

The inner critic

Finding a kinder way to speak to yourself

The inner critic is a name for harsh, self-critical thoughts. It can sound convincing, but it does not give the whole picture of who you are.

What it can look like

Harsh self-judgement

After a setback, you may judge your whole self rather than one situation or action.

Impossible standards

You may overlook what went well and focus on anything that fell short.

How you might feel

Self-criticism can leave you feeling anxious, ashamed or discouraged. A kinder response can acknowledge difficulty without attacking your worth.

What may help

- Notice the exact words you are saying to yourself.
- Ask what you would say to a friend in the same situation.
- Try a fairer response that recognises effort and what you can learn.

You can learn without putting yourself down.