



7 tools to

coach your

inner critic

by beatrice zornek



ABOUT

Hi - I'm Beatrice. I'm a Transformational Life Coach and I specialise in Inner Critic coaching.

This book is dedicated to those of you who resonate with the concept of the Inner Critic and want to learn how to coach your own inner voices.

Fifteen years ago, I had a breakdown in the bread aisle of a supermarket over someone telling me I was stupid in an online game. During that period, I remember that most of my energy was used to just try and “keep it together” and stay functional on surface level. And then I embarked on a journey to understand what was going on for me - I wanted to “stop feeling this way”. Along the way, I have learned that it's not possible – nor is it wise – to “wish” the Inner Critic away into inexistence. The Inner Critic has a valuable purpose and wisdom which I hope you will learn to harvest and use for your own healing.

My own journey coaching my Inner Critic (her name is Barbara by the way, or Babs for her friends) – my journey has been completely transformational, and I have found joy, harmony, and inner peace in a place that previously felt tense, difficult, and conflicting.

To help you on your journey, I have created these tools that are simple, accessible, and practical. However, they are profound and sometimes involve emotional work with yourself, so it's essential to give yourself time to tap into each tool. I hope they help you discover a place of joy, harmony, and inner peace in your own life.

Be well,

Beatrice Lomuel .

1. PARENT, ADULT, CHILD

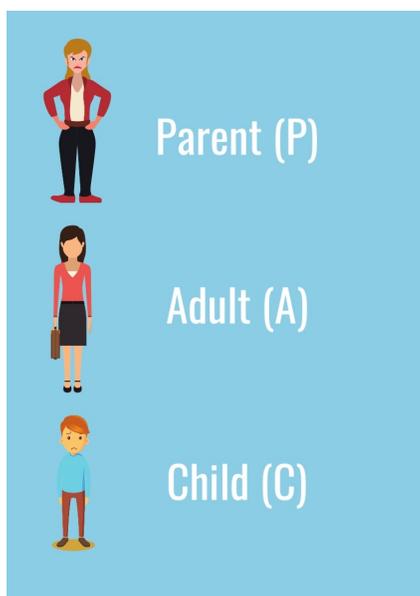


If you're reading this book, I'll take a stab in the dark and say you're familiar with your Inner Critic. It's that inner voice that sounds slightly different to your normal internal voice. You might recognise it as a voice that creates tension and conflict in your physical or mental body.

At the foundation of my Inner Critic work, I use a psychotherapy and coaching method called Transactional Analysis (TA). TA uses very accessible language – you don't need a degree in psychotherapy or coaching to understand the lingo.

A core principle in TA is the Parent-Adult-Child (PAC) model.

The PAC model explains how we experience different inner voices. It helps create an awareness of which voice we're in at any given time. This awareness of the inner voice helps us understand it. With some practice, we can learn to switch between voices in a way that supports us most at the time. All our inner voices can be directed internally (towards ourselves) or externally (towards others).



If you look at this simple diagram on the left representing the Parent, Adult and Child, which one do you think might be your Inner Critic?

It's surprising how many people can immediately – and accurately – identify that our Inner Critic is represented by the Parent.

The Parent is a voice we learn as children from our own parents, teachers, or other significant adults in our life. In our early childhood, we learn about the world and how it works. When we are born, the world is void of rules, right and wrong, good or bad, desirable or undesirable. Over time, with the guidance of the adults in our lives, we build a lens of how we “should,” “must,” or “can't” behave in order to survive and in order to gain

approval, affection, validation, and security.

The **Parent** voice is multi-faceted. At times, it has offered us love, care, and protection. Other

1.

PARENT, ADULT, CHILD (CONTINUED)

times, it may have criticised and put us down, making us feel inadequate or fearful. This criticism may have made us feel we need to do better and try harder, in order to achieve that ultimate approval and security, and avoid the risk of abandonment. Know that even if our parents and other adults have given us these messages, they are merely projections that they have put on us, based on their own past experiences, and to the best of their own ability at the time. Although parents (and, hence, the Parent voice) generally mean well, they may sometimes lack in ability, kindness, or awareness.

My Inner Critic, Barbara, has often said to me: “That’s no good. I’m sure **others** can do better than **you**.”

The **Child** voice represents that part of us that might sometimes feel scared, helpless, fearful – or other times, playful, creative, and curious. This Child is still us. It’s us at a young age. We still get triggered in our adult life, and, in the process, experience that all-too-familiar feeling we had a long time ago. This may be an early memory of when we felt we had to behave a certain way to preserve harmony in relationship with the adults in our lives. As children, we may

have taken responsibility for how our parents felt and behaved towards us. We may have feared that by overstepping the boundaries, we may lose the love or protection of the people upon whom we necessarily depended.

This early-learned behaviour sometimes carries on into our adult life, in relationship with others. You may notice sometimes at work when someone speaks in a certain tone, that you feel criticised or put down. You may feel guilty or responsible for how they behave towards you.

Our Child is also multi-faceted, just like our Parent. Our Child can be a good boy or girl, who follows the rules and eats all of their veggies. Children can be playful, curious, cheeky, naughty, or rebellious. They can be happy or they can throw a tantrum.

Unlike the Child and the Parent, the Adult isn’t multi-faceted.

