

6 Simple Ways to

DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

A Guide for Teen Girls

How to Transform Your
Inner Critic Into Your
#1 Best Friend and
Personal Champion



JACQUI LETRAN, MSN

Nurse Practitioner & Teen Confidence Expert

Hello,



Congratulations on taking this step to learn how to transform your inner critical voice into a voice of love and support for yourself.

Now is the right time to stop the constant negative chatter inside your head and take control of yourself and your life. You don't have to let that voice ruin your day and hold you back any longer. You are ready to build a solid foundation that will allow you to fully experience the wonderful life that you deserve.

I'm happy to be on this journey with you.

With Love,

Jacqui Letran

Based on the multi-award winning book,

Jump Start Your Confidence & Boost Your Self-Esteem:

A Guide for Teen Girls to Unleash Your Inner Superpowers, Conquer Fear & Self-Doubt and Build Unshakable Confidence.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Do you want to stop that inner critical voice from holding you back and destroying your self-confidence? Here are six simple steps you can take today to turn the voice of your inner critic into a voice of love, support, and encouragement.

We all can be our own harshest critic. The words we say to ourselves when we've made a mistake or fail are often negative, critical, and demeaning. It's these words that tear down our self-esteem—making life unpleasant and difficult.

Our words have immense power. Whatever words we use to express our thoughts or feelings, whether out loud or silently to ourselves, are the same words that create our reality and life experiences. In a way, our words are similar to editing a digital photo using a filter.

Imagine taking a vibrant and colorful photo and putting a black and white filter on it. What would happen? Would your picture remain vibrant and colorful? If you are editing a photo using a particular filter and you don't like the result, are you going to say, "Oh, well. There's nothing I can do about it."? Or would you try a different filter? Most likely, you would try a new filter, or possibly remove the filter completely.

Our life experiences are similar. Consider your words as the filter, or "Word Filters," and your perception of life experiences are the photos. Whatever Word Filters you choose to put on top of your life experiences will become the result you see in your "photos," which is how you see your life reality. When you have an experience you don't like, be willing to experiment with different Word Filters and create the pictures that you want at the moment.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

For example, let's say you tried out for a lead role at your local theater and you were not chosen for the part. The Word Filters that naturally pop up for you might sound like:

- I don't deserve that part.
- I'm a terrible actor.
- Everyone else is so much better.
- Who am I kidding? I'm no good at this.
- Why do I even bother? I should just quit.

Would you say these same words to a fellow actor who also didn't get the part? Imagine this conversation for a moment.

Fellow Actor: "I worked so hard but didn't get that part. I don't know what to do. I'm so depressed."

You: "You didn't get that part because you're a terrible actor. Everyone else is so much better than you. Who were you trying to kid? I don't know why you even bother. You have no talent. You should quit!"

Would you ever say something like that to anyone else... EVER?

Yet, too often, this is the kind of talk you take from yourself. How is it OK to bully and degrade yourself?

When you used these Word Filters to view your experience, how did you feel? Did you feel positive and encouraged, or did you feel sad and deflated?

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Here you are, already not feeling so great because you didn't get the role you wanted. Instead of lifting yourself up, you beat yourself up further. Using negative Word Filters to view your experiences creates an unnecessary fear and self-doubt that can destroy your self-confidence. How can you move forward and succeed in life when you constantly add the extra weight of sadness, fear or shame onto an already difficult situation?

But it doesn't have to be this way. You have the power to stop your inner critic from bullying you around.

Here are six activities to transform your inner critic into your number one support system. You can select one or two of the following activities to start with, or you can dive in and complete them all. The choice is yours.

1. Create Your Own Word Filters

A. Create a list of things you wished someone would say to you when you're feeling down and need some support and encouragement.

Example:

- Everything will be OK.
- I believe in you.
- Let's figure out how to solve this.
- You can do this.
- You are so smart.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

B. Change each sentence you wrote down into an “I statement.”

Example:

- I am OK. Everything is OK.
- I believe in myself.
- I know I can figure out how to solve this.
- I can do it.
- I am smart.

C. Pick two statements you want to work with first. Twice a day, look at yourself in the mirror and say those two statements to yourself with meaning, purpose, and conviction. Imagine you are saying those statements to your best friend, or the person you love most.

If any of the sentences you wrote feel uncomfortable to say, be willing to soften that statement with either, “I’m willing to,” or “I’m willing to know it’s possible.”

