make an agreement to do this for two weeks and then keep that agreement with themselves. My experience is that it is a lot more difficult to just start this without an agreement with yourself as to specifically what you are going to do and when it is going to end. Remember we are dealing with critical mind and that mind can give you a hard time about stopping too soon, not doing it enough, failing at this too and other nauseating ideas. If you know you are going to do this for two weeks and then look at the results, there is less to blame yourself for and there is something to be proud of. You will have kept that commitment with yourself. And I feel sure you will notice some shifts.

I am not suggesting that everything will be healed in two weeks. You may want to take a few days off after the initial two weeks and then make a new commitment with yourself to continue for another two weeks. I personally feel that it is important – even nurturing - to take a bit of space when doing an intense practice like this. You can continue like this two weeks at a time, with some time in between for relaxing until you feel a significant shift in your daily life and outlook.

And if you don't keep that commitment to yourself, when did being hard on yourself help anything? If you didn't finish this, feel you didn't do it right, whatever the judgment is, tap on that also. Gentleness is all important to this practice. The whole idea is to stop being so hard on ourselves!!

A teacher of mine used to say that it is not how we fall down that matters – it is how we pick ourselves back up. Here is some suggested tapping just in case you fall down:

"Even though I did it again – blew it – couldn't do it right....."

"Even though – once again - I couldn't keep my promise to myself....."

"Even though I can't finish anything – they're right, maybe I am stupid....."

"Even though I'm really angry at myself....."

"Even though I don't deserve to have a better life....."

Some Additional Help – Make A Contract With a Friend

"A Contract With a Friend" can be a very helpful addition to releasing critical mind. I only set up this up for a week. It can always be renewed and it is much easier to renew it than to explain why you want to stop it. You will want to see how this works with the person you have chosen before you commit to a longer period than a week. Make this easy on yourself.

This is the contract. Every time your friend hears you judge yourself or someone else, the friend simply says, "Judging." Since you don't always hear the judging voice inside you, especially in the beginning, this can be very powerful and can help you to hear that voice and start shifting it much more quickly.

Your friend does not lecture you or make other comments. This is an important part of the contract. Your friend just says "Judging," and you respond in whatever way is appropriate for you. Sometimes it will be

with grace, sometimes it will be with frustration. Be sure to warn your friend that you may or may not respond with pleasure.

Your friend may have something of their own to work on. You might help them by doing the same thing, either with judging or perhaps with rescuing or being a procrastinator or perfectionist. "A Contract With a Friend" can help with lots of conditions, not just judging. This wonderful practice comes from the work of Stephen and Ondrea Levine and I thank them.

Critical Mind Can Impact Your Whole Life

My experience is that working with critical mind in this way makes the rest of the work we do together much easier. When you take that burden of judgment out of any condition, many things can change.

If you have questions about this, want information about the book in progress on this work, or want to share the results of doing this process, please feel free to contact me.

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