The **Adult** represents our present self. It has access to all our life experience and wisdom and is able to make complex rational decisions. The Adult is present, resourceful, and observant. The Adult also represents you: all the wisdom, knowledge, and life experience you’ve accumulated over the years. When in Adult, you are able to become

1.

PARENT, ADULT, CHILD (CONTINUED)

aware of your inner dialogue and hold space for it, while continuing to go about your daily life.

Many therapy and coaching approaches focus on becoming aware of your inner voices and switching into Adult. Often, that's all that's required to go back into Adult: an exercise of awareness, which allows you to see what you need in order to switch back into your most resourceful self. The ability to initiate this shift is powerful and profound in itself. Who doesn't want to feel resourceful, present, and able to solve complex problems, particularly when faced with an internal conflict?

In my own journey, however, I have discovered that switching into the Adult voice is often easier said than done, and may create temporary shifts, rather than transformational, permanent ones. Rather than trying to be an Adult all the time, I have discovered magic and power in playing with all of our inner voices – parent, child, and adult - with vulnerability, compassion, and self love.

While I have a lot of respect and love for the TA model, I have developed my own model around it, so if you are familiar with it, please be aware that the terminology used in this book and the tools may be different from the original theory. In straying from the traditional TA model, I would like to invite you to explore your inner world with awareness and kindness, noticing how you feel about each voice that is uncovered as you navigate the complex, beautiful world of your psyche.

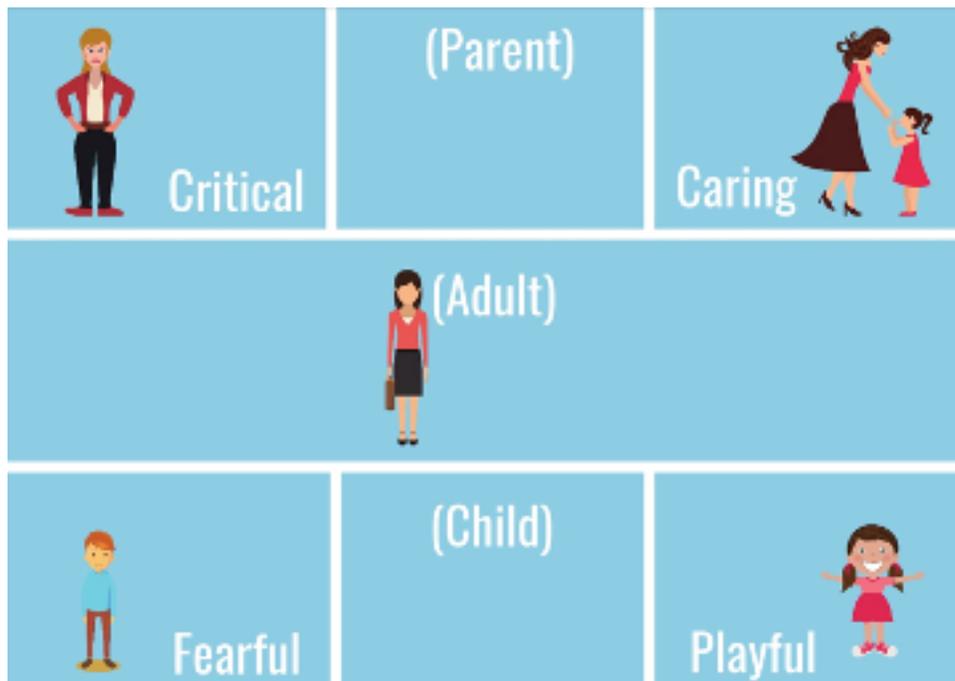
Rather than aiming for an “ideal” part of us that is “lacking” (our Adult) when our Inner Critic comes in, I invite you to take a journey within yourself with vulnerability. Allow that vulnerability to exist, just like any other feeling, such as joy, happiness, or bliss.

Rather than perceiving your Inner Critic as an undesirable feeling or negative energy, make room for it to share its wisdom – just like a book waiting to be opened, explored, and learned.

This inner work can be profound, which is why instead of encouraging you to “switch” into Adult, I am inviting you on a journey of deeper exploration of all your voices.

1. PARENT, ADULT, CHILD (CONTINUED)

As we've been talking about the facets of the Parent (critical, rules, nurturing, caring), and the



facets of the Child (following rules, fearful, playful, curious), I'd like to introduce a more nuanced version of the Parent-Adult-Child (PAC) model in the diagram on the left.

Our Inner Parent can be Critical or Caring.

Our Inner Child can be Fearful or Playful.

If you think about the facets I've added to the Parent and the Child, can you intuit some

behaviours or messages you might receive in each voice?

Here are some examples of messages they might be giving us:

- **Critical Parent:** "You can't do it. You shouldn't do that. That's not good enough"
- **Caring Parent:** "I love you. I support you. You can do it!"
- **Fearful Child:** "I can't do this. I shouldn't do that. I must be better/nice/kind/perfect"
- **Playful Child:** "I wonder what will happen if I try it like this? I like to play! No, I won't do that!"
- **Adult:** I am aware of these voices and I am present in here and now, able to access all my tools and resources without restriction.

1.

PARENT, ADULT, CHILD (CONTINUED)

So how does the PAC model help us coach our Inner Critic?

Whenever we face an inner conflict, understanding the PAC model helps us become aware of the voice we are in.

By separating these voices, we can allow them to come “online,” one at a time, to express what they need to tell us.

