

Learning to Love Criticism

Four Areas of Our Personality:

- I know and you know
- I know but you don't know
- You know but I don't know
- No one knows

Reasons We Don't Like Criticism:

- We get embarrassed
- We get our feelings hurt
- We get intimidated

What Happens Physically When We are Criticized:

- Shoulders tighten
- Breathing gets shallow
- Alarm bells begin to go off
- It actually triggers a nerve in the body

What Happens Psychologically When We are Criticized:

- Our mind races
- Our mind puts up a shield and mounts a counter attack
- Our ego gets so defensive that it controls the flow of information to our brain. Your ego begins to sensor what you hear.

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Studies show that when others criticize us, we drop them from our lives. We then go straight to our cheerleaders to complain or get reassurance.

Most of us have **support network** like this, but what we really need is a **challenge network**.

Challenge Network (Culture):

A group of people that you trust to help make you better. They tell you the stuff that you don't want to hear but need to hear it.

“Without criticism we will never improve.”

Illustration: Diver

A diver performed what he thought was a good dive, only to see the judges scores disagreed. A diver can't judge his own performance while flipping and twisting in mid air. After reviewing the tape he agreed with the judges. They had a different perspective than he did.

As a challenge culture we embrace criticism. We want to be better so we want to hear it.

As a challenge culture criticism is a guest, not a visitor.

As a challenge culture we care more about results than image.

How To Love Criticism:

1. **Cultivate a Growth Mindset**

A fixed mindset leaves no room for improvement. A growth mindset is open to feedback for growth and improvement.

2. **Cultivate a Value for Failure**

We don't like criticism because we don't like failure. We don't like to be wrong. We will never learn or get better without failure.

3. **Cultivate Humility**

Those who are humble learn the most. They are the most teachable. Humility helps you accept criticism because you are no longer trying to be right all the time to elevate your own image.

“It's ok to say that you know that you don't know.”

What To Do With Criticism:

1. **Rate Yourself on How You Received It**

When someone gives you feedback they have already evaluated you. They are now judging if you are open or defensive. This determines how teachable you are.

2. **Let Someone Else Rate You**

Get feedback from your challenge network. Those you trust to give you truthful feedback.

3. **Listen, Thank, Apply**

The best way to prove yourself is to show you're willing to improve yourself.

How to Offer Criticism:

1. State Your Desire to Be Helpful

It is easier to accept criticism if you know it's meant to help you. When you experience the benefit of criticism you will crave it.

2. Eliminate "Don't take it personally"

It's ok to be human and have feelings. We can hurt one another and we all care about what we do. We should not take it personally because we care.

3. Offer Suggestions

Don't leave me stranded. Make me better with suggestions on how to improve.

4. Offer Support

Provide support and continual feedback. Provide a clear path to the end goal.

*teaching based on TED Talk Worklife Podcast "How to Love Criticism."