



Reducing Excessive Self-Criticism Journey

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Step 22: Loneliness with the Truth

This step addresses a very significant illusion, one that is essential to recognize and give attention to, because it prevents a person from directions of development, growth, creation, and expression, without them always noticing it. This illusion competes with a person's ability to be loyal to themselves, to their path, to their essence, to their beauty, to their creativity, to their passions, and to everything that characterizes and makes them unique.

This illusion is well maintained by excessive self-criticism, which transmits messages to the person whose role is to keep them within an experience that does not reflect what can truly take place in their life. Because this experience instills a strong fear within them, sometimes even to the level of existential fear, it succeeds in preventing them from seeing the full picture, a picture that could serve their developmental needs in a meaningful way, while also reducing excessive self-criticism.

Every person has, to a large extent, a kind of truth that is a worldview unique to them and to them alone. It is a kind of mental fingerprint that reflects the uniqueness that distinguishes each person from all others. This uniqueness can be expressed in many ways that a person generates from within themselves, provided that they feel free and capable of expressing it, and do not feel that such expression is dangerous or may lead them to places they do not wish to be.

One of the reasons many people give up, entirely unconsciously, on the special and beautiful truth within them, which can even be described as the divine truth within the human being, is the illusion built around the strong need to belong and to be part of the group. When the need to belong is too strong, and the longing for inner truth and individuality is weak or weakened, a person may imagine that if they adhere to their unique truth, they will find themselves alone and isolated.

As a result, many people, who could have enjoyed and grown with the “divine diamonds” they brought with them into the world, choose, unconsciously, to give up access to them in favor of a level of belonging that is mediocre at best, compared to the belonging they truly need.

This is a form of belonging that forces a person, to a large extent, to give up themselves and parts of their uniqueness, simply in order to feel that they belong to some group. Sometimes this is an actual group, and sometimes it is a collection of social messages that the person has internalized as “codes of belonging” to the social space they wish, or at least hope, to belong to.

And this is the illusion: my truth might make me lonely. My unique truth, and therefore also my “strange” truth, the one that even I sometimes struggle to understand or express freely without absorbing inner criticism, might supposedly cause the people around me to look at me in an unfavorable way and even prefer not to be in my presence. This is, as stated, a complete illusion, even to the point of being harmful.

Because if a person prefers the company of people among whom they cannot express their truth and behave according to it, they sentence themselves to a much deeper loneliness, both social loneliness and inner loneliness.

This is a loneliness in which a person forces themselves to move away from who they are, to deny the unique aspects they came into the world with, and consequently also to deny their possible roles in serving others in a way that would also fulfill them.

As a result, many people learn, in a general sense, to distance themselves from and even avoid a wide range of topics related to the exploration of truth. Once they become accustomed to distancing themselves from their own truth, dismissing its existence, and blending into a social atmosphere in which they lose their unique fingerprint, they expand this pattern into other areas where there is a search for truth, a request for truth, or journeys toward truth. Such topics invite questions they may not be able or willing to answer.

Over this entire “orchestra,” which exists to some degree in every person, with differences in intensity and style, excessive self-criticism conducts. It will do everything in its power to keep the person within a low to moderate level of belonging, a belonging whose behavioral code includes self-cancellation of any truth that might contradict the consensus.

In fact, anyone who undergoes processes of transformation and significant change in their personality reports a renewed connection to their truth, through a process that is not simple, involving decisions and confronting old habits that forced them to lie to themselves and about themselves. Every person who undergoes a process of spiritual awakening discovers within themselves a new truth that had always been there, but was too hidden due to the excessive involvement of self-criticism, which had been internalized as representing the demands of a society that has little tolerance for difference and broad individuality.

The fear of loneliness with my truth, which is, as stated, nothing more than an illusion, is a very significant fear that tells a broad story about the society in which we live. People

fear loneliness, fear being cast out, fear not having support, fear being completely alone on their path.

There is no place for judgment toward these people, each of us is also among them at different moments, because they are a product of a social system that pressures them, primarily through the internalization of excessive self-criticism, to feel this way and to make choices accordingly, often without awareness.

In contrast, when a person chooses a path of learning and practicing the reduction of excessive self-criticism, they discover how false it is and how much it distorts reality, and how it plants unnecessary, exaggerated, and irrelevant fears within them. Through its exaggerated messages, it attempts to manage their life for them.

When a person learns to recognize the exaggerations and distortions of excessive self-criticism, they can reexamine, slowly and gradually, their relationship with their truth, a truth they could not access due to years of self-criticism dominating their life.

For many people, this idea sounds surprising, the idea that truth leads to loneliness. It is surprising because many have never fully experienced the price paid by someone who does not give up their truth, despite threats of social rejection and lack of acceptance.

Moreover, it is surprising because of the denial surrounding this subject, a denial also maintained by excessive self-criticism, which forces a person to create around their truth an illusion of irrelevance, to the point that it no longer appears to be truth at all.

This is a very significant challenge within human society, a challenge that explains many phenomena, choices, and behaviors. A person who has grown into someone who does not give up their truth, at least to a sufficient degree that it awakens in them interest and a need to embark on journeys of exploration and change, is relatively rare. Such a person must pass through moments of feeling a lack of belonging and a lack of alignment with their immediate environment.

However, that same loneliness ultimately proves to be temporary and even valuable. During it, the person learns the importance of belonging to themselves, the pleasure in that, and the freedom that comes with no longer needing to pretend on a regular basis, which otherwise creates an even deeper loneliness.

Therefore, in the end, this is an illusion that must be passed through when one seeks to develop and discover inner beauty and a personal path of expression, growth, creation, and change. It is an illusion because the people we truly want around us are those who recognize our truth, resonate with it, support it, and feel comfortable with it. Usually, these are people for whom their own truth is also very important.

If we are surrounded by people among whom there is a silent agreement to hide the truth from one another, then we are indeed in deep loneliness, one that affects us to the point

that we may want to distance ourselves from anyone who lives their truth, because they will remind us of our own loneliness and awaken within us a not simple pain.

And so, continuously, there exists a kind of struggle between excessive self-criticism and the simple and stable truth of the person. Excessive self-criticism will attempt to mark truth as the factor that leads to loneliness, while in reality, truth is the only path to finding the supportive and accurate environment for that person.

All that remains is to choose which side to stand on. The side that cooperates with excessive self-criticism and creates hidden loneliness under the illusion of belonging, or the side that resists it, willing to encounter moments of not belonging, but using them to clarify where one truly belongs and who the right people are to be close to.

Questions for Self-Reflection (preferably in writing):

1. What are the first feelings that arise within you when you hear the word "truth"?
2. In which situations, places, or with which people is your truth likely to be met with reactions that would not feel pleasant to you?
3. Can you identify the situations in which your excessive self-criticism influences you not to tell your truth?
4. Is it possible that there are ways you have not yet considered to express your truth more fully than you do today, without harming yourself or creating discomfort with certain people?
5. If you were to "meet" your quiet, unfiltered truth right now, and imagine that it wanted to say a few things to you, what do you think it would say?
6. Is there anything else you would like to share or write about regarding what you have read in this chapter? Experiences? Insights? Questions? Feelings?