For example, you’re working on, “I’m OK. Everything is OK,” and it doesn’t feel right when you said it back to yourself because you are overwhelmed with fear. Soften it to, “I’m willing to be OK. I’m willing to have everything be OK,” or “I’m willing to know it’s possible that I’m Ok, and that everything is OK.” Softening the statement will allow you to accept it more easily.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Continue to work on your two statements twice daily until they feel comfortable to you. At that point, you can either switch them out for two new statements or add two more to the list.

2. Treat Yourself with Kindness

To stop your inner critic, start with kindness to yourself. Kindness can soothe you, lift you up, and motivate you. With kindness, you can give yourself that extra loving push to go after what you want. If you want to transform that inner critic into your best friend, start treating yourself with the same level of kindness you show to the people who are important to you.

Instead of allowing your old Word Filters to control your mood, what if you decided to use positive Word Filters instead? What if you choose to think or say, "That actor got the role because she has three more years of experience than I do. I am a beginner and I'm committed to learning and practicing so I can be my best," or "I am not the right person for this part and the right part for me will come along."

When you use these positive and kind Word Filters, how do you feel? Do you feel sad and deflated, or do you feel motivated to improve yourself and inspired to look for new opportunities?

The reality of the situation is that you did not get the lead role. However, how you choose to view that event will either lift you up and prepare you for the next opportunity or drag you down and crush your ambition. The choice is yours.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

If you catch your inner critic rearing its vicious head and treating you poorly, stop! You have the power to create a completely different experience for yourself by choosing different Word Filters.

3. Fall in Love with Yourself

Let's start working on creating that fantastic relationship with yourself and making sure you know how great you really are.

Set a timer for twenty minutes and create an "I Love Me!" list. Write down everything you love about yourself and your life. Nothing is too small or too minor of an item for this list. Write down the things you've done that you are proud of, the things you're good at, and any accomplishments you've achieved. Write down your personality traits and physical attributes that you love. Write down compliments others have given you. Remember to add the quirky things you love about yourself and your life as well.

Here's a list to inspire you

- I love my sense of humor.
- I love how long my hair is.
- I love that I have freckles on the tip of my nose.
- I love that I love animals.
- I love that I can dance.
- I love my smile.
- I love that I stopped biting my nails.
- I love that I can play the drums.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

For the next two weeks, add at least three more items to your “I Love Me!” list daily. Feel free to extend this exercise beyond two weeks if you wish. The longer you practice self-gratitude and appreciation, the easier and more natural it will become... and you deserve it!

Spend ten minutes each day enjoying your list. If you ever feel down about yourself or need a quick pick-me-up, go back to your list and review it again to remind yourself just how magnificent you really are. Pick one or two things you love about yourself and focus on those qualities.

4. Self-care is Essential

Spend the next ten to fifteen minutes making a list of self-care activities that feed your soul and help you to feel happy, relaxed, energized, or motivated.

Just like the “I Love Me!” list, add to this list often. Remember, even little things you do that are good for you or allow you the space to feel special are great. Anything counts here, no matter how small or how large, as long as you are showing yourself love in the process.

Examples: eat an apple instead of a bag of chips, take a brisk walk, listen to music, play with your dog, take deep breaths, dance, take a long shower, read, meditate, go out for a nice meal, hang out with your friends, buy yourself something special, watch your favorite show, draw, paint, etc.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Make a commitment to spend at least twenty minutes each day practicing one or more of the self-care items you have on your list. Remember, when things are hectic, these activities become even more important to help ease your mind and recharge your energy, so you can efficiently tackle the work ahead.

In addition, when you catch your inner critic trying to take you down, step up and be your best friend. Pick one or more activities from your list and make time to do it. If you cannot engage in any prolonged activity at that moment, take four to five deliberate deep breaths in and out. Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four, hold your breath for a count of four, and release your breath for a count of four. Slow, deep breaths allow you to let go and will re-center you. Remember to schedule a time to take actions on your behalf as your best friend later that day, even if it's only for ten minutes.

5. Develop an Attitude of Gratitude

It is much easier to focus on what's wrong, and what's lacking in your life than it is to focus on the positive. When you focus on the problem, it appears bigger and more difficult to manage. If you focus on it enough, one problem can become overwhelming, making it hard to see the other positive things in your life.

Keeping an Attitude of Gratitude journal is a simple way to help you refocus on what's going well in your life and what's important to you.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Each morning, do a quick inventory of your life and write down two things that you are grateful for. It could be something exciting like: "I'm grateful to be on vacation for the next 5 days. It can even be something as simple as, "I'm grateful to have a bed to sleep in." The idea behind a gratitude journal is to keep your mind focused on the good things in your life.

