



September 2, 2008

## DEALING WITH THE CRITICS

### How are you with criticism?

Criticism is usually felt when someone gives us the benefit of their opinion. The problem is that the giver often gives their opinion without asking for permission to do so. It is this unsolicited opinion that seems to create great resistance within us and the feelings that go with it.



If the opinion giver seeks permission by saying, ***"Can I tell you what I hear/see when you say that?"*** or ***"Can I tell you how I feel about that?"***, somehow we seem to put up a different set of antennae and take time to listen to what is being said. I suggest that when someone asks permission you are being given a choice, and that feels quite different inside to being told, ***"That won't work"***, ***"You're wrong"*** or ***"You're talking rubbish"***. You are being given a choice and you can in fact say, ***"No, I don't want your opinion"***. However, if we choose to listen, there is a fair chance that we will learn something. Even if we only learn one thing that causes us to change only one thing, that thing could be the difference that makes the difference to what we want to achieve.

The next time you are about to give your opinion, stop, think and ask permission to say it as you see it and feel it, and notice the different response that you get. By doing this you will in fact be creating an open feedback culture where everyone feels free to give and to receive information. Imagine the difference that can make.

If you find yourself on the receiving end of someone's opinions, stop, think, and ask yourself, ***"What can I learn from this?"***, ***"What is there in this information that I need to pay attention to?"***

I often say, ***"Opinions are like belly buttons – we all have one"***

So, the next time you are feeling the sting of criticism remember,  
**BELLY BUTTONS!**

### Do you have an inner critic in your mind?

Those external critics out there have nothing on the one that resides in your own mind. There isn't a critic out there who can pull you down, unnerve you and destroy your self belief quite like the one in your mind.

If the voice in your mind is giving you constructive criticism, **fine**; eg ***"Ok, you've learned what not to do, what are all the things you can learn from this?"***  
**Now that's useful!** If the voice is giving you a hard time and beating you up, eg ***"You stupid idiot you screwed up yet again – there you go, you're the same old failure – you never get it right"***, **this is not supportive.**

The good news is that you can **choose** to listen to this voice in your head or you can **choose** to **fire it!**

### Here is a useful exercise to help you banish your internal critic

- Notice where you make the voice. Does it seem to be coming from inside your head or outside? Does the voice come from the front, the side, or the back of your head?

- Extend your arm and stick out your thumb.
- Wherever the critical voice is, start to move it down your arm to the tip of your thumb, so it is now speaking to you from there.
- Next, slow it down and change the tone of it. Make it sound sexy, or speed it up so it sounds like Mickey Mouse.
- You will find that it sounds much less threatening and that this will enable you to Change your Perception of this internal voice and achieve the success you deserve.

**You are the master of your universe – so master it!**

Sincerely,

Sheena Wheatley

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