Our inner voices are like having our headphones on with a different song playing in each ear. The sound becomes confusing and difficult to discern. Once we take one headphone off, the melody in that ear will become clear. Similarly, by allowing the inner voices to take turns, they will become clear, and so will their beautiful wisdom.

I say wisdom because if you detach yourself from the story or the meaning you’ve given to the feelings you experience, you will come to see that everything we feel is simply feedback to ourselves, wisdom waiting to be learned, understood, and integrated. The only thing that’s holding us back from harvesting this wisdom is ourselves – and how we have learned (or chose) to define what our feelings **mean**.

2. MEET YOUR INNER CRITIC



Even though you are aware that your Inner Critic is your own internal voice, you may have found it difficult to say "hey, you're here and I'm integrating you with love and harmony."

The instinct is to try and "push it down." To "silence" or "destroy" it.

What if, instead of trying to wish it into disappearance, we allowed it to be, honoured it, and made it real, just as it invites us?

That's exactly what this exercise is. I would invite you to make your Inner Critic real. To imagine what they look like and build detail around them.

Think about these questions as you imagine your own Inner Critic:

How old is your Inner Critic?

What gender are they?

What do they look like?

What is their hair length and colour?

What is their facial expression?

What else do you notice about your Inner Critic's appearance?

Now, take a moment to tap into your heart and decide on a name for your Inner Critic. If it doesn't come right away, just sit with your eyes closed, in silence, and the name will surely come to you.

Now that you have a visual image of your Inner Critic, a really powerful exercise is to draw them. You don't have to be talented at drawing – remember that's your Inner Critic telling you that you can't draw!

Take a few minutes to draw your Inner Critic. I would love to see your visual representation!

Below is my own Inner Critic – meet Barbara:



3.

CHAIR WORK



How is it useful to have a visual representation of our Inner Critic?

The more detail you build around a vague concept, the more easy it will be to access and notice it. If you see a figure in the dark, you might identify it's a human and not a dog. But you may not be able to identify who that person is.

But, if you turn on the light, you will see who the person is, in great detail.

And you will recognise it right away: “Ahh Barbara, please do come in.”

And you will even be able to have a conversation with them.

A very powerful exercise used in coaching with inner voice dialogue is Chair Work. You can do this by yourself at home, with just some chairs in a room.

Setup: Place two chairs facing each other.

One chair will represent **You** (the present you), and the other one – your **Inner Critic**. Especially if you're doing this by yourself, it's important to distinguish between the two chairs. When you're doing deep emotion(al) work, it's easy to lose track of

which is which.

Take a bit of time to personalize the two chairs. You could place a post-it note with your name on one chair, and your Inner Critic's name on the other chair. You can even stick the picture of your Inner Critic on it, so it's more realistic.

It's important to have uninterrupted privacy for half an hour to an hour when you do this exercise, so you can talk out loud.

Start the exercise by sitting in the “You” chair and telling your Inner Critic what you want to communicate to them. Imagine your Inner Critic is sitting in front of you. What would you like your them to know?

Give yourself time to express what you want to say. This could be brief, or you might surprise yourself at how many things were bottled up inside, waiting to come out.

Once you've finished what you want to tell them, move into the Inner Critic chair. Take a moment to embody your Inner Critic, based on everything you know about them. How they look. How their posture might look. What would you Inner Critic do with their arms? Cross them? Hold them in their lap?

3.

CHAIR WORK (CONTINUED)

How would they look at you? Where might the tension be in their body? Take a moment to truly embody that person, becoming your Inner Critic, assuming their physicality, anatomy and posture... and then reply to the message you were just given.

As you're sitting in the Inner Critic chair, facing You, let the Inner Critic say what they want to communicate to You. Let the Inner Critic speak their truth and respond to what You had to say.

Once the Inner Critic has told their piece, swap chairs and respond from the "You" chair, facing the Inner Critic. You may want to tell them how that's made you feel. Or ask them a question. Or sit in silence.

Whenever a new thought comes up, identify whether it's You or your Inner Critic – and sit in the right chair.

This work can be painful, but incredibly insightful. If we allow the dialogue to continue for a while, we might discover wisdom, protection, and love in the Inner Critic, where previously we only saw it as ruthless, harsh or mean.

This exercise can be taken further, by adding one or two more elements to it:

The Observer: the Observer is a new position you can take, standing in front of the two chairs, noticing what is happening in the dynamic between these two people (You and your Inner Critic). If you stand in front of the chairs and look at the two people's dialogue as if you were an uninvolved observer, what might you notice about these two people?

The Distant Observer: it can be helpful to step as far back (physically) from the chairs as a Distant Observer, or an observer of life, noticing that dynamic from very far away. If you notice these two people's dialogue, what might you observe from this new, very distant position that maybe you didn't notice before?

3.

CHAIR WORK (CONTINUED)

Chair Work can also be very profound when practiced with a coach or a facilitator who can guide and observe you. By having someone by your side, you can fully immerse yourself in the exercise without worrying about the logistics of it. If you do have a facilitator, it's important that it's someone non-judgemental, empathetic, and trustworthy who can hold space for you. I do this exercise with my clients and it's wonderful to see them immerse themselves in the dialogue while having someone holding that space for them. A trained facilitator or coach can help tease the blocks and the conflict out and help you get further in defining how you choose to redefine your inner narrative.

If you don't have a facilitator by your side, have a friend or a family member to call on when you've finished.

