

Critical Inner Voice Paper

Here are your choices:

1. Pick someone else in the class (and they can choose you as well). Have this person stand behind you and read your critical inner voice to you. This could be the whole rant (original or revised) or it could just be the themes that you picked out. At various points during this, or all at the end, respond aloud to your critical inner voice in the rational but firm way that you have planned out.
2. Record your voice reading your critical inner voice (again this could be your original, a revised version, or just the themes) and respond aloud to your own voice, again, in the rational but firm way that you have planned out.

After completing #1 or #2, write about the experience (minimum 1 full page; no maximum – not grading on length – all or nothing). Here are some questions you could explore:

1. How “loud” is your critical inner voice? How much of a role does it play in your every day life?
2. How dominant is guilt as an emotion that you feel in your every day life? How much of what you do is motivated by the desire to reduce guilt?
3. Can you think of examples of times you have committed “self-sabotage,” setting yourself up to get in trouble, or to fail, or to ruin something important to you? How might this be connected to your critical inner voice?
4. Reflect on where you think your critical inner voice comes from – what experiences and/or people.
5. What were some of the themes that you picked up on in your critical inner voice, and how have these specific attacks affected your daily life and behavior?
6. Say whatever you would like about the experience of writing out your critical inner voice, and/or hearing and responding to it.
7. How can you use this experience to make positive change in your life? How can you permanently alter the internal dialogue? Also, think about how the critical inner voice limits you, and then think of a few specific actions you could take, or specific consistent changes you could make in your daily living, that would be for the good and would break through the limitations placed on you by your critical inner voice.