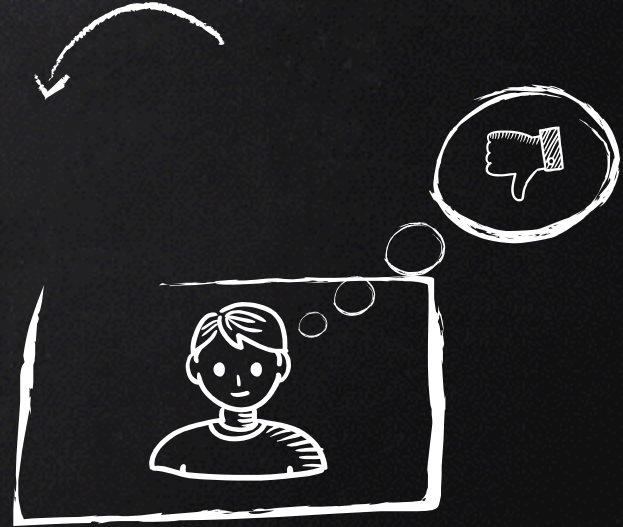




OVERCOMING ~~INSECURITY~~



with Lisa Firestone, Ph.D.



LISA FIRESTONE, PH.D.

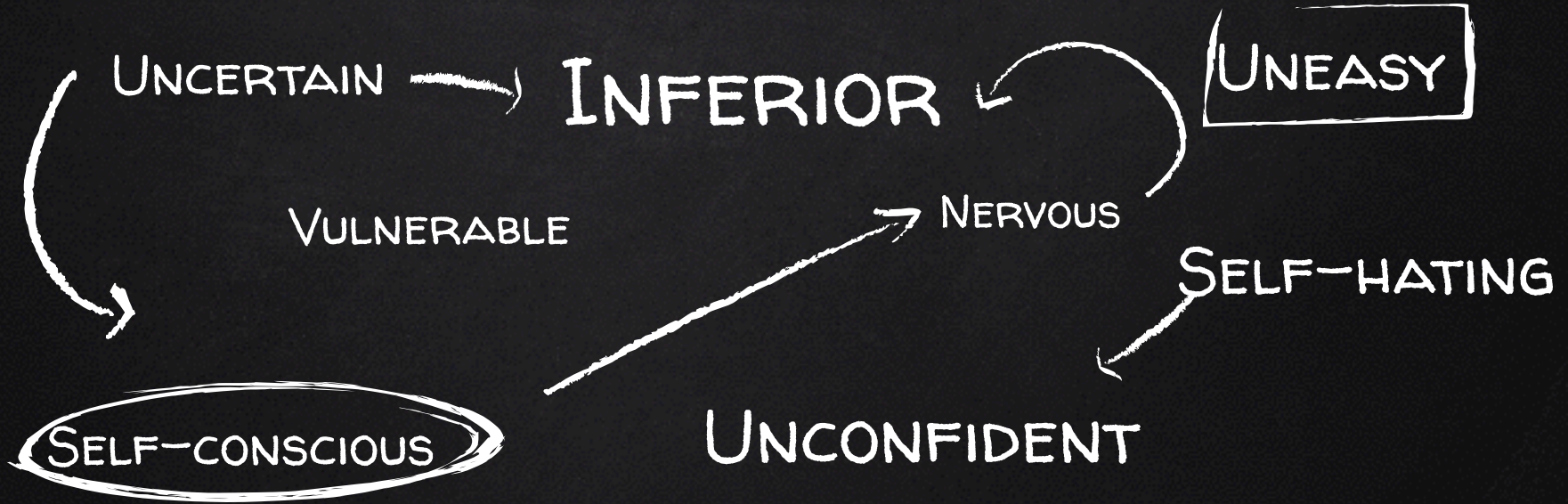
DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION –

THE GLENDON ASSOCIATION

SENIOR EDITOR – PSYCHALIVE



WHAT IS INSECURITY?





IMPORTANCE OF INNER SECURITY

Many people lack a sense of inner security, so they try to find security in their relationships, jobs and accomplishments, but it's only when we feel secure within ourselves that we're able to enjoy more closeness, success and happiness in our lives.



POLL #1

How often do you or your clients experience insecure thoughts?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- A few times a year
- Never



THREE PARTS TO THIS WEBINAR



1.

THE ROOTS OF INSECURITY





ATTACHMENT STYLE

What is insecure attachment?

SAFE +

SEEN +

SOOTHED =

SECURE



Dr. Daniel Siegel



“To achieve normal self-experience the infant requires his emotional signals to be accurately or contingently mirrored by an attachment figure...When a child cannot develop a representation of his own experience through the caregiver’s mirroring interactions, he internalizes the image of the caregiver as part of his self-representation. We have called this discontinuity with the self the ‘alien self.’”