This profound work can bring out lots of emotions, so it's important to know that there's someone there to support you emotionally if some wounds come out that need to be held in a space of love and kindness.

4. VOICE PLAY



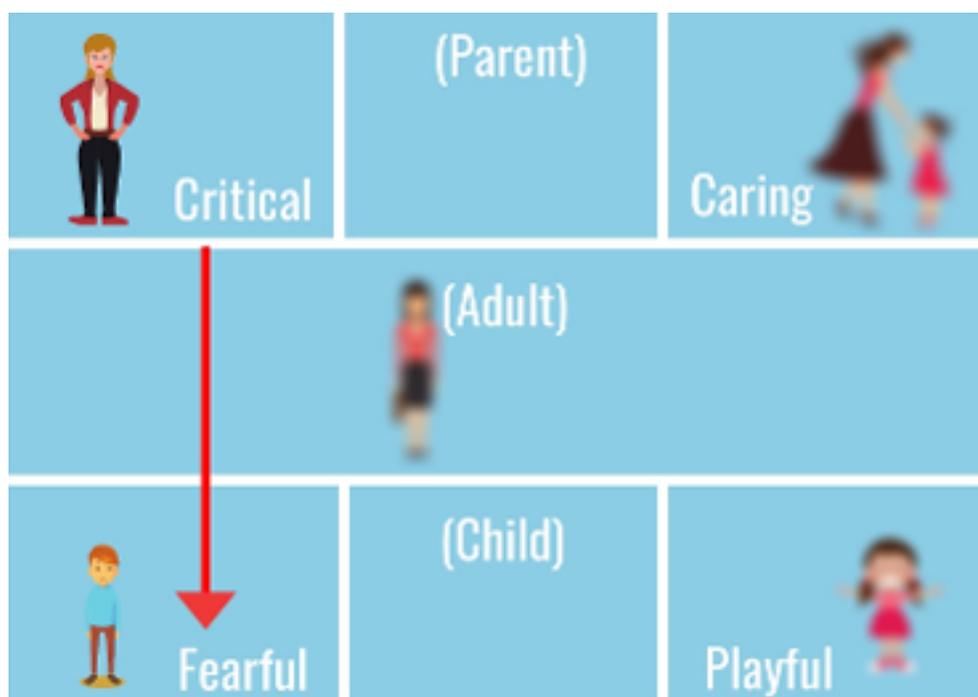
This is a method I have developed myself over 15 years on my journey of coaching my Inner Critic. I am now sharing this method for the first time. This tool is at the core of my own coaching and healing and I love using it in my work with my clients.

This method is using the Parent-Adult-Child (PAC) model.

This inner voice exercise is very powerful in helping us reframe our Inner Critic. It involves switching between inner voices. This helps us become aware of what's going on in our mind at any given time. We are all too familiar with the conflict and tension, but being able to make sense of it is so meaningful. By knowing what's happening inside our mind, it's much easier to decide on the next step.

Below are three steps of this exercise.

1. Current situation – Critical Parent/Fearful Child



The conflict starts when the Inner Critic (Critical Parent) voice comes on, criticising away. The important thing in this stage is to become aware – not so much of what the Inner Critic is **saying** – but who they are **speaking to**.

Imagine you're in a dark room, and all you have is a flashlight. You turn on the flashlight, and it emits powerful rays of light.

4.

VOICE PLAY (CONTINUED)

The light can be blinding if you turn it towards your eyes and focus on it.

When the Inner Critic (Critical Parent) flashes up, our limbic system goes in overdrive, putting us in a fear response – activating the Inner Fearful Child, just like a “deer in the headlights”. More often than not, we get stuck in this stage, rejecting and repelling that emotion, that blinding painful light, trying to push it away and make it disappear.

But focusing on the Inner Critic’s message is as unnecessary as it is to turn that blinding light towards our eyes. The flashlight is not harmful in and of itself. The flashlight is only there to enable us to see something that wasn’t visible to us before, when we were in the dark.

If instead of blinding yourself with this light, you turn it around, you will be able to see around yourself and make sense of the world around you.

Just like the bright flashlight, the Inner Critic (Critical Parent) sheds light on another part of ourselves: our Inner Fearful Child.

Our Inner Critic doesn’t want to harm us, like we may have previously misunderstood. They want to shed light on the feelings – and ultimately, the needs – of our Inner Child.

