



# Reducing Excessive Self-Criticism Journey

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## Step 18: Excuses of Self-Criticism

Let us begin with a reminder: excessive self-criticism attempts to force us to remain in place, not to rise beyond ordinary logic. Therefore, it also blocks expressions of inner leadership, creativity, freedom, spontaneity, intuition, and everything that carries elements of uncertainty, surprise, imagination, or change.

That is why it is so important to be aware of it, not to underestimate its power, not to diminish its significance, and not to think that we are done with it. Never.

We need to understand that it is there, and that it holds great power. It represents our fears, our inner darkness, the massive negative influences we absorb from all directions and internalize. It also represents the work of growth that we are meant to do, often directly facing it, sometimes more than anything else.

It is good to discover it. It is good to expose it. It is good to get to know it. It is good to speak with it. It is good to face it. It is good to stand מול it. It is also good, from time to time, to overcome it. It is good to live a life in which we maintain a relationship and awareness toward that self-criticism, and to tell ourselves that it is excessive, both internally and in front of others.

In this way, we manage our lives rather than being managed by this massive trend, which includes guilt, irrelevant responsibility, irrelevant feelings of missing out, irrelevant feelings of loss of time, and many other unhelpful experiences that all converge into the same place we are addressing here.

This step focuses on a specific type of common excuses and helps us identify a very common phenomenon that represents the influence of excessive self-criticism:

**Every excuse for avoiding initiative, renewal, creation, and change is in fact excessive self-criticism in disguise.**

What does this actually mean?

It means that within our healthy nature, when we are connected to it at a reasonable level, there is a living, breathing, vibrant place within us that seeks to grow, create, change, influence, touch, connect, evolve, expand, and manifest. There is a creative core within us, connected to spirit and intuition, nourished by love and generating love. It is there. It is alive. Right now.

This healthy nature is the foundation of abundance, the foundation of joy, the foundation of love. It is the divine aspect within the human being, the part we arrived here with, the part we brought from the source. The purpose of this inner part, this healthy nature, is to express itself, to realize itself, to give of itself, to dance with the environment through its unique expression.

Our healthy nature is what we are constantly seeking, while at the same time often missing, largely due to the excessive influence of inner self-criticism.

This is part of the human drama. And it is okay. This is who we are. We do not want to apply excessive self-criticism to this phenomenon as well, or create additional guilt. There is no point in being critical of our tendency toward excessive criticism. There is value in recognizing the phenomenon, understanding it, becoming experts in identifying it, and learning tools to reduce its presence and influence.

We need to learn and internalize that the healthy part within us, the part that knows how to grow, expand, and create freely, exists. That it also has patience. That it is not pressured for immediate realization. That it is not disappointed when we forget it or move away from it. That it is always there for us. That it is part of us. That it is us. That it is not separate from us, and that we cannot be separate from it.

We may fail to notice its presence because of various difficulties we have placed upon ourselves, and mainly because of the excess self-criticism we have become accustomed to living alongside it, in its shadow and even in its light.

So when I come to summarize the process so far, I look at the bottom line and want to remind myself and you that within us there is a wonderful, divine, sophisticated, brilliant, creative inner engine that deeply understands what love is. It comes from a source of love, creation, renewal, and transformation. It is there.

And every time we construct within ourselves, in a rather sophisticated way, an excuse to avoid initiative, renewal, creation, and change, we are in fact following the path paved by our excessive self-criticism, while at the same time distancing ourselves from that healthy, magical, and highly capable nature full of passion.

Excessive self-criticism manages to make us think and tell ourselves a very convincing story: why it is not possible, why it is not the right time, why it is not working, why it will not work, why it is not good enough, why it does not function as it should. Various forms of negative feedback that we generate for ourselves.

And in the end, this causes us not to listen and not to act in cooperation with that unique inner engine within us. That engine speaks to us through pure passion, trying to tell us how important this is for us, for our health, for our relationships.

To reduce excessive self-criticism, we need to learn to listen more to this passion. To believe it. To take courageous initiatives in its service. To contain with love and understanding what we experience as “failures” in implementing it. To remain in continuous relationship with it, in dialogue, in listening, in trial and error.

This is the role of the personality, of who we are, with all our ego, our repressions, our denials, our wounds, our karma. This personality is built here, in this time, in this life. And it can do the work to improve the connection with that inner engine, with those intuitive whispers of growth, expansion, courage, and change.

A developing and self-healing personality can and should choose this. And when it chooses this, it must recognize that every excuse, every inner statement that prevents initiative of renewal, creation, and change is in fact excessive self-criticism in disguise. It is a kind of lie. It is not real. It does not represent what truly exists.

This does not mean that a person must always be in constant renewal, creation, and action. There are also periods of rest, pause, waiting, and observation. This too is part of the process. But even then, we can be aware that we are resting, refueling, preparing for the next step.

What matters is to remain aware that sometimes we overload ourselves with a variety of excuses: there is no time, no resources, no knowledge, no talent, no friends, no suitable conditions, no suitable country. These are excuses that arise because we are afraid to take the step, to go on the adventure, to move into the unknown, to move toward the fulfillment of the pleasure of creation and initiative.

We are simply afraid. It is important to acknowledge this, because everything begins there. Excessive self-criticism emerges from this fear. And this fear can be dissolved not only through understanding, but through action. Through reducing criticism, setting boundaries, taking initiative, renewing, creating, changing, allowing surprises. Through allowing ourselves to make mistakes. To be foolish. To experiment. To change.

Excessive self-criticism will always be there as part of life, but it is the part that challenges our experience of life. It invites us to face it, to set boundaries, and sometimes even to bypass it.

And how pleasurable it is to make this transition, from a state of excessive self-criticism to a state of greater freedom, greater inner space, and a greater willingness to play with reality, with passion, and with ideas of expansion and change.

These transitions, these transformations, are always available as an option, and they occur more and more frequently in those who choose to dedicate a significant portion of their attention to reducing excessive self-criticism.

**Questions for Self-Reflection (preferably in writing):**

1. What is the most exciting, intriguing, and stimulating initiative for change that is still sitting in your “drawer” for one reason or another?
2. What are the main excuses you tell yourself for not realizing this initiative?
3. What is the “practical logic” that reinforces these excuses and makes you feel justified in delaying this realization?
4. Is the thought of finding a new way to bring this vision to life pleasant, frightening, or both? Please elaborate.
5. Is it possible to realize this dream in a slightly different way for now, or to take a small step toward it for now, so it does not remain entirely in the drawer?
6. Is there anything else you would like to share or write about what you read in this step? Experiences, questions, feelings?