

Tips for Managing the Inner Critic

- *CHANGE THE CYCLE: REMEMBER THAT NEGATIVE SELF TALK IS NOT EVIDENCE OF SOMETHING BEING 'WRONG' WITH US THAT NEEDS TO BE FIXED - IT IS A FEATURE OF BEING HUMAN.*
- *USE THERAPY AS A WAY OF EXPLORING THE SELF. SOMETIMES WE NEED HELP TO UNPACK OUR THOUGHTS TO DISCOVER WHAT LIES WITHIN OUR UNCONSCIOUS. THAT WAY WE CAN CHALLENGE NOT ONLY THE VOICE, BUT ALSO WHO WE HAVE BECOME AS A RESULT OF OUR EXPERIENCES. WHAT AND WHERE ARE THE ORIGINAL WOUNDS AND WHO PLACED THEM THERE? ALL THESE QUESTIONS CAN BE EXPLORED IN THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS. YOU DON'T ONLY HAVE TO GO TO THERAPY WHEN YOU ARE IN CRISIS.*
- *WE HAVE ADDED A LIST OF SUGGESTIONS AND SIGNPOSTS FOR THERAPY AT THE END OF THE JOURNAL. PLEASE BE SURE TO EXERCISE DUE DILIGENCE WHEN CHOOSING PRACTITIONERS AND THERAPISTS. YOU MAY WISH TO ASK FRIENDS TO HELP YOU RESEARCH AND FIND A THERAPEUTIC MODEL THAT WORKS FOR YOU. I WOULD AT THIS POINT LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERAPY IS NOT ACCESSIBLE TO ALL. WE RECOGNISE THAT LONG NHS WAITING LISTS, COST, AND TIME IN A LONG WORKING DAY ARE ALL BARRIERS TO ACCESS. THERE ARE SEVERAL ALTERNATIVES TO TALK THERAPIES, SOME TO CONSIDER MIGHT BE: MUSIC & GONG THERAPY; EMDR; ART THERAPY; SAND TRAY THERAPY; DANCE AND MOVEMENT THERAPY; SOMATIC THERAPY; NATURE THERAPY.*
- *TO RETRAIN YOURSELVES, YOU NEED OTHER PEOPLE. PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU AND FILL YOUR MIND WITH KINDER PERSPECTIVES. YOU NEED TO DARE TO LEAN ON THEM (NOT AN EASY MOVE FOR PEOPLE WHO FEEL UNDESERVING IN THE FIRST PLACE), AND ASK FOR THEIR HELP IN TAMING THE CRITICAL INNER VOICE. PERHAPS BE CURIOUS ABOUT WHY YOUR FIRST IMPULSE IS TO FORGIVE THE CRITIC AND BLAME YOURSELF.*



Many of us may have become adept at avoiding uncomfortable or unpleasant emotions – whether because we are distracted by our busy lives, or because we are simply unable to cope with what we might find. The first steps towards self-compassion are to sit with the discomfort of getting to know the inner critic, and to have awareness of our inner world:

What triggers feelings of anger, disgust or shame?

How do you instinctively react to those feelings?

What blocks or resistance do you feel?

What is the content (and tone) of your internal monologue?