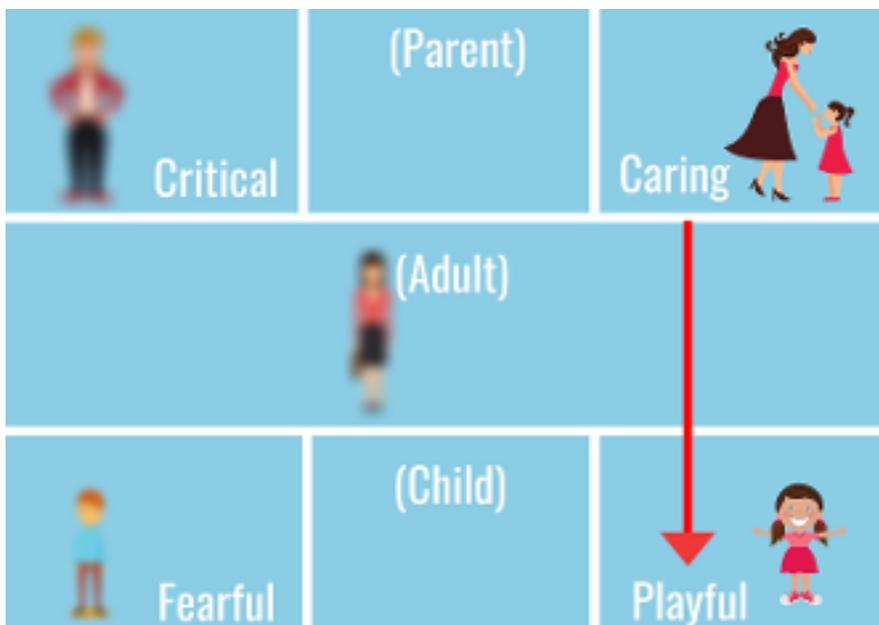
The Fearful Inner Child knows they must follow rules in order to obtain the love and validation from their parents and other significant adults. The Inner Fearful Child may also feel helpless, sad, or hopeless because of the hardship and difficulties they might be experiencing. They might feel afraid or unloved and scared when faced with the relentless bashing from their Inner Critic.

Whenever you feel fear, sadness, hopelessness – stop for a moment to identify if that might be your Inner Fearful Child.

4. VOICE PLAY (CONTINUED)

Step 2. Replace the Inner Critical Parent with the Inner Caring Parent

The Inner Critical Parent is making us aware that there is a Child there, within us, asking for love and nurturing. That Child is scared, fearful, worried, sad. If we stay stuck in an Inner Critic loop, we might continue bashing our Inner Child, reinforcing the message that we are not worthy of love.



But know that this is just our automatic response. We get stuck in the feeling of the moment, instead of allowing ourselves to access a deeper level of awareness.

The more you start to explore your inner world with awareness, you may discover that your Critical Parent isn't the only parental voice within yourself.

We also have an **Inner Caring Parent**.

The Caring Parent is that part of you who is able to offer love, care, protection, validation, encouragement, and support to your Inner Child.

You might think you're not capable to draw this inner part out.

But know that the Caring Parent is not a voice we must learn, build, or develop over many years and with a lot of study. We already have an Inner Caring Parent.

4.

VOICE PLAY (CONTINUED)

Imagine that you're walking on the street late at night, and in front of you appears a 5- or 6-year-old child, bruised, scared, confused, and crying. As an adult (or as a parent yourself) noticing this situation, what might you do? Would you start shouting at this scared child, telling them that they're useless for getting lost, that they are worthless for crying, and that they will never amount to anything?

Or might you give them a warm embrace, moving the strands of hair off their scared, tearful little face, reassuring and helping them find safe passage back home?

How could we use this nurturing energy within ourselves, to have a conversation with our Inner Child and reassure them that even if we may have forgotten about them for a little while, we can see them now? How could we reassure our Inner Child that we are there for them, wipe the tears off their face and hold them in a safe embrace, letting them know that now that we've discovered them, we will never let them go?

Our Inner Child is safe and they will never be abandoned by us. We will hold their hand and lead them to safety and be mindful of their existence and needs, and listen to them whenever they need to speak.

Whether we're talking about the Inner Child, the Nurturing Parent or the Critical Parent, they are all energies that exist within us, and they are all important and helpful. There is nothing inherently wrong with any of these voices.

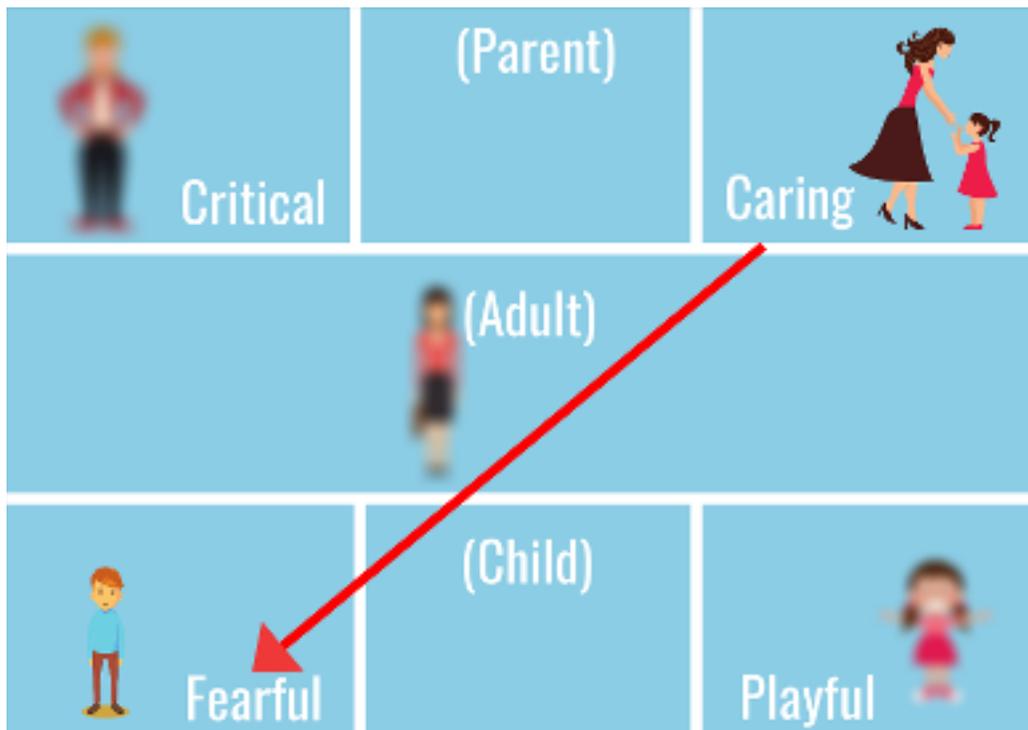
How might we thank our Inner Critic for existing, knowing that without its harsh messages, we may have never become aware of what our Inner Child was feeling?