– Peter Fonagy and Anthony Bateman



PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT IN CHILDREN

Category of Attachment

- Secure
- Insecure – avoidant
- Insecure – anxious/ ambivalent
- Insecure – disorganized



Parental Interactive Pattern

- Emotionally available, perceptive, responsive
- Emotionally unavailable, imperceptive, unresponsive and rejecting
- Inconsistently available, perceptive and responsive and intrusive
- Frightening, frightened, disorienting, alarming

ATTACHMENT AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION

- Attachment insecurities are associated with deficits in neural structure associated with emotion regulation.
- Infant attachment security is associated with distinct emotional regulation strategies at even 20–30 years old.



Sources: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352250X18300071>

http://socialinteractionlab.psych.umn.edu/sites/socialinteractionlab.dl.umn.edu/files/media/girme_et_al_emotion_2020.pdf



People who don't have somebody who's consistently there for them feel insecure and people who felt like they had to take care of themselves feel insecure underneath that, because they feel a desperate need to control.

EMOTIONAL SECURITY

Higher maternal warmth
linked to greater emotional
security in children.



Source: Alegre, Albert & Benson, Mark J. & Perez-Escoda, Nuria (2014).
Maternal Warmth and Early Adolescents' Internalizing Symptoms and
Externalizing Behavior. *The Journal of Early Adolescence* vol. 34 no.
6 712-735. <http://jea.sagepub.com/content/34/6/712.abstract>



PARENTAL CONFLICT

Parental conflict can lead to emotional insecurity in children.



Source: Kouros, C. D., Merrilees, C. E., & Cummings, E. M. (2008). Marital Conflict and Children's Emotional Security in the Context of Parental Depression. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 70(3), 684–697. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00514.x>



PARENTAL DEPRESSION

Parental depression can lead to emotional insecurity in children.



Source: Cummings, E. M., Cheung, R. Y. M., & Davies, P. T. (2013). Prospective Relations between Parental Depression, Negative Expressiveness, Emotional Insecurity, and Children's Internalizing Symptoms. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 44(6), 10.1007/s10578-013-0362-1. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-013-0362-1>



CRITICAL ATTITUDES



ATTITUDES THAT CAN LEAD TO INSECURITY

- Tear down/ Criticism
- Build up/ Overpraise
- Pressure/ Expectations



ATTITUDES WE'RE EXPOSED TO

- The way we were seen by our parents or influential caretakers
- The way our parents saw themselves

This kid is out
of control



You're so
incompetent!





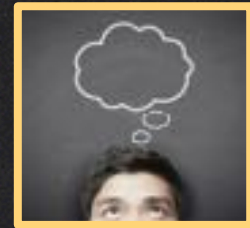
SEPARATION THEORY

ROBERT W. FIRESTONE, PH.D.

Integrates psychoanalytic and existential systems of thought

Two kinds of emotional pain:

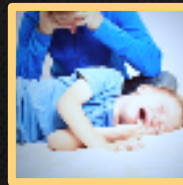
Core Conflict:



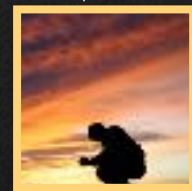
UNDEFENDED



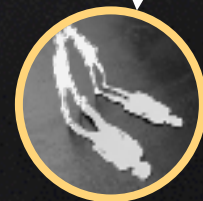
DEFENDED



INTERPERSONAL



EXISTENTIAL



FANTASY BOND



CRITICAL INNER VOICE

REAL SELF VS. ANTI-SELF



THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE

FEIFFER

by JULES FEIFFER

I AM A CRITIC.



I AM NOT A BOOK, ART
THEATRE, FILM, MUSIC
OR DANCE CRITIC.



I AM A
BERNARD
CRITIC.



A RESIDENT CRITIC, WORKING
INSIDE THE HEAD OF A BERNARD.



HE STANDS UP I TELL HIM
"YOU'RE LATE." AT THE OF-
FICE I TELL HIM "YOU'RE
BORING." AT PUBLIC APPEARANCES
I TELL HIM
"YOU'RE
BORING."



WHEN HE FALLS IN
LOVE I TELL HIM
"YOU'RE NOT GOOD
ENOUGH."



ON OCCASION HE CAN'T
TAKE ANY MORE OF
MY VIEWS AND CHARGES
ME OUT OF HIS HEAD.



SO I RIP OFF MY
MASK AND SAY
"IS THAT THE WAY TO
"TALK" TO YOUR
MOTHER?"



