

Conquer Your Critical Inner Voice

with Lisa Firestone, Ph.D.



THE GLENDON
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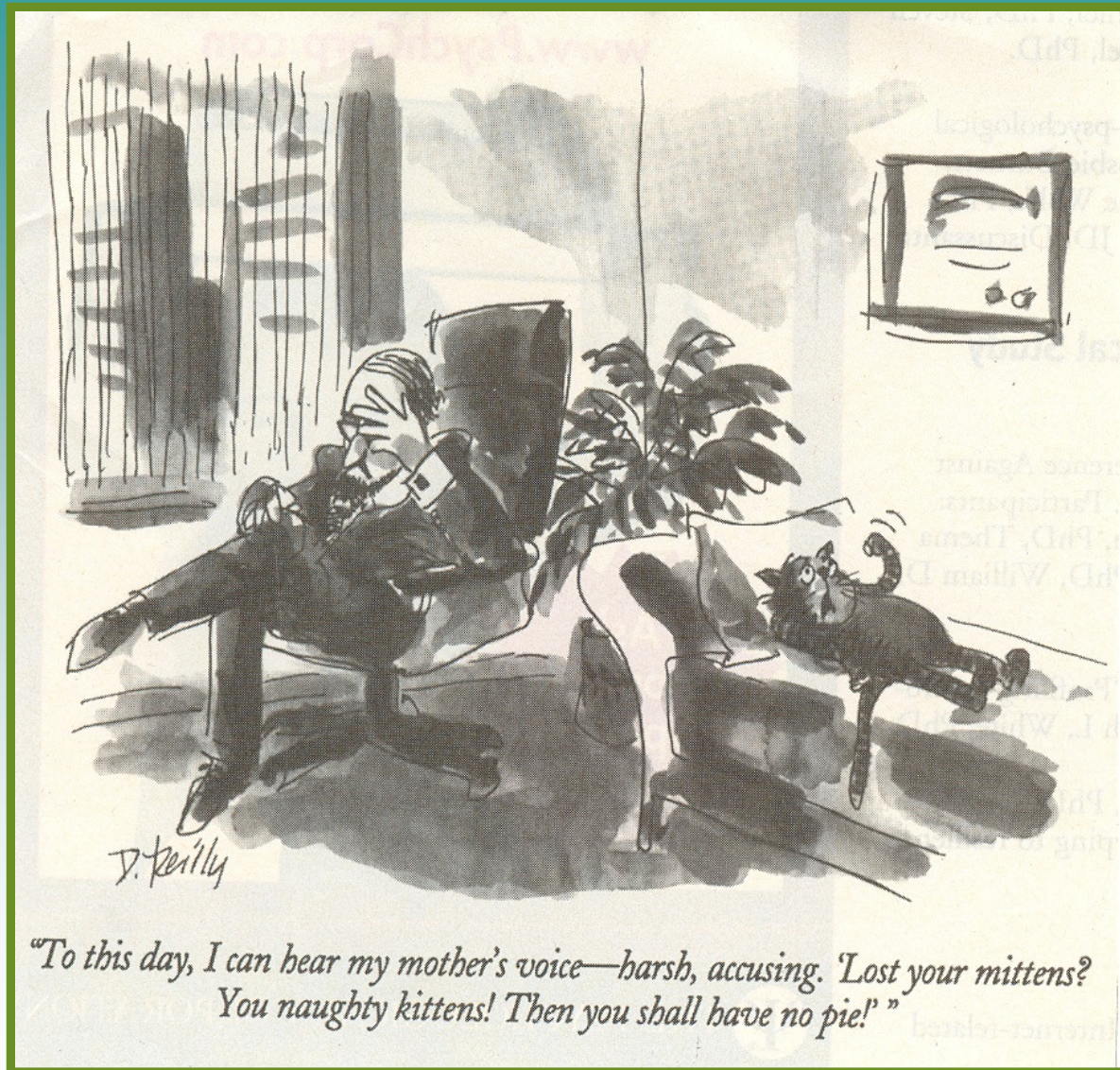
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Definition of the Voice

The critical inner voice refers to a well-integrated pattern of destructive thoughts toward our selves and others. The “voices” that make up this internalized dialogue are at the root of much of our maladaptive behavior. This internal enemy fosters inwardness, distrust, self-criticism, self-denial, addictions and a retreat from goal-directed activities. The critical inner voice effects every aspect of our lives: our self-esteem and confidence, our personal and intimate relationships, and our performance and accomplishments at school and work.



