
Apr 9 2018 – Session 8 (AOC Week 25)

Presence and Purpose Emphasis

- **The Inner Critic** (based on the work of Tara Mohr in her book Play Big)
- **The Inner Mentor** (based on the work of Tara Mohr in her book Play Big)

Agents of Change (AOC) 2017/2018 program

The Inner Critic

(based on the work of Tara Mohr in her book Play Big)

related to the Risk Manager dynamic
(from Shadowwork and CIYO Leadership Archetypes work)
and Impostor Syndrome

The Inner Critic

Key Concepts for Understanding the Inner Critic

- **All women grapple with the inner critic, but it shows up in different domains for different women** - some may struggle with it more in the arena of work, others with body image, others with mothering, others in their creative life, and so on.
- **There are common (though not universal) qualities of the inner critic voice** that can help us recognize the critic when it speaks up (see next slide).
- **We often confuse the inner critic with realistic thinking**, but we can differentiate them through their different “tones” and way of approaching problems.
- **It is crucial to remember: that the inner critic is an expression of our safety instinct** – part of us that wants us to avoid any emotional risk/harm. This part misleads us as it is only concerned with avoiding discomfort; it has no interest in fulfillment, joy, or self- actualization.
- **The Inner Critic and your context** - Women who have worked or studied in environments where critical thinking is the dominant mode, may find they have inadvertently strengthened the voice of their inner critic.

The Inner Critic

How to recognize the Inner Critic?

The 11 qualities Tara Mohr lists to help us identify the Inner Critic's 'voice':

1. Harsh, rude, mean
2. Binary
3. Ostensibly, the voice of reason
4. The voice of "you aren't ready yet"
5. The voice of "you aren't good at math / negotiating / technical stuff"
6. The voice of body-perfectionism
7. The tape
8. A broken record
9. Irrational but persistent
10. The one-two punch
11. The inner critic may take inspiration from critical people in your life

The Inner Critic

Inner Critic versus Realistic Thinking?

Inner Critic	Realistic Thinking
Definite pronouncements with little real evidence	Curious questions + interest in evidence
Black and white	Able to see the gray
Yes/no questions (“Is it possible?”)	Open ended questions (“How might it be possible? What part is possible?” etc)
Repetitive	Forward-moving
Focuses on problems/lacking areas	Seeks solutions
Speaks in anxious tone	Speaks in calmer tone

The Inner Critic

When does it show up most strongly?

- **Speak up most loudly and most vocally when we are considering (or taking) bigger steps that bring new levels of exposure**, visibility, praise, potential criticism. An Inner Critic flare up can be a sign of being on the right path!
- **The inner critic may be informed and exacerbated by outer critics in our lives**, but it is not “caused” by them – the inner critic arises in us even without the presence of critical others in our lives.
- **We are not trying to get rid of the critic** – because we are all hardwired to have one! Self-doubt will continue showing up as we step into big changes. The goal is to learn how to hear the Inner Critic voice and not take direction from it.

Ultimately - We need to shift our perfectionist vision of ourselves from “completely confident at all times” to “full of self-doubt and still doing our thing”. i.e. we are best served when we make peace with the fact that our Inner Critic/s will not go away, but we can quiet the message down

The Inner Critic

Journaling - Identifying your very own Inner Critic

- What does your critic say? Write down some of your inner critic's most frequently voiced beliefs.
- Who from your current life or past does the inner critic echo or build upon when it speaks? Family members, old teachers, cultural messages?
- How would you describe your inner critic? Anxious? People-pleasing? Persistent? Pick five words that describe it.
- Now create your Inner Critic character
- Name your Inner Critic character, and give it a name or names.

The Inner Critic

Identifying your very own Inner Critic – more journaling questions – Going deeper

- What are your inner critic's motivations?
- Has your critic been a motivating ally for you in the past? What have been the costs and benefits of relying on the critic as a motivator?
- How did time spent in critical-thinking centric work or academic environments affect your inner critic?
- When have you heard your critic speak up most loudly? What visibility or vulnerability were you facing then?

The Inner Critic

How to quiet the Inner Critic?

Identify the Inner Critic as a Voice and/or a Character

1. Label and notice the Inner Critic voice.
2. Separate the “I” from the Inner Critic.
3. Create a character that personifies your Inner Critic.

Shape a New Perspective on the Inner Critic

1. Bring compassion to its motives. Ask: “What does my safety instinct not like?”
2. Look for the humor in what it is saying.
3. Check in with your Inner Mentor.
4. Choose a core value to let lead you instead.

Somatic Tools

1. Remove your critic from the scene.
2. Pantomime putting all your inner critic thoughts into a vessel (a cup or box).
3. Picture the voice receding into space.
4. Imagine you can simply turn down the volume on the critic’s voice.

The Inner Mentor

(based on the work of Tara Mohr in her book *Play Big* and on CTI coaching work)

related to Sovereign Leadership Archetype in CIYO programs

The Inner Mentor

Key Concepts for Understanding the Inner Mentor

- The inner mentor can be understood as: the voice of inner wisdom; a feeling of centeredness and love; a vision of our more authentic or actualized selves; a picture of the future life we long to create.
- Inner Mentor visualization-related tips:
 - Typically, what women encounter in the inner mentor visualization includes both literal and symbolic elements.
 - The inner mentor may speak to us through words, imagery, facial expressions, body language or simply feelings she conveys.
 - Often, some of our inner mentor's life, or some of what she says is surprising, baffling, or even troubling to us – it may be at odds with our conscious plans. But much of what she says is resonant and moving for us.

The Inner Mentor

How to recognize the voice of the Inner Mentor

- Is simple and relatively succinct
- Feels loving
- Does not feel cerebral – feels connected to heart and body
- May contain or be communicated through visual elements
- May be surprising or baffling
- Will be emotionally moving to the client and often to you as coach as well

Clues that you may not yet be accessing your Inner Mentor (it takes practice!)

- Complex or intricate guidance
- Your energy hasn't shifted out of anxiety or adrenaline yet
- Rapid or complex speech when describing the Inner Mentor
- Feels like you are still “in your head”/overly cerebral/overly Magician archetype

The Inner Mentor

Growing into our Inner Mentor

You can invite your Inner Mentor / your own centered wisdom into your life and decision-making more often by consciously pausing to consider:

- What would she say?
- What would she be wearing as she comes to support me in my dilemma?
- What would her weekly calendar look like? What would she prioritize?
- What would she do in this situation? What questions would she encourage me to consider? What possibilities would she guide me to explore
- What are the big things and the little things about this situation?