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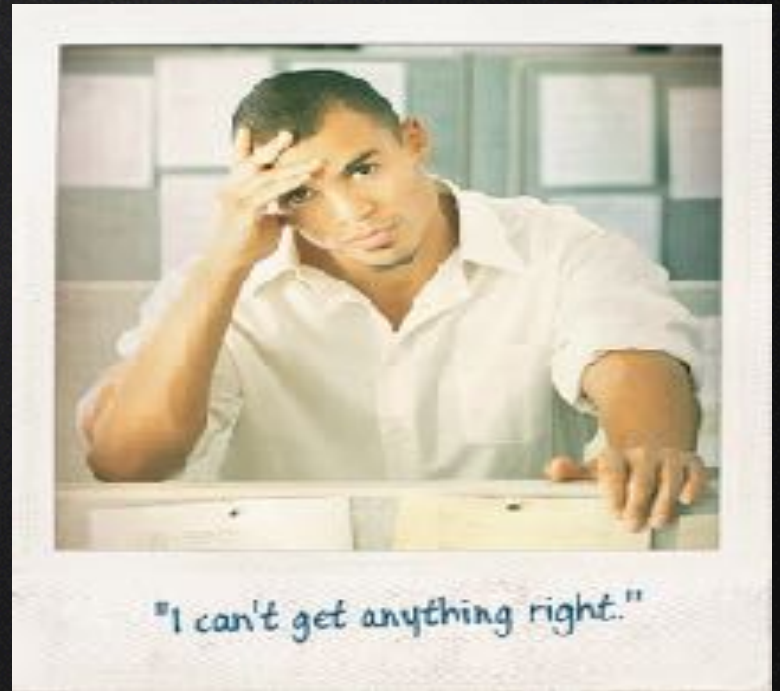
2.

HOW DOES INSECURITY AFFECT US?



WHAT IS THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE?

The critical inner voice is a well-integrated pattern of destructive thoughts toward ourselves and others.



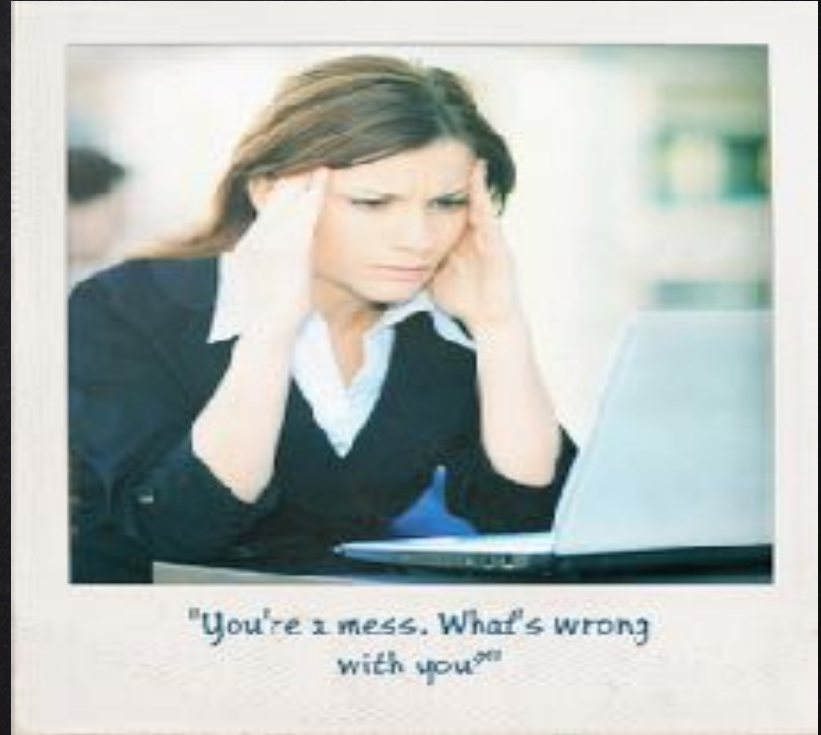
WHAT IS THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE?

The nagging “voices” that make up this internalized dialogue are at the root of much of our self-destructive and maladaptive behavior.



WHAT IS THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE?

The critical inner voice is not an auditory hallucination; it is experienced as thoughts within your head.



WHAT IS THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE?

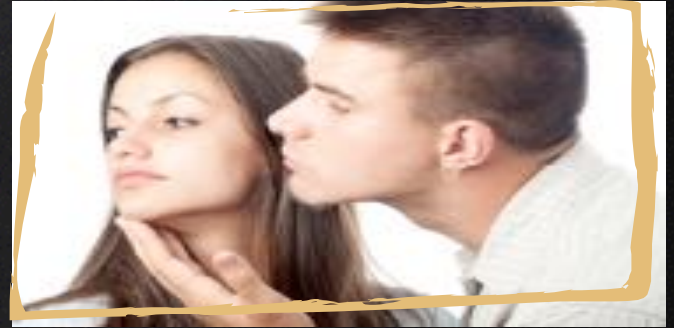
This stream of destructive thoughts forms an anti-self that discourages individuals from acting in their best interest.



"Just give up already!"

HOW DOES THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE AFFECT US?

- The critical inner voice is an internal enemy that can affect every aspect of our lives, including our self-esteem and confidence, our personal and intimate relationships and our performance and accomplishments at school and work.
- These negative thoughts undermine our positive feelings about ourselves and others and foster self-criticism, inwardness, distrust, self-denial, addiction and a retreat from goal-directed activities.



COMMON CRITICAL INNER VOICES

About Yourself:

You're ugly.

You're stupid.

You're not like other people.

You'll never succeed.

About Your Relationship:

She doesn't care about you.

He's going to leave you.

You'll always be alone.

About Your Career:

You'll never be successful.

You're going to get fired!

No one likes you here.

