

TTAY Inner Critic Transcript

Welcome to the Truth about you podcast. With me, Ali Knight, intuitive soul coach and empowerment alchemist. I'm here to share with you the truth about you and me and everyone. We dive deeply and quickly into who we really are at soul level and how it is to human in this game we call life. This is the podcast for you. If, like me, you are willing to question everything, release the conditioning that holds you back, and really create the life you came here to love. OOH. Let's talk about your inner critic.

Ali Knight:

The truth about your inner critic. Everyone has an inner critic, right? Everyone. And so what I want to do in this episode is explore this notion of the part of us that is internally created and that can be incredibly critical. I want to share with you some of the work I do with others and always with myself about working with our inner critic and how we can take a bit of a departure from that inner critical voice because we don't deserve to live under the lens of criticism. And yet, very often that critical lens is something that we create and that we listen to inside of us. So let's get into the detail. We're going to be talking about what is an inner critic, the power of your inner critic, and how our inner critic can impact us, what sort of results that might create, and then how we get to work through. Our relationship with our inner critic so that we can create a more balanced, perhaps view on things, a more balanced energy set and mindset around what it is that we are experiencing, who it is that we are, the choices that we're making and the way we're choosing to live life.

Ali Knight:

I know you already know what an inner critic is in general terms, but for the purposes of this episode, I want to be quite detailed about what I understand an inner critic to be. So what an inner critic might sound like or look like, or be experienced as. Is that sort of that little or big voice in your head? It could be quiet whisperings of self doubt, or it could be, on occasion, a loud and constant barrage of insults. Either way, our inner critic is that negative voice in our mind that ultimately limits us. Often an inner critic voice presents as obviously critical, but also it could be disguised criticism could be disguised as caution, keeping us small, keeping us firmly in our comfort zones, making sure we don't take any risks. Everybody has one. As I say, how much we engage with our inner critic is going to vary from human to human. But the one thing that I know to be true is that when I start working with clients around their inner critic or their internally critical voice is that we hear it or experience it as our mind talking.

Ali Knight:

So we think it's us. We believe the narrative. And we assume that this internally negative dialogue is fact, when in reality, our inner critic comes from conditioning, comes from a place of often ego. And our inner critic has a purpose, in fact, when we look at it in the round. So our inner critic exists to protect us, believe it or not. And our inner critic is created to protect us from what the mind perceives as threatening. So your inner critic might hold

you back by reminding you of your greatest fears and insecurities. Your inner critic might make sure you're aware of any potential for hurt or shame or embarrassment.

Ali Knight:

Your inner critic might replay for you disappointments from your previous lived experience, from your past. And your inner critic may continue to present to you your limiting beliefs about what is possible for somebody like you. Somebody like you. In inverted commas, our inner critical voice develops in early life. It's all conditioning. Interestingly, our inner critic and how they present, how that part of us appears within us, is going to change over our lifetime. The one thing that is typical within a critic is that it's there to keep you safe, to make sure you never look silly or stupid or take a big risk and perversely. Your inner critic thrives on negativity and criticism that goes on around.

Ali Knight:

It one of the ways I get people to think about identifying their inner critic. And the idea that our critical inner voice comes from things that have happened when we were perhaps quite a bit younger or in particularly emotive situations in adulthood where we have interpreted and experienced an event with negative emotions attached, is to ask questions around. As a child, for example, when you were praised, what would you have been doing? Or when you were told off? What would you have been doing then as you were growing up? As you moved into adulthood? As you came into the working world, perhaps, or parenting world? Or caring world? Or world of responsibility, let's say. What was most valued in terms of behaviour and what was frowned upon, what was not deemed as acceptable by those around you. And when you've answered these questions, you might want to take a step back and see if you can see any parallels between your inner critic and their voice and what you have absorbed through previous lived experience, what you've interpreted, what your mind has interpreted from it. In terms of recognizing our inner critic, we have many voices within us. We have many parts to us as individual human beings, as a soul in a body with a mind. There's lots of parts to us.

Ali Knight:

And so in recognizing our inner critic, we get to know them and we get to identify what they look, sound, and feel like. We get to therefore make some conscious choices about whether we're going to listen to them or not. So how do you recognize your inner critic? Your inner critic is always going to create this sort of limiting vibe, this limiting energy. It's often outwardly, directly, negative. It also originates in your head. So if we were to look at the physical body, inner critic voice comes from up top, comes from where our brain resides within it, within our skull, so it comes from our thoughts and the narrative we have. Very often our inner critic is pernicious, can be subtle as well as loud, and is very often undermining, very often talking us out of something importantly. There is another voice inside you too, and that is your soul voice.