What would it take for us to shift this previous perspective that the Inner Critic is a bad thing, like a beast we must destroy at any cost, and instead see them for what they actually are: a useful internal resource that enables us to become aware of the rich, profound and mysterious world taking place within us?

4.

VOICE PLAY (CONTINUED)

3. Replace the Fearful Child with the Playful Child



The last part I'd like to talk about, is the Playful Child.

Your Caring Parent is the voice who can shed light on the Playful Child and make us aware of their existence. The Inner Playful Child is creative, cheeky, fun, and curious.

But if you're scared, fearful, bruised, and hurt, how could you be creative and in the mood

for fun and play?

For us to access this creative energy within us – our Inner Playful Child - it's essential to first look after our Inner Fearful Child's need for protection, security, and validation. It is only then – when our Inner Child feels seen, loved, and safe – that they are able to loosen up, see beyond the hurt and pain, and open their eyes to the marvelous playground that is life, where there are many opportunities and a beautiful unexplored world to discover.

As we focus that energy of kindness and compassionate love towards our Inner Child, notice how these hard shackles of fear, tension, and abandonment suddenly loosen up and vanish on their own. Notice how your Child becomes open to the new and exciting world being revealed in front of your eyes.

4.

VOICE PLAY (CONTINUED)

When we offer ourselves the love and safety we need, we allow ourselves to say:

“Open your eyes, my Inner Child. There is a beautiful world out there that can’t wait for you to explore it. Your responsibility, my darling Inner Child, is to play, be curious, and to be happy. Everything else, my dear Child, is my responsibility, the Adult in me, that resourceful, wise person within me who can draw on my life experience and knowledge. You, my darling 5-year old, you are allowed to experience the novelty and beauty of the world with curious playfulness. You can now let go of all the responsibility you’ve taken upon yourself for all these years, knowing that I am here to protect and look after you. And I will never leave your side.”

Notice the shift in energy when you give this new permission to your Inner Child?

You can’t skip from the Inner Critic to the Playful Child.

In order to access that space of creativity and playfulness, we need to first acknowledge our Child’s need for love, safety and affection. Know that there is no weakness in needing love and affection. We

crave it and often expect it in our connection with others. But how could another person heal the trauma and burden we’ve carried on our shoulders for so many years? How could someone else ever erase the labels of “not enough” and “not worthy” that we stamped on our own foreheads? And ultimately – but crucially – what would drive us to want another person take responsibility for all our trauma and for the healing that our precious little hearts crave?

The empowerment is in the willingness to take responsibility for our own selves. It’s in accepting ourselves unconditionally – just like in the past we’ve loved and given to others, leaving nothing for ourselves. Just like we’ve thought that if we love others enough, perhaps – just perhaps – some day, that love will come back to us and heal us and save us and everything will be okay again. Just like the princess waiting for her Prince Charming to rescue her from the tower.

We become saviours of others in the hope and infinite desire that some day, someone will save us in return.

4.

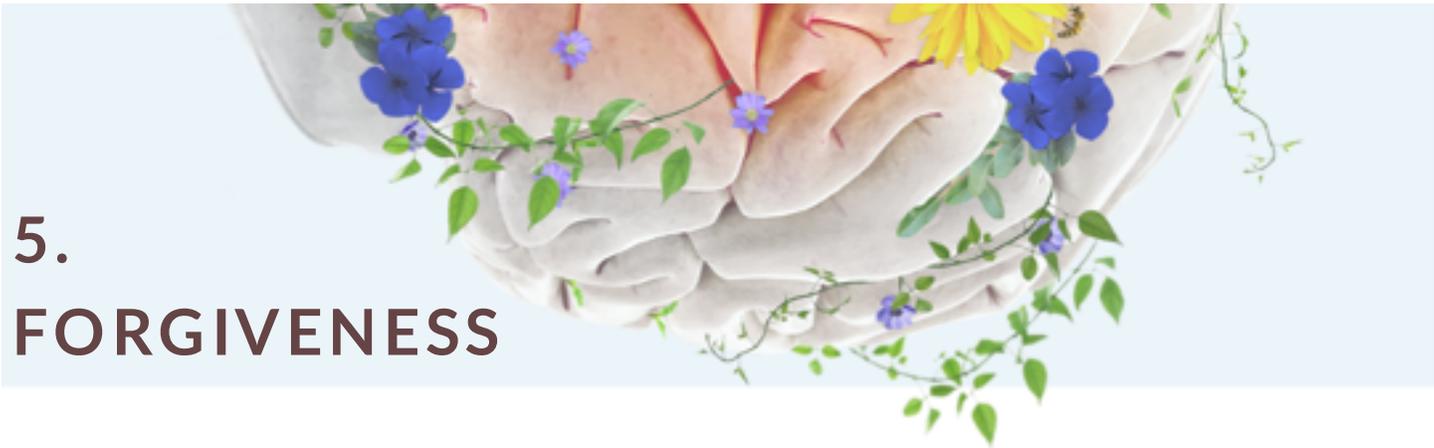
VOICE PLAY (CONTINUED)

But what if, as Matt Licata says in his book "The Path is Everywhere", “**you** are the saviour you have been looking for”?