HOW THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE LEADS TO INSECURITY

✗ Self-punishing thoughts

“You’re so bad at this.
You’ll never get
anything right. Just
give up!”

✗ Self-soothing thoughts

“This is just too much
pressure for you. Don’t
worry about it. Just
stop trying”

POLL #2:

Do you or your clients commonly express having these critical inner voices?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

INSECURITY IN RELATIONSHIPS

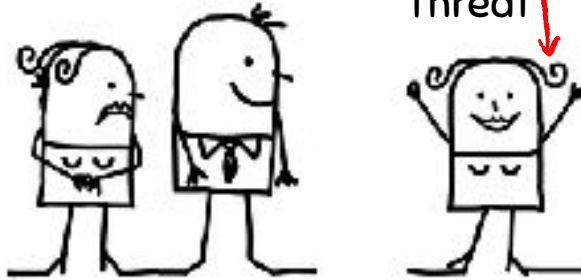
- Secure Attachment
- Dismissive Attachment
- Preoccupied Attachment
- Fearful Avoidant



TRIGGERS FOR INSECURITY



SECURE = OKAY



ATTACHMENT SYSTEM
ACTIVATES



REACTION

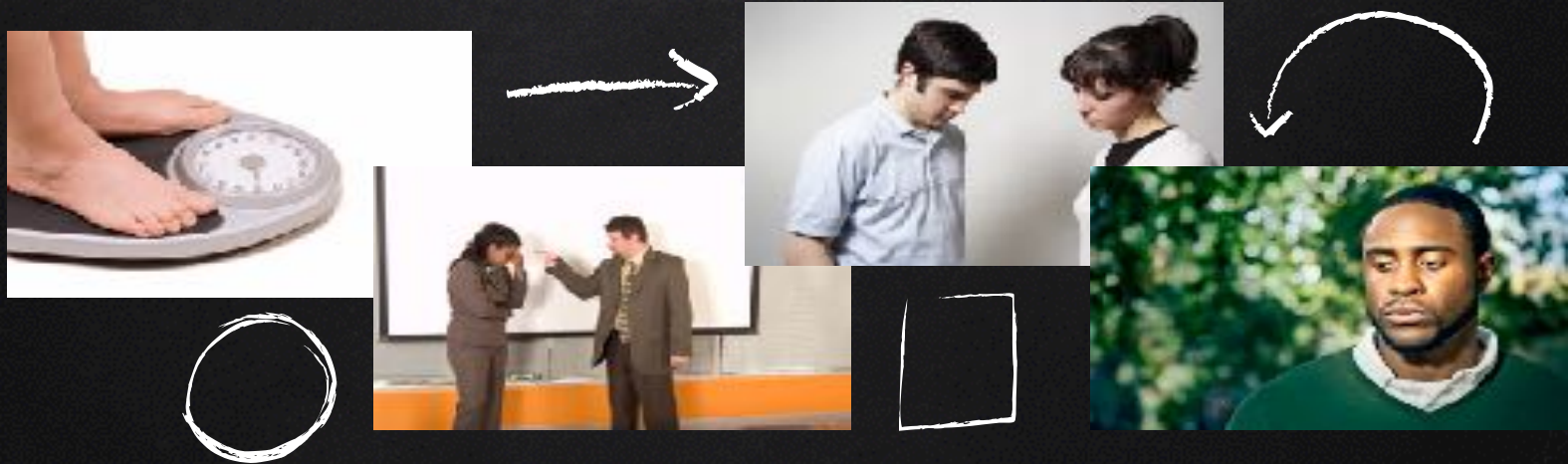
3.

HOW TO CHALLENGE INSECURITY



IDENTIFYING THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE

1. Recognize the events that trigger it
2. Recognize the specific outside criticisms that support it
3. Become aware of times you may be projecting your self-attacks onto other people
4. Notice changes in your mood



IDENTIFY NEGATIVE THINKING

Are you...?

- **Filtering:** You magnify the negative aspects of a situation and filter out all of the positive ones.
- **Personalizing:** When something bad occurs, you automatically blame yourself.
- **Catastrophizing:** You automatically assume and anticipate the worst.
- **Polarizing:** You see things only as either good or bad. There is no middle ground.

Source: Mayo Clinic

CRITICAL INNER VOICE ATTACKS

CHANGE "I" STATEMENTS TO "YOU" STATEMENTS.

Self-critical attacks
as "I" statements

Self-critical attacks
as "you" statements

Examples:

I'm so unattractive. → You're not attractive.

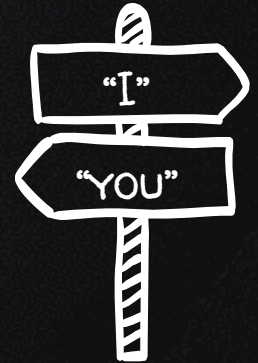
I'm a failure. → You're a failure.

No one loves me. → No one loves you.

