

Developing Your Nurturing Inner Voice

Many people have an internal voice that is constantly criticizing them and attacking their self-worth. This voice may have originated with a parent, a teacher, or another overly critical adult in your childhood. It may be a mixture of harsh comments you heard when you were growing up. You may not even be able to remember just where or when the criticizing voice in your head appeared, but it is important to know that you don't have to listen to it anymore.

Instead of listening to the critical voices in your head, you can develop a nurturing inner voice that you can listen to when you are feeling low and you are questioning your self-worth.

Begin by writing down five nurturing statements that you want to hear. These are the kind of statements that someone who cares deeply about you might say to you.

Some examples might be:

I'm really proud of what you have accomplished.

You always amaze me.

You should give yourself more credit for all that you do.

Now write in things you'd like to hear:

Now think of someone you consider to be very nurturing. It can be someone you know, or it can be someone you don't know well at all but you think of as a nurturing person. It could even be someone from fiction or someone you made up in your mind.

Now Imagine that this person is saying any or all of the above statements to you. Describe the situation (room, clothing, body position) you are in.

Think about this scene until it is very vivid in your mind. What else is this person saying to you or doing that makes you feel cared for?

What are you saying back?

Now change the channel to your critical voice, just for moment. Imagine that your critical voice is back talking to you in your head. What is it saying?

Now change the voice in your head back to your nurturing voice. Was this easy to do? With practice you can switch to your nurturing voice whenever you hear your critical voice.

Rate this exercise on a 1-10 scale.

_____ How helpful was this exercise (1=Not at all and 10=Very Helpful)

_____ How often do you think you can use this exercise? (1=Seldom and 10=Very often)

_____ How much you think this exercise will help you in your daily life? (1=Probably not and 10=A great deal)