Ali Knight:

By contrast, just to sort of give you a flavour of this, by contrast to our inner critic, our soul voice is supportive and compassionate. Our soul voice is full of optimism and possibility. Our soul voice is open and flexible and always expansive. Our soul voice is a voice of love, kindness, compassion. And if we were to look at where this soul voice comes from physically, it comes from our centre, we might hear that reverberation or experience that reverberation in our chest, at our heart centre, or perhaps in our belly, at our solar plexus, or indeed maybe even our sacral centre. It's our knowing. So inner critic is our thinking based. Soul voice is our knowing.

Ali Knight:

And our soul voice sees what we're capable of. It's encouraging, it understands that we're here to grow and learn. It's loving, and it holds a positive perspective. So at the most basic level, our inner critic voice is going to sound negative and come from our head and be limiting. And our soul voice is going to be optimistic, expansive and based in our centre. I want to ask you at this moment in time, which of those two voices, out of the many that we have within us, which of those two voices do you pay most attention to? For a very long time, I identified with each and every inner critic voice. I embodied and believed every single thing my inner critic had to say. And it wasn't pretty, it wasn't pleasant, it was very restrictive.

Ali Knight:

It created huge amounts of anxious thinking within me. It kept me from experiencing adventure and joy and freedom and fun and all the things I hold really dear. It limited me. It put the walls up and it put the barriers up against my experience of living fully and expressing myself fully. Thankfully, I did tons of inner work with my inner critic. I got to know her, and the gender of mine is a her. Your inner critic could be any gender, not necessarily the same gender that you identify with as a human being. So if I'd listened to mine all those years ago, I would never have set up my own business, I would never have run the most incredible retreats, which is one of the most joyful parts of my job.

Ali Knight:

I never would have dared to step outside of my conditioning in any way. And so I never would have experienced true magic. I never would have experienced all of the things that a spiritual awakening and living in alignment with who I am have since brought me the time that this was most obvious to me that I had really done and moved through and out. The other side of a lot of work with my inner critic was when I was holding a retreat in Anglesey a couple of years ago now. It was November, it was freezing. We'd gone for a walk. I'd had a photographer along with me for the weekend to try and capture the essence of what goes on in these retreats. And she did the most incredible job.

Ali Knight:

Anyway, in a moment of intuitive insight, I was like, oh, I've just had a brand new tattoo. I would like that photograph. So I said to AIL to be my lovely photographer, can we do some

shots of my tattoo? Now? I've got this enormous tattoo on my left hand side and she's like, yeah, of course. Can where would feel good for you to do it? And I was like, well, the beach, of course. So it's freezing cold in November, but the sun is shining, it's blowing a gale. And so when I take all the guests on a guided walk, we stop on the beach and I strip down to my pants, which were possibly the worst pants I could have chosen to put on that day. However, there we go. And in front of all my retreat guests, pretty much naked, having all these pictures taken, because I want to have fun with it.

Ali Knight:

I want to feel joyful and liberated and free. And all of a sudden I'm standing there on the beach surrounded by the most incredible humans, with quite a few onlookers, it might be said, and just thinking, oh my God, how far have I come? Because once upon a time, I would never have even contemplated doing such a thing. Not least because I didn't particularly love my body, which I do now. Not least because that wasn't the professional thing to do if you are a retreat host. Not least because I'm diabetic. I've got loads of diabetic equipment stuck all over my body, loads of ripples and bumps and stretch marks from having the children, and I just wouldn't have contemplated it. And yet there I was, not even giving two shits about any of that. And that is because I had done so much work with my inner critic.

Ali Knight:

You can hear the flavour of how my inner critic used to have sounded in what I've just said there. There was stuff there around body image, there was stuff there around what's appropriate and professional, there was stuff there about what's acceptable and what isn't acceptable. So our inner critic voice takes many different flavours that's totally out of context, that word, but you get my drift. And so when we learn who our inner critic is we get to have a much more adult dialogue with them. Our inner critic is just one part of us. It's not the whole of us. And yet the more persistent those thoughts are, the more we believe that that is us and that that voice is fact and that it's the only right way to think. And I want to really challenge that within you.

Ali Knight:

So I have a free Ditch the Bitch Guide to Releasing Your Inner Critic or To Working With Your Inner Critic, which you can get on my website. I don't Want To Wax on about that right now, but I'm Going to just very briefly touch on some of the Strategies that I talk about within there in terms of giving you Some Tools after listening To This Episode that you can take away and start to play with and start To Get To know your inner critic. And start to get To Work with your inner critic. Because our inner critic, if we choose to continue to let them run the show, will limit your existence. Your inner critic will limit your capacity for joy. Your inner critic will keep you stuck and small and yes, very safe. Except it's not safe, is it, to never experience the fullest of joy. So, step one, you need to get to know your inner critic.