INNER VOICE AS AN EXTERNAL ENEMY

Why you should put your “voices” in the second person:

- Become clearer and more easily recognizable
- See them more like an enemy than your real point of view
- Increases your awareness of these thoughts
- Bring up clues about your feelings and your past
- Feel more compassion for yourself and take your own side
- Unearth negative core beliefs about yourself



TWO SIDES OF THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE LEADS TO TWO KINDS OF ACTIONS:

Actions that seem
self-destructive:

Actions that seem
self-protective:

Example:

You're so fat. You should
just starve yourself.

You've been stressed all
week. Just have a drink or
two. You deserve it.

CRITICAL INNER VOICE VS. THE REAL YOU

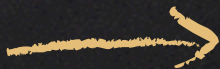
RESPOND WITH A MORE COMPASSIONATE AND
REALISTIC VIEW OF YOURSELF.

My critical inner voice
as “you” statements

The real me
as “I” statements

Examples:

You're so incompetent.



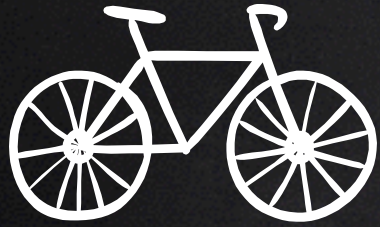
You must be stupid.

You're making a fool of
yourself. You should just hide.



Sometimes I struggle with
work, but I catch on
fast and do a good job.

No one is laughing at me.
People enjoy my company.



A PLAN FOR ACTION

What are some actions dictated by your
critical inner voice?

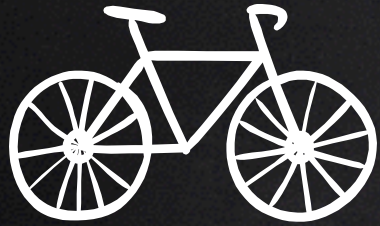
Examples:

“Have another piece of cake.”

“You should go away and leave everyone alone.”

“No one will ever really love you, so don’t get too close.”

“Don’t go after that promotion. It will never happen.”



A PLAN FOR ACTION

What are some actions that reflect the real me?

Examples:

“I want to eat healthy and take care of myself.”

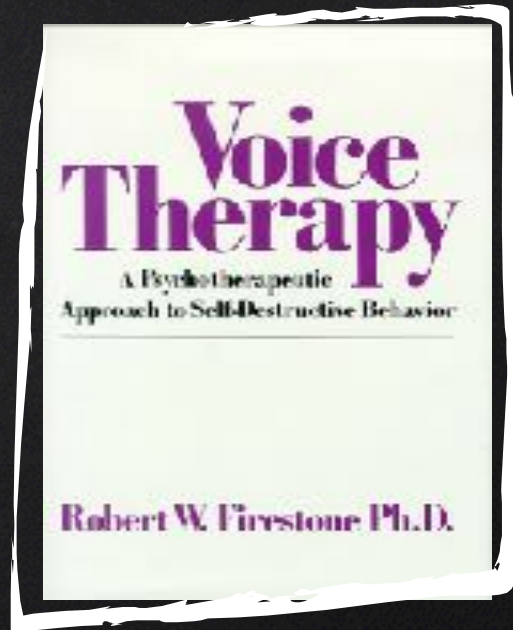
“I don’t want to be isolated. I’ll seek out friends”

“I want to stay vulnerable in my relationships.”

“I’m gonna take actions toward my career goals.”

VOICE THERAPY

Cognitive/ Affective/ Behavioral Approach



THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS IN VOICE THERAPY

STEP I

- ✗ The person articulates his or her self-attacks in the second person and expresses any feelings that arise.



THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

IN VOICE THERAPY

Step II

- ✗ The person discusses reactions to saying their voices.
- ✗ The person tries to understand the relationship between these attacks and early life experiences.



THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS IN VOICE THERAPY

STEP III

- ✗ The person answers back to the voice attacks.
- ✗ The person makes a rational statement about how he or she really is.



THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS IN VOICE THERAPY

STEP IV

The person develops insight about how the voice attacks are influencing his or her present-day behaviors.



THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS IN VOICE THERAPY

STEP V

- ✘ The person collaborates with the therapist to plan changes in these behaviors.
- ✘ The person is encouraged to not engage in self-destructive behaviors and to increase the positive behaviors these negative thoughts discourage.



If you are interested in attending a voice therapy training or in getting training materials please contact jina@glendon.org or visit www.glendon.org.

SELF

ANTI-SELF



Let thoughts go by like a train,



and choose not to get on.

CURIOUS

OPEN

ACCEPTING

LOVING



SELF-COMPASSION

“BEING TOUCHED BY AND NOT AVOIDING YOUR SUFFERING”

From Kristin Neff:

Self-compassion is not based on self-evaluation. It is not a way of judging ourselves positively; it is a way of relating to ourselves kindly.