What if our energy and immense desire to rescue others is there to show us a path? A path that doesn't lead us to others, but one that leads us back to ourselves.

If we turn the focus of this saviour energy towards ourselves, with new and loving commitment, what might we discover within ourselves?

*In a misguided rush to reach a destination where everything will finally be okay – a destination that we just can't seem to be able to reach, no matter how hard we try – we may have missed that the answer has been staring us right in the face all this time:
you are your own destination.*



5. FORGIVENESS

The Inner Critic voice is deeply rooted in messages we've learned in our early development. If I ask you, who was that person in your life who has now become your Inner Critic – you could probably name that person right away.

If we zoom in on this, we will find that there might be one dominant person who has become our Inner Critic. And there might also be other people or experiences that contributed to who our Inner Critic is today: perhaps both our parents, siblings, extended family, teachers, that bully in school...

Louise Hay, author of *You Can Heal Your Life*, proposes an exercise of forgiveness which is profound and full of kindness and healing energy.

Think about all the people who have contributed to creating your Inner Critic voice.

Go on, give yourself some time now to write down the names of the people who might have put you down and criticised you, who didn't believe in you or didn't love you like you needed.

People who contributed to my Inner Critic:

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Now, start with the first name on the list, and say:

“The person I need to forgive is and I forgive you for “

For some of the people in your Inner Critic, you might have a lot of things to forgive. Give yourself time to acknowledge what they need forgiveness for.

5. FORGIVENESS (CONTINUED)

With others, you may only need to forgive one or two things.

Once you have forgiven as much as you can for now, turn your attention inwards.

Say out loud:

“I forgive myself for

Spend a few minutes going through the things in your heart that may need forgiveness. As you start saying the words, you will access deeper and deeper levels of memories you’ve been holding onto for many years.

This work isn’t easy. Some things may be deeply embedded in our narrative and identity, that we might think it’s unfathomable to forgive other people for what they’ve done – or even ourselves. If you’re finding it difficult to say the words and express forgiveness towards people who have caused pain, then just spend the time to acknowledge those things. You can still acknowledge what you’d like to forgive, even if some things are too painful – for now.



6. LETTING GO

Forgiveness is a powerful healing energy that can enable us to release the long-term burden that we've been – consciously or unconsciously – carrying on our little fragile Inner Child shoulders for all these years.

By allowing ourselves to forgive, we create a space that allows us to let go of the emotional debris it leaves behind.

Letting go of the old thoughts and feelings that no longer serve us is essential in order to make room for new thoughts and feelings that we want to create in our lives.

I'm not saying we should be grateful for difficulties we may have experienced. Nor am I saying that these people or experiences that have caused us harm deserve to be put on a pedestal. What I am suggesting is far simpler and more focused on your own healing and experience, and not on others. We are holding onto the injustice, the blame and pain, as if our past suffering will somehow make us more justified to remain stuck in this feeling of loss, abandonment, and pain. But know that only by letting go of these experiences, will you be able to honour yourself. Your life is not those memories. You are not those experiences. That is a reductive label and a distorted lens to live your life from. Along the way, you have created your own experiences, wisdom, and knowledge. As best as you could. That's all you can ever ask of yourself – to do the best **YOU** can, because you're all you've ever got.

*Every step of the way, YOU are the only constant in your life.
Honour yourself.*

No, I don't ask that you honour those people or experiences – though, perhaps one day, in a more distant future, you might be able to look at them with detachment and from a distance, recognising your rich, abundant life, in which – yes, abuse or hardship may have had its part – and being grateful for your life as a whole, despite those experience. Or even grateful for who you've become and how you've healed, as a result of those experiences.

We don't often give ourselves the opportunity to heal profound or difficult memories in our

6.

LETTING GO (CONTINUED)

lives. This is a deeply emotional exercise. When we do deep work, it's important to make it meaningful and memorable. This is why, with this exercise, I would encourage you to use a ritual.

A ritual doesn't have to involve dancing around a tree naked at midnight while holding a chicken during full moon. Though it can, if that's what you want.

A ritual can be as simple as finding a place you love, somewhere that has a special meaning for you, where you feel safe to say goodbye and let go of the memory of those people you've forgiven, knowing that they will be safe and find peace in that place. Knowing that in this process, you are birthing fresh space in your heart for new experiences to take place. Experiences you will choose to create yourself.

This place can be a park, a forest, a pond, a river, a beach, or a place where you used to go as a child. It could be your old family home or your back garden. Feel into what that special place is for you, and find time to go there.

It doesn't have to be abroad or an inaccessible place. Remember: it's more about the opportunity of letting go and the ritual itself, than finding the perfect place in the world.

Once you've decided on the place, consider if there's anything else you want to take with you for this ritual. Perhaps bring a visual reminder of the person (a picture, an item) or write their names down on a piece of paper.

Letting go of a physical item, a picture or their name makes the ritual more profound, because we associate it with something tangible and real, not just an image in our minds.