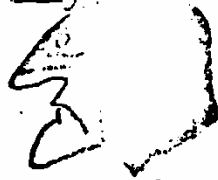


"To this day, I can hear my mother's voice—harsh, accusing. 'Lost your mittens? You naughty kittens! Then you shall have no pie!'"

FEIFFER

by JULES FEIFFER

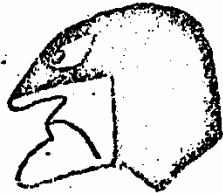
I AM A CRITIC.



I AM NOT A BOOK, ART,
THEATRE, FILM, MUSIC
OR DANCE CRITIC.



I AM A
BERNARD
CRITIC.



A RESIDENT CRITIC WORKING
INSIDE THE HEAD OF A BERNARD.



HE WAKES UP, I TELL HIM,
"YOU'RE LATE." AT THE OF-
FICE I TELL HIM "YOU'RE
BEHIND." AT DINNER PARTIES
I TELL HIM,
"YOU'RE
BORING."



WHEN HE FALLS IN
LOVE I TELL HIM,
"YOU'RE NOT GOOD
ENOUGH."



ON OCCASION HE CANT
TAKE ANY MORE RE-
VIEWS AND ORDERS
ME OUT OF HIS HEAD.



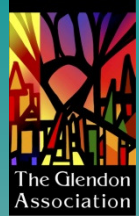
SO I RIP OFF MY
MASK AND SAY,
"IS THAT THE WAY TO
TALK TO YOUR
MOTHER?"



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Common “Voices” in Yourself



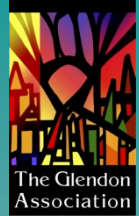
- ❖ You're stupid.
- ❖ You're unattractive.
- ❖ You're not like other people.
- ❖ You're a failure.
- ❖ You never get anything right.
- ❖ No one will ever love you.
- ❖ You're fat.
- ❖ You're such a loser.
- ❖ You'll never make friends.
- ❖ You'll never be able to quit drinking (smoking etc).
- ❖ You'll never accomplish anything.
- ❖ What's the point in even trying?





Poll #1: How many of you have had these voices about yourself?

Common “Voices” in Your Career



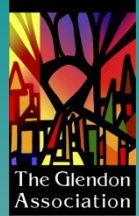
- ❖ You don't know what you're doing.
- ❖ Why do they expect you to do everything yourself?
- ❖ Who do you think you are? You'll never be successful.
- ❖ You're under too much pressure. You can't take it.
- ❖ You'll never get everything done. You're so lazy.
- ❖ You should just put this off until tomorrow.
- ❖ No one appreciates you.
- ❖ You'd better be perfect, or you'll get fired.
- ❖ Nobody likes you here.
- ❖ Put your career first. Don't take time for yourself.
- ❖ When are you ever going to get a real job?
- ❖ No one would hire you.





Poll #2: How many of you have had these voices about your career?

Common “Voices” in Relationships

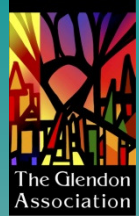


Voices About Yourself:

- ❖ You're never going to find another person who understands you.
- ❖ Don't get too hooked on her.
- ❖ He doesn't really care about you.
- ❖ She is too good for you.
- ❖ You've got to keep him interested.
- ❖ You're better off on your own.
- ❖ As soon as she gets to know you, she will reject you.
- ❖ You've got to be in control.
- ❖ It's your fault if he gets upset.
- ❖ Don't be too vulnerable or you'll just wind up getting hurt.



Common “Voices” in Relationships



Voices About Your Partner:

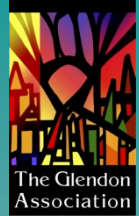
- ❖ Men are so insensitive, unreliable, selfish.
- ❖ Women are so fragile, needy, indirect.
- ❖ He only cares about being with his friends.
- ❖ Why get so excited? What’s so great about her anyway?
- ❖ He is probably cheating on you.
- ❖ You can’t trust her.
- ❖ He just can’t get anything right.





Poll #3: How many of you have had these voices about your relationship?

Common “Voices” in Parenting



- ❖ You don't know what you're doing.
- ❖ You're a horrible father.
- ❖ You're just like your mother.
- ❖ Everyone sees what a bad parent you are.
- ❖ Your kids are out of control.
- ❖ They're no good, because you're no good.
- ❖ You'd better make them listen to you.
- ❖ You never get a moment's peace.
- ❖ Don't you wish they'd just leave you alone?
- ❖ Having kids means giving up your life.
- ❖ Only a horrible person feels critical of their kids.