Three Elements:

1. Self-kindness Vs. Self-judgment
2. Mindfulness Vs. Over-identification with thoughts
3. Common humanity Vs. Isolation

Source: <http://www.self-compassion.org/>



BENEFITS OF SELF-COMPASSION

- Mechanism for change
- Lowers stress
- Buffers against negative social comparisons



Source: <http://www.self-compassion.org/>

SELF-COMPASSION VS. SELF-ESTEEM

from Dr. Kristin Neff:

SELF-ESTEEM

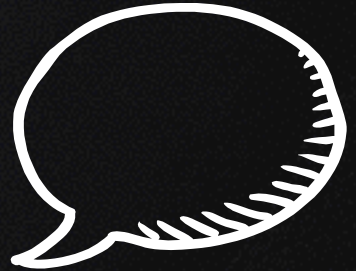
- Self-esteem refers to our sense of self-worth, perceived value or how much we like ourselves.
- Low self-esteem is problematic, however trying to have higher self-esteem can also be problematic.
- The need for high self-esteem may encourage us to ignore, distort or hide personal shortcomings so that we can't see ourselves accurately.
- Our self-esteem is often contingent on our latest success or failure, meaning that our self-esteem fluctuates.

Source: <http://www.self-compassion.org/>



“When we’re mainly filtering our experience through the ego, constantly trying to improve or maintain our high self-esteem, we’re denying ourselves the thing we actually want most. To be accepted as we are, an integral part of something much greater than our small selves. Unbounded. Immeasurable. Free.”

- Kristin Neff



Over 100,000 in Print!

The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook

A PROVEN WAY
TO ACCEPT YOURSELF,
BUILD INNER STRENGTH,
AND THRIVE



Kristin Neff, PhD | Christopher Germer, PhD

STUDIES SHOW THAT SELF-COMPASSION HAS A SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE ASSOCIATION WITH:

- ✓ Happiness
- ✓ Optimism
- ✓ Positive affect
- ✓ Wisdom
- ✓ Personal initiative
- ✓ Curiosity and exploration
- ✓ Agreeableness
- ✓ Conscientiousness
- ✓ Extroversion



DIFFERENTIATION

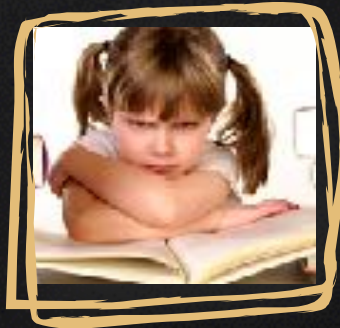
Some of our insecurity comes from a lack of differentiation from past influences:

Step 1: Break with internalized thought processes, i.e., critical, hostile attitudes toward self and others

Step 2: Separate from negative personality traits assimilated from one's parents

Step 3: Relinquish patterns of defense formed as an adaptation to painful events in one's childhood

Step 4: Develop one's own values, ideals and beliefs rather than automatically accepting those one's grown up with



HOW DO YOU TELL WHAT'S REALLY YOU?

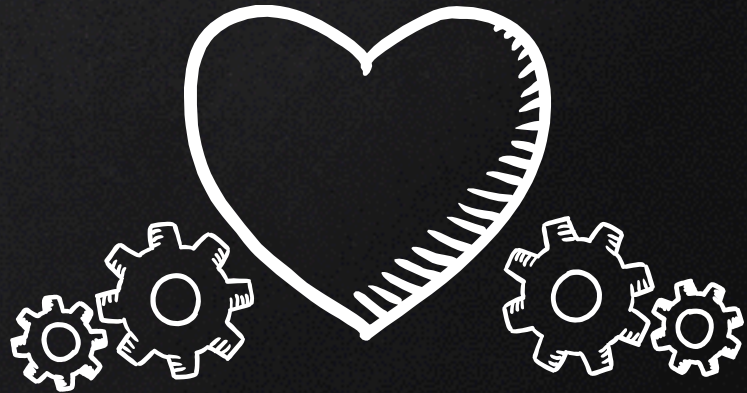
- What gives your life meaning?
- What lights you up?
- Which people in your life make you feel most yourself?
- What activities make you feel most yourself?



EARNED SECURE ATTACHMENT

We can feel more secure through an earned secure attachment. An earned secure attachment can come from:

- ✘ Feeling the full pain of your childhood and making sense of it.
- ✘ Engaging in psychotherapy.
- ✘ Forming an adult relationship with someone with a healthier attachment.



CREATING A COHERENT NARRATIVE

- ✗ Look back at your attachment relationships.
- ✗ Who were the important adult figures in your childhood?
- ✗ How did your parents (or caretakers) treat you?
- ✗ Did you feel safe, seen, soothed and secure by anyone?
- ✗ Reflect on traumas both large and small.



MAKING SENSE OF YOUR LIFE COURSE



**An eCourse with Drs.
Dan Siegal & Lisa Firestone**

Making Sense of Your Life: Understanding Your Past to Liberate Your Present and Empower Your Future

What could be more important than understanding your story and how it shapes who you are? In this eCourse, Drs. Dan Siegel and Lisa Firestone will draw upon the latest neurobiological research, attachment theory and their clinical experience to guide you through the process of creating a coherent narrative in order to make sense of your life.

Learn More

<https://ecourse.psychalive.org/>



WE CREATE THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.