Remember that this letting go doesn't mean that you're letting go of your parents or family and never speaking with them again. This is a symbolic letting go of the burden you've been carrying all these years.

6.

LETTING GO (CONTINUED)

Once you're in that place, think of what you want to communicate to them. It could be the words below:

"Name, thank you for being part of my life all these years, as best as you were able to. I am now saying goodbye to you and I am leaving you in this beautiful, safe space. You will be safe here. I am grateful that I am able to let go and make space in my life for the new experiences I want to create."

And then when you are ready, complete the ritual by letting go of the items you brought. You might burn the piece of paper and spread the ashes on the ground. Or bury the item in the ground, at the base of a tree, allowing nature to breathe new life into it and create something new in the place of that old experience.

Before you leave this place, take a moment to reflect on what has shifted in your energy. Feel the weight that has been lifted off your shoulders, and the energy that has been released as a result of no longer needing to carry all that weight.

How will you be using that energy instead?

7. A NEW DIALOGUE



look, and decide how you want to integrate them in your life.

Every time we decide to change how we react to a situation, we need to form new neural pathways – or new inner narratives – about how we will react to situations. It's not enough to resonate with a new belief or narrative, it takes time for them to become imprinted in our brain and our behaviour, so it's important to spend time on implementing them in your life.

The tools I've given you are adaptable. You are unique and they can be molded so they work for you – they are not an absolute truth you must follow to the letter. Your inner guidance will tell you how you can apply them.

As we circle back to the previous six points, take a bit of time to reflect on how you can integrate them in your life.

1. The Parent-Adult-Child (PAC) model.

How can you use what you know now about these inner voices to become aware of where the voice is coming from? And who is this voice speaking to?

You can also take this one step further.

In your communication with others, can you identify which voice people communicate from? Or what their words or tone trigger in you? How can you use this new awareness in your communication with others?

2. Meet your Inner Critic.

Now that you've done the work to give your Inner Critic a voice, a personality, and even a look, how can you use this visual image of your Inner Critic to have a conversation with it?

How easy will it be from now on to identify this voice and visualise it?

Just like me, or with your own words, you might also have your own version of "Oh, hello Barbara, I didn't see you there. Please, do come in."

7.

A NEW DIALOGUE (CONTINUED)

3. Chair Work

You now have an exercise that you can use to have a dialogue with your Inner Critic, by separating it from the other voices or noise in your mind.

Take a picture of your Inner Critic drawing on your phone, so you can come back to it whenever you want to have a conversation with it and make sense of the message it wants to give you. Use the Chair Work exercise whenever you feel you want to separate and understand that voice.

4. Inner Voice Play Method

Our Inner Critical Parent is sending messages to the Fearful Child.

Whenever the Inner Critic comes on, remember they're only there to make us aware of our Inner Child's needs. If you change your focus from the Inner Critic's voice onto the Inner Child, you will hear their message which might come from fear, sadness or need for security. Listen to what your Inner Child has to communicate, because their needs can be fulfilled by your Inner Caring Parent.

Your Inner Caring Parent can offer this love and protection to your Inner Child and take the burden off their little shoulders, enabling them to focus not on carrying the responsibility of your adult life, but empowering them to be responsible for what they do best: play and be curious.

Once you create this space for creativity, playfulness and curiosity, how will you be using this beautiful new energy that emerges from you?

5. Forgiveness

After you've done this exercise once, you may notice new things or people coming up for you that need your forgiveness. Or perhaps some things that you've already forgiven keep coming up. Know that this is normal and okay. Certain things need longer to heal and forgive.

Just remind yourself: "The person I need to forgive is..... and I forgive you

7.

A NEW DIALOGUE (CONTINUED)

for..... “

And remember to then turn inwards as well, and say “I forgive myself for””

6. Letting go

Forgiving people in our lives is a wonderful act of honouring and loving of self. However, it leaves behind a residue, which is why creating a “letting go” ritual can be transformational and healing.

You can create your own ritual and find your own physical space for letting go. This is about honouring those painful memories and letting go of them. You can let go of the negative emotions you’ve associated with those people – allowing yourself to grieve, just like you would grieve someone you’ve lost.

Grieving is an important part of letting go and healing. It’s okay to be sad and to go back to that sacred place where you did your letting go ritual, to remind you of the time when you decided that you will let go of the burden on your shoulders and make room for happiness, joy and, inner peace.

SPREAD THE LOVE



Thank you for reading this book. This has been my soul work and inner guidance. The content has poured from my heart. I have felt guided to write this book because over and over, I encounter people who experience these challenges. What I hear is not “this problem again!” or “how can I get them to work with me?” – what I hear is an opportunity to take people on a journey of self discovery that you can do in your own time. One that you can dip in and out of, as and when it feels right for you.

Your heart will guide you when to return to this book, and when to take time for reflection and contemplation. Don’t feel you need to read all of it in one go, or do all the exercises today. Trust the inner guidance because it will know when it’s time to access the next level – whether it’s the next day, a month later or a year later.

I work with intuitive, self-aware people who want to re-create their inner narrative and learn to coach their own Inner Critic. If you know others who might benefit from this work, please share it with them.

If this book resonates with you, I would love to hear from you – whether to work together, ask me a question, or collaborate. I offer a free 30-minute clarity session so we can decide if we're a fit for each other. I also offer a 10% discount on 3-month packages if you send me a picture of your Inner Critic drawing when you contact me.

Be well,

Beatrice

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