

Seven Types of Inner Critics

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In our study of the Inner Critic, we have identified the following seven types of Inner Critics that people are troubled by:

Perfectionist

- This critic tries to get you to do things perfectly.
- It sets high standards for the things you produce, and has difficulty saying something is complete and letting it go out to represent your best work.
- It tries to make sure that you fit in and that you will not be judged or rejected.
- Its expectations probably reflect those of people who have been important to you in the past.

Guilt-Tripper

- This critic is stuck in the past. It is unable to forgive you for wrongs you have done or people you have hurt.
- It is concerned about relationships and holds you to standards of behavior prescribed by your community, culture and family
- It tries to protect you from repeating past mistakes by making sure you never forget or feel free.

Underminer

- This critic tries to undermine your self-confidence and self-esteem so that you won't take risks.
- It makes direct attacks on your self-worth so that you will stay small and not take chances where you could be hurt or rejected.
- It is afraid of your being too big or too visible and not being able to tolerate judgment or failure.

Destroyer

- It makes pervasive attacks on your fundamental self-worth.
- It shames you and makes you feel inherently flawed and not entitled to basic understanding or respect.
- This most debilitating critic, comes from early life deprivation or trauma.
- It is motivated by a belief that it is safer not to exist.

Conformist

- This critic tries to get you to fit into a certain mold based on standards held by society, your culture or your family.
- It wants you to be liked and admired and to protect you from being abandoned, shamed or rejected.
- The Conformist fears that the Rebel or the Free Spirit in you would act in ways that are unacceptable. So it keeps you from being in touch with and expressing your true nature.

Taskmaster

- This critic wants you to work hard and be successful.
- It fears that you may be mediocre or lazy and will be judged a failure if it does not push you to keep going.
- Its pushing often activates a procrastinator or a rebel that fights against its harsh dictates.

Inner Controller

- This critic tries to control your impulses: eating, drinking, sexual activity, etc.
- It is polarized with an Indulger Part—an addict that it fears can get out of control at any moment.
- It tends to be harsh and shaming in an effort to protect you from yourself.
- It is motivated to try to make you a good person who is accepted and functions well in society.