Poll #4: How many of you have had these voices about parenting?

Part One: Where Do Critical Inner Voices Come From?

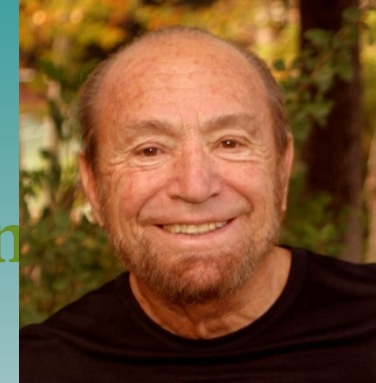


How Voices Pass From Generation to Generation



Separation Theory

Robert W. Firestone, Ph.D.



- ❖ The concept of the **Fantasy Bond**
- ❖ The concept of the **Critical Inner Voice**



Where do voices come from?

Patterns of Attachment in Children



Category of Attachment

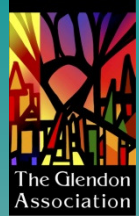
- ❖ Secure
- ❖ Insecure – avoidant
- ❖ Insecure- anxious/ambivalent
- ❖ Insecure - disorganized

Parental Interactive Pattern

- ❖ Emotionally available, perceptive, responsive
- ❖ Emotionally unavailable, imperceptive, unresponsive and rejecting
- ❖ Inconsistently available, perceptive and responsive and intrusive
- ❖ Frightening, frightened, disorienting, alarming



What causes insecure attachment?



❖ Unresolved trauma/loss in the life of the parents statistically predict attachment style far more than:

- Maternal Sensitivity
- Child Temperament
- Social Status
- Culture



Implicit Versus Explicit Memory



❖ Implicit Memory



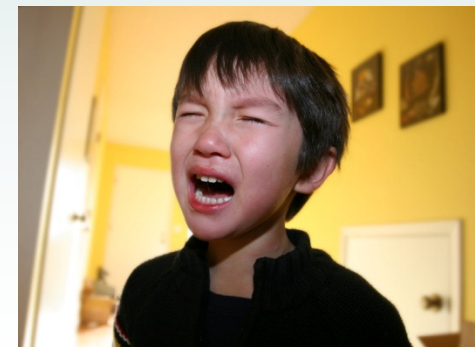
❖ Explicit Memory



How does disorganized attachment pass from generation to generation?

❖ Implicit memory of terrifying experiences may create:

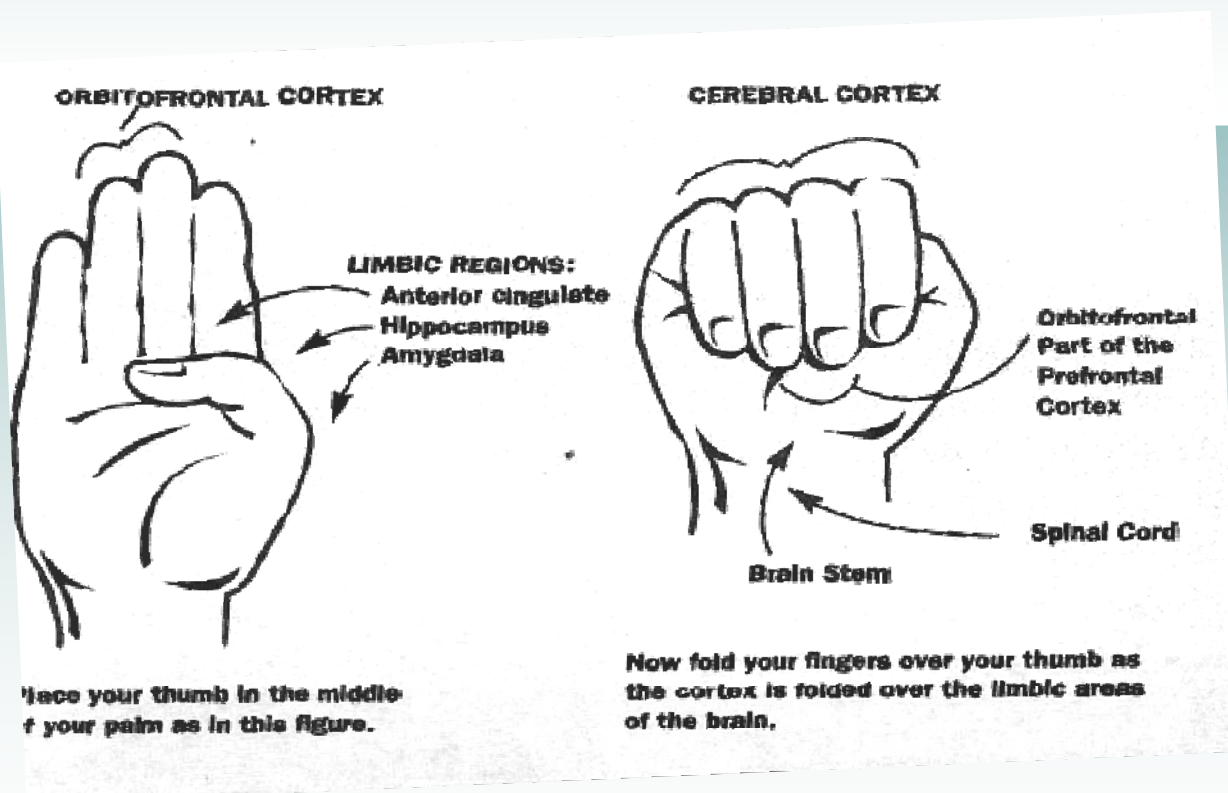
- Impulsive behaviors
- Distorted perceptions
- Rigid thoughts and impaired decision making patterns
- Difficulty tolerating a range of emotions



