

Meeting My Inner *Critic*

Noticing harsh thoughts and choosing a kinder reply.

Most of us have an inner voice that judges, doubts or criticises us. This inner critic often develops for understandable reasons, sometimes as a way of trying to protect us from mistakes, rejection or disappointment. Its tone, however, can be harsh and leave us feeling anxious, low or stuck. This worksheet will help you notice harsh self-talk, understand it more clearly, and practise a kinder, more balanced inner voice.

Does your inner critic *sound* like this?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ You always get this wrong. | ☐ You should have done better. |
| ☐ Who do you think you are? | ☐ Everyone else copes, why can't you? |
| ☐ You are not good enough. | ☐ Do not bother, you will only fail. |

In my own words, it says: _____

Getting to know your *critic*

When does it show up *most*?

Situations, people or times of day.

How do I feel when I hear it?

In my body, my mood and what I do next.

What is it trying to *protect*?

I would *name* it...

Naming it can help you step back from it.

Choosing a Kinder *Reply*

Practise a more balanced inner voice.

The aim is not to silence your inner critic, but to notice it and respond as you would to a good friend: honestly, fairly and with care.

Notice

1

I am noticing the thought that...

Name it

2

There is my inner critic again.

Question it

3

Is it true and helpful? What would I tell a friend?

Reply

4

Answer in a way that is kind and realistic.

My inner critic says	My kinder, balanced reply
<i>You messed up that presentation. You are hopeless.</i>	<i>It did not go as planned, and that is disappointing. However, I did my best and I prepared well. I can learn from this.</i>

Kind phrases to *try*

- I am doing my best with what I have.
- Mistakes help me learn and grow.
- I can be imperfect and still be worthy.
- This is hard, and I am handling it.

Would you like more *support*?

Sometimes a harsh inner voice is rooted in past experiences and can be hard to shift on your own. Counselling offers a safe space to understand your inner critic and build a kinder relationship with yourself.

Learn more at
www.marlynna.com

This resource is for general reflection and is not a substitute for professional support. Therapy sessions are not for emergencies. For immediate crisis support or urgent medical care, please contact your local emergency services.