Write in your gratitude daily. Be consistent. Even on the worst day, spend a couple of minutes reflecting on your life and pick out two things you are grateful for.

Perhaps, you might write:

- I'm grateful I have hair.
- I'm grateful I have teeth.

Those might seem silly things to focus on in your gratitude journal, but we all take little things like that for granted. Usually, we only notice these great things when there's a problem, like feeling a toothache. When you can focus on being grateful even in times of trouble, you retrain your mind to be positive in a very powerful way.

Each night before you go to bed, spend a couple minutes and do a quick review of your day. Write down two things you are grateful for that happened earlier in the day. It could be something really wonderful like, "I'm grateful I won first place in the art contest." Or something simple like, "I'm grateful that I have internet connections to watch my favorite YouTube videos."

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Keep all of your gratitude statements 100% positive to truly rewire your mind to focus on the positive things. Here's an example of a positive statement and a negative statement disguised as a positive statement.

Statement 1: I am grateful I had a filling lunch today.

Statement 2: I am grateful I didn't go hungry today.

Statement 1 is a positive statement because it focuses on the thing that went well - having had a filling lunch.

Statement 2 is a negative statement because the focus is on the problem of being hungry. Even if your lunch was just an apple and it wasn't filling, you can still write, "I'm grateful I had an apple for lunch today."

Statement 1: I am grateful that I have friends to hang out with at school.

Statement 2: I am grateful that I didn't feel lonely today.

As with the first example, statement 1 focuses on the thing that is going well, having friends to hang out with. Statement 2 focuses on the problem, loneliness.

Even if you didn't have any friends to hang out with, your gratitude statement could be, "I am grateful I am comfortable by myself today."

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

6. Be Your Own Best Friend & Personal Champion

Challenge yourself to treat yourself with the same level of thoughtfulness, kindness, and respect that you show the person you love most. When your inner critic starts criticizing and judging, you can take positive action right away!

First, imagine you are talking to the person you love and admire the most, and they shared with you they are experiencing the exact situation that your inner critic is judging you for.

Second, what would you do to support, encourage, and motivate this person? Write down everything that you would say and think about how you would say it to this person you love and admire so much.

Third, speak to yourself using those same words you just wrote down. If any of the sentences you wrote feel uncomfortable to you, be willing to soften that statement with either, "I'm willing to..." or "I'm willing to know it's possible to..."

For example, you wrote, "You are a talented actor," and it doesn't feel right when you said it back to yourself. Soften it to, "I'm willing to know myself as a talented actor," or "I'm willing to know it's possible that I'm a talented actor." Softening the statement this way will help you to accept it more readily.

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

Fourth, repeat your new positive and supporting statements to yourself multiple times throughout your day until it feels good and comfortable to hear those words.

If you would never say something that is critical, cynical, or berating to this person you love and admire, then avoid saying it to yourself. Choose only loving, motivating, and supportive words when you speak to yourself. And of course, you can go back to your self-care list and do something nice for yourself, or review your *I Love Me* list to remind yourself just how awesome you really are.

You have the power to be your own best friend and personal champion. You have the power to transform that critical, negative internal voice into a voice of positivity, motivation, love, and support for yourself. Start today and make a commitment to yourself and your happiness. When you do this regularly, you'll quickly realize how others respond more positively to you as well. Humans are incredibly adept at feeling your energy and adjusting to your "vibe." When you treat yourself with love and respect, don't be surprised if others follow your lead.

Remember, always be kind to yourself. You deserve it!

6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

If you enjoyed what you've read so far and want to go deeper on this topic, check out the Award-Winning **Words of Wisdom for Teens** Series.



Jacqui Letran is an Award-Winning Author, Nurse Practitioner, and Teen Confidence Expert with over 18 years of experience guiding youth to optimal physical and mental health. Her multi-award-winning book series, Words of Wisdom for Teens has earned sixteen awards and is regarded as a "must-read" collection of books for teens and young adults struggling with low self-esteem, anxiety or depression.

An avid adventurer and animal lover, Jacqui spends most of the year exploring the U.S. in her motorhome with her husband, 4 cats, and a dog. When not traveling, Jacqui can be found soaking up the sunshine and smiles in Dunedin, Florida.



6 Simple Ways to DEFEAT YOUR INNER CRITIC

- 1 Create Your Favorite Word-Filters
- 2 Treat Yourself with Kindness
- 3 Fall in Love with Yourself
- 4 Self-Care is Essential
- 5 Develop an Attitude of Gratitude
- 6 Be Your Best Friend and Personal Champion