The Brain in the Palm of Your Hand



Daniel Siegel, M.D. – Interpersonal Neurobiology





Poll #5: How many of you can remember a time when a parent flipped his or her lid with you?

9 Important Functions of the Pre-Frontal Cortex



1. Body Regulation
2. Attunement
3. Emotional Balance
4. Response Flexibility
5. Empathy
6. Self-Knowing Awareness (Insight)
7. Fear Modulation
8. Intuition
9. Morality





Division of the Mind

Parental Ambivalence

Parents both love and hate themselves and extend both reactions to their productions, i.e., their children.

Parental Nurturance



Parental Rejection, Neglect Hostility



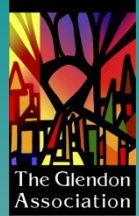
Parental Nurturance



Self-System

Unique make-up of the individual; harmonious identification and incorporation of parent's positive attitudes and traits; and the effect of experience and education on the maturing self-system.

Personal Goals



Needs



Food

Thirst

Sex

Safety

Wants



Affiliation

Achievement

Activity

Meaning

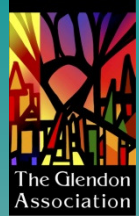


Love

Compassion
for Others

Generosity

Personal Conscience



❖ Moral Principles



❖ Ethical Behavior



❖ Integrity



Parental Rejection, Neglect, Hostility

Other Factors: accidents, illnesses, death anxiety

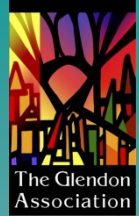
Anti-Self System

The Fantasy Bond (core defense) is a self-parenting process made up of two elements: the helpless, needy child, and the self-punishing, self-nurturing parent. Either aspect may be extended to relationships. The degree of defense is proportional to the amount of damage sustained while growing up.



Anti-Self System

Self-Punishing Voice Process

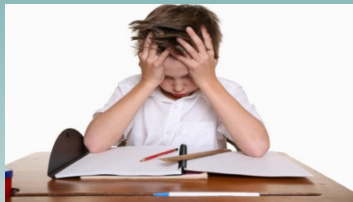


Voice Process

Behaviors

Source

1. Critical thoughts toward self



Verbal self-attacks – a generally negative attitude toward self and others predisposing alienation.

Critical parental attitudes, projections, and unreasonable expectations.

2. Micro-suicidal injunctions



Addictive patterns. Self-punitive thoughts after indulging.

Identification with parents defenses

3. Suicidal injunctions – suicidal ideation



Actions that jeopardize, such as carelessness with one's body, physical attacks on the self, and actual suicide

Parents' covert and overt aggression (identification with the aggressor).

Anti-Self System

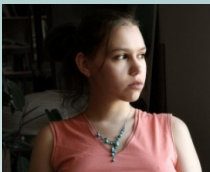
Self- Soothing Voice Process



Voice Process



1a) Aggrandizing thoughts toward self.