GUIDELINES FOR CONTINUED PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Be aware of the fear that accompanies change.
- Realize that psychological pain is valid.
- Develop a more realistic view of your parents.
- Differentiate – unlearn old behaviors, learn new behaviors.
- Become more aware of specific defenses against feeling.
- Recognize the value of friendship.
- Seek your own personal meaning in life.



GUIDELINES FOR FURTHER DEVELOPING A MEANINGFUL LIFE

- Practice being generous in all your relationships.
- Become aware of existential realities.
- Develop a spiritual perspective and appreciate the mystery of existence.



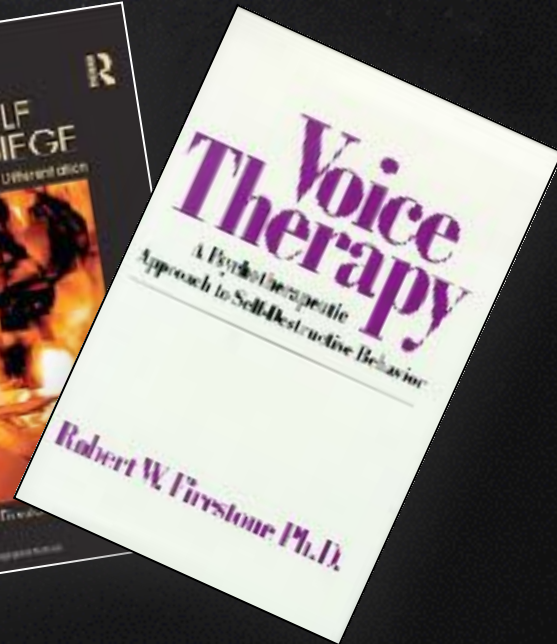
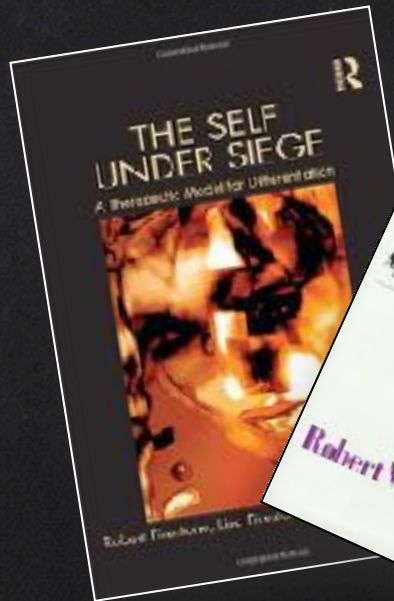
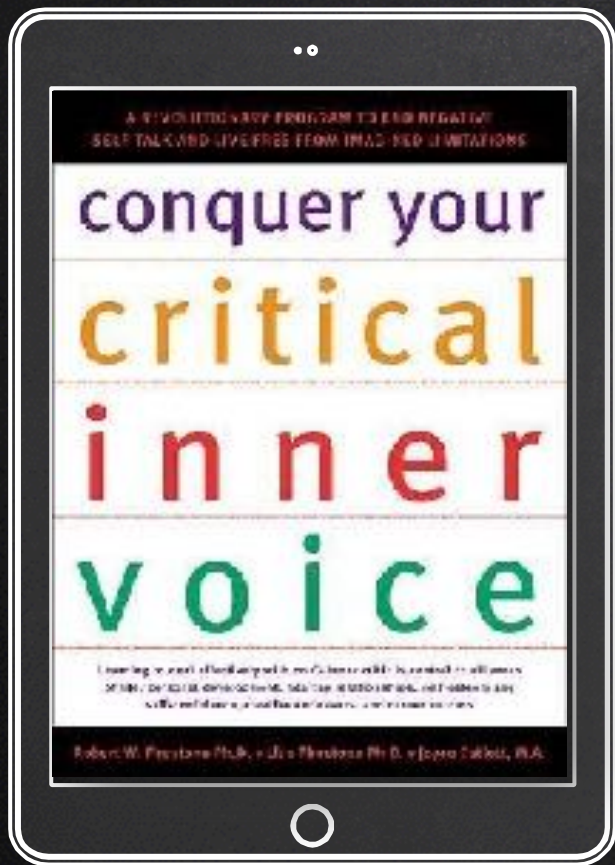


“A human being is a part of a whole, called by us 'universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest... a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security.”