Ali Knight:

So you need to grab a journal and a pen or the back of a fag packet, or type something out on your laptop. And you need to write about your inner critic. If they were a real human, what kind of person would they be? What do they look like? What would they dress like? What kind of character do they have? What's their sort of philosophy on life? What's some of their favourite sayings, their favourite criticisms? What might their biggest fear be? And what are they there for? What are they striving for? What's their aim? Why is this inner critic in existence? What's its purpose? And then finally, when you've done that exercise and you've written out all of the characteristics that you can think of about your own inner critic, I want you to give them a name. A name that carries no analysis, no opportunity for self judgment. Give it the name that comes to you. It is your right name for now, for your inner critic. And the reason we do that is because when we externalize or look at this part of us as just one part of us, and therefore name it, it starts to help our unconscious mind logically know that that's not the whole of us. So we start to get to challenge and consciously choose which bits we listen to.

Ali Knight:

That is my one biggest tip for starting to work with your inner critic. Now, in the downloadable guide, you will see lots of other strategies, such as actually getting to connect within you, understanding who you are, which we've talked about on other episodes, opening up some dialogue between your soul voice and your inner critic voice. So offering your inner critics some reassurance, perhaps in those moments where they're loud and persistent and trying to get themselves heard, talking there about self compassion. And if it's really hard for you to talk compassionately to yourself, I would invite you to consider how you might talk to a friend, your best friend. If they were telling you about the inner critic you've just described, what would you want to say to them? Because that is the exact same thing that we need to learn to say to ourselves. Because I'm me. There is a strategy around releasing your inner critic in there that involves writing down everything that your inner critic loves to say, loves to berate you about, loves to bring you down with, and then burning it, setting fire to it, watching it to reduce to ashes and turn to dust. This is an energetic practice as much as it is a mindset practice, as much as it is a shamanic practice.

Ali Knight:

And it's super powerful. Lastly, I talk when we're working with our inner critic, I really encourage you to create some Affirmations so really positively worded statements voiced in the present tense that tackle some of the stories that our inner critic likes to tell us. So for example, one thing that your inner critic might continue to tell you is that you're not good enough. So a positive Affirmation to tackle that would be I am always phrasing the I am more than enough or I am enough. If you can't push yourself to get to the more than enough, I am enough. Or if you're in a critic's favourite phrase is you look fat. For example, the Affirmation you'd use for that is I am beautiful. When we repeat these mantras, these Affirmations in our conscious mind, we start to change our state magically.

Ali Knight:

We also start to alter how we see ourselves. And when we alter how we see ourselves, we show up differently in the world. Now, if we're always showing up from a position of negativity and self criticism, we're only showing a teeniest tiniest part of who we actually are. So Affirmations positive mantras are super powerful as an antidote to that inner critic voice. Lastly, my favourite way to deal with my inner critic, if she is incredibly persistent and just won't give up, is to shout at the top of my voice shut the fuck up. Always a great one to fall back on. Other things that I really want to mention when working with inner critic stuff, keep yourself safe. Some of this comes from earlier childhood experiences.

Ali Knight:

Some of this comes from perhaps difficult past experiences. Some of this comes from perhaps tough, challenging memories of not feeling good enough, not being worthy. And so caretaking yourself through this process is really important. There are ways to do that. So make sure that you surround yourself with your people when you're speaking out loud, what your inner critics having to say? It's a real opportunity to sense check that with others, trusted others, please. So sharing that in a narrative can often be a real opportunity for others to go, oh, hang on a minute, that's not right, is it? That's not how I see you or that's not what I've watched you do, or where the hell's that come from? What's going on there? The more work we do with our inner critic, the less power they have to dictate our life. And that, for me, always has to be for the win. Because at the end of the day, our inner critic may never go away completely.

Ali Knight:

And that's okay, because we can learn to see our inner critic and ourselves through the lens of kindness and compassion. So by making your acquaintance with your inner critic, by understanding what they sound like and where they come from, and seeing them as a part of you that needs healing and needs some TLC, is the thing that's going to make all the difference. And if this is really resonating with you and it feels like a lot to move with, a lot to explore, a lot to unpack, a lot to unravel, then at the end of the day, ignoring your inner critic is a great first aid fix because also believing them cannot be an option. Louise Hay, one of my favourite authors, has this that I want to end with. You have been criticising yourself for years and it hasn't worked. Try approving of yourself instead and see what happens. Loads of love, my love. Thank you so much for listening.

Ali Knight:

My biggest desire is that this episode of Truth has helped you connect even more deeply to yours. If you've enjoyed listening, I'd love you to share your truth by rating the podcast on whichever platform you use to listen. I'd really love you to connect with me on Instagram at @aliknightcoaching or through the sign up form on my website, allynightcoaching.com. And lastly, I'm sending you all my love as you peel back the layers and reveal the most beautiful and sacred part of you, your Truth.