

SELF-CRITICISM

JOURNAL PROMPTS



Self-criticism is an automatic pattern that chips away at your well-being. Think of it as a subtle saboteur, causing anxiety and depression, discouraging you from embracing new experiences and taking much-needed risks. Left unattended, it casts shadows on achievement and leaves you doubting your relationships. These journal prompts are crafted to guide you in peeling back the layers, the first crucial steps towards a more fulfilling and joyous life.

How does self-criticism show up for me?

What was happening right before the self-criticism showed up?

What does some part of me see as the benefit of the self-criticism?



Notice how self-criticism or self-attack shows up for you.

Some examples are:

- **Self-talk**, such as thinking or saying to yourself, "I'm so stupid", "I'm so awkward"; using a harsh tone with yourself.
- **Emotions** such as guilt or shame - notice that some part of you is guilt-ing or shaming you.
- **Other feelings**, such as a dragged down feeling - notice that some part of you is dragging you down.

Write down all the ways in which you notice self-criticism showing up for you.

1

Build on your self-awareness by noticing what was happening right before a part of you started criticising or attacking you. It may not be obvious at first. For some people the criticism will follow a "mistake" that they've made, and for others criticism may arise as soon as they start thinking about making changes, feel challenged, or are embarking on something positive or productive. Try to pick out your unique pattern, and discuss with your therapist if you are not sure.

2

Self-criticism and self-attack tends to result in feelings of depression and low mood - which makes sense, it's easy to imagine how someone else would feel if you treated them this way. But the part of you that is hurting you doesn't see it that way, has at some point learned to treat you this way, and thinks it is benefitting you. What does the part of you see as the benefit? Is it so you do better next time? Is so you get in before someone else criticises you? Is it your mind's way to stop you from making changes, even positive ones, because to some part of you that is the really scary thing?

3