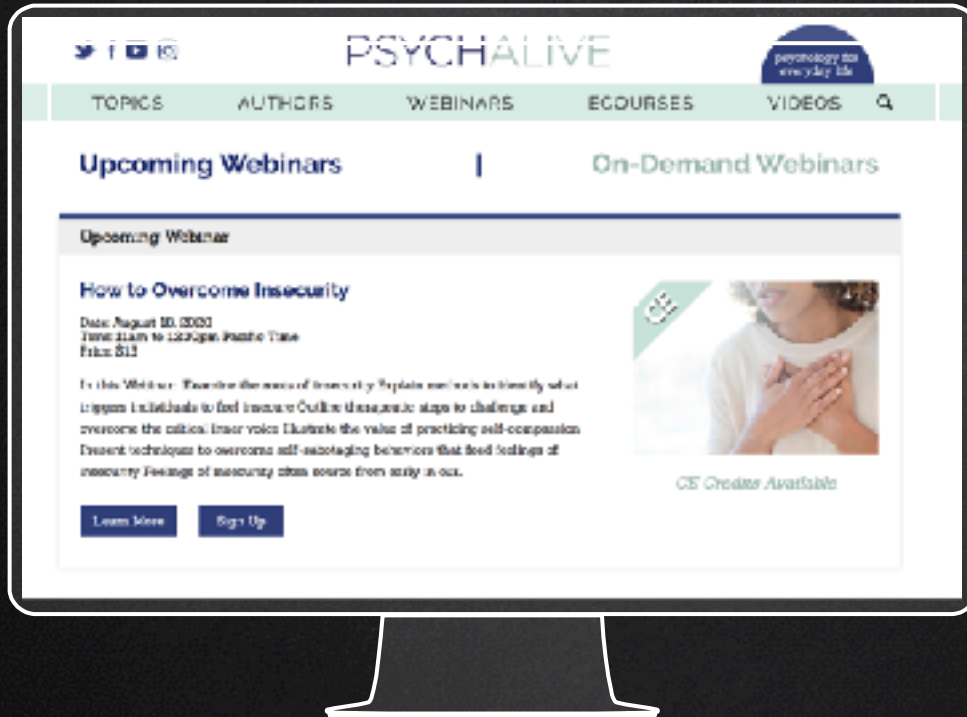
– Albert Einstein



BOOKS

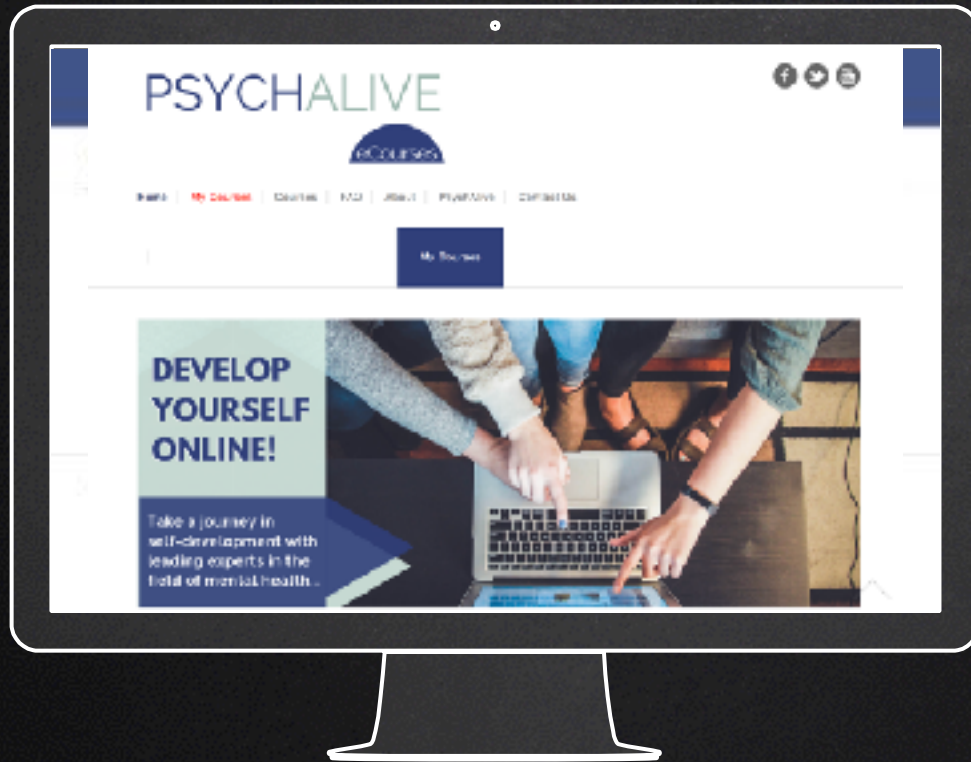


WEBINARS

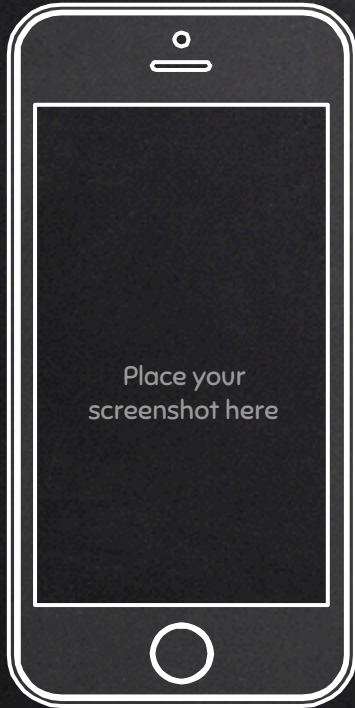


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THANKS!

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