



Reducing Excessive Self-Criticism Journey

Dr. Pinkie Feinstein

Step 8: Change

Chapter Eight continues Part Three, which focuses on tools for reducing excessive self-criticism. And there is a very interesting point here. At times, when things are done correctly, this process can be experienced as a kind of miracle, as a kind of wonder.

It is not supposed to be a miracle or a wonder if we understand in advance that this is how things work. And yet, the experience is sometimes that of a miracle. And Chapter Eight deals with this.

It deals with the way in which we actually generate this “miracle,” and perhaps also with the fact that we are not always aware that we have the ability to generate such miracles. Because very often, the miracle begins exactly at the point where we reduce excessive self-criticism.

In a certain sense, excessive self-criticism hides from us our ability to create realities, to create meaningful changes. And ultimately, these are the things we experience as miracles.

When a person is free, even partially, from excessive self-criticism, their creative forces, their flexibility, their spontaneity, their originality, their boldness, all of these take a leap.

And what is this leap, really? It is not a leap to a new place. It is a return home, a return to our natural ability, an ability that is not blocked, an ability that is free to act.

But because we have become accustomed to living with blockage, when it opens, it feels like a miracle.

Chapter Eight brings with it a central understanding: change is a way of life. A way of life that does not allow excessive self-criticism much room to operate.

Many times, we are happy when change comes our way, when an opportunity for change arises. Sometimes we are even excited by it. But at the same time, not infrequently, we are also afraid of it. It can be stressful; it can be confusing.

We long for change, but we do not always take the actions required to create it. And this is where our task comes in.

When the goal is to reduce excessive self-criticism, change becomes a central tool. And it connects to other aspects of inner leadership. The less we are in excessive self-criticism, the more we are in contact with our intuition, the more we can develop compassion toward ourselves.

Because there is a very close connection between excessive self-criticism and judgment in general. And the more we reduce criticism, the more compassion expands.

And change does not have to be complex. We can see excessive self-criticism as a pressing force, like invisible clamps that keep directing us along the same path, the same route, without even considering the possibility of change.

And sometimes we even criticize others for not changing, without noticing how difficult it is for us as well to be flexible, to surprise ourselves, and to offer ourselves new ways.

And here we have a task: to reduce excessive self-criticism through change. And from there, things begin to unfold, toward creativity, toward emotional transformation, toward the ability to deal with complex situations. All of these depend, to a large extent, on reducing excessive self-criticism.

And it can be reduced, almost like a miracle, if we allow ourselves to generate more change, to turn change into a routine. Two things that seem not to speak to each other: change and routine. And yet, here we can choose.

To choose to initiate change as a conscious person, as a responsible person, as a person who wants to grow. We declare this, we go to courses, to workshops, we watch content, we invest. We want to heal, to grow, to change.

So here is a simple message: whoever wants to change must practice changing. And sometimes this is one of the simplest and most enjoyable things there is.

The amount of change a person can create in any given moment is far greater than they can grasp. The number of options available to a person at any given moment is vast. At every moment, a person is at a crossroads, they simply do not always notice it.

Because they are enslaved to routine, and the routine is enslaved to excessive self-criticism. But in reality, a person moves from one crossroads to another, and at each crossroads, there are options.

Some of the options are more courageous, connected to passion, capable of changing a life. And others are not really options, but simply the automatic continuation of the same path, without change, without awareness, without boldness.

And this is exactly where a person can choose. To choose to practice, to practice increasing the moments of change in their life. And this can take countless forms, small changes, small choices, slightly different actions.

And why is this so significant?

Because if excessive self-criticism is like a force that holds us in a straight line, and we cooperate with it without noticing, then the moment we step out of that line, the moment we change, excessive self-criticism cannot operate in the same way.

And the more we add change, and more change, and more spontaneity, it becomes tired. And then we receive moments of freedom, moments of natural creativity, moments of connection, moments of clarity, moments of inspiration.

And all of this begins with something simple: agreeing to play with reality, doing things a little differently. It does not have to be a big change, it does not have to be dramatic, it is simply practice, to choose differently, to change direction, to train this muscle, to turn toward paths we usually avoid. The possibilities here are endless.

But it is important to understand something deeper: excessive self-criticism pulls us to walk in a straight line, reducing excessive self-criticism allows us to walk in curves, even without knowing exactly where we will arrive, or when we will arrive, or what will happen.

And this is exactly where the process begins. Because it is easy to say that the result is less important than the process, but here we truly enter the process. And what is the process? A continuous sequence of changes.

And within that sequence, the person begins to free themselves from their excessive self-criticism. And within the changes, it matters less what the outcome will be, because within the process itself, they begin to receive what they were truly seeking: freedom, freedom from criticism, inner connection, boldness, creativity, passion.

This is the true result.

And therefore, in order to reach it, we need to reduce excessive self-criticism. And in order to reduce excessive self-criticism, we practice change.

And we hold on to a simple principle: change is a way of life that does not allow excessive self-criticism much room to operate. Every time I add change, I move it, I distance it.

And when this becomes a way of life, reducing excessive self-criticism also becomes a way of life. We get used to it.

There are people who practice this in different ways. For example, free writing in the morning, without knowing what they will write, simply allowing something new to emerge. There are people who change small habits: relationships, daily actions, ways of thinking. The possibilities are endless, because at every moment we are at a crossroads.

But if we do not use that crossroads, if we do not listen to our passion, if we do not allow ourselves to choose differently, excessive self-criticism will continue to manage our lives.

And so, from this moment on, we practice. Change and more change, even for the sake of play, even for the sake of the experience, even just to train the muscle. Because the moment there is change, something shifts.

And the criticism becomes confused, becomes tired, and gives us breathing space.

And from that breathing space, we continue, another change and another change, until we connect to a quiet, confident, creative inner voice, a voice that was always there, but was hidden, hidden by the noise, the noise of excessive self-criticism.

And now, as the noise decreases, we begin to hear.

And it can be very pleasant, at a certain moment, to hear less inner criticism and instead to hear passion, enthusiasm, curiosity, pleasure, and many other experiential gifts that come with the reduction of excessive self-criticism.

It is worth it, is it not?

Questions for Self-Reflection (it is recommended to answer in writing):

1. What are the things you like to change in your life frequently?
2. What are the things you like to change in your life only rarely?
3. What change do you wish for yourself but currently feel unable to bring about?
4. What change would make you truly realize that your control over your life is less than you thought?
5. If you had the means and the conditions, what unusual and unconventional change would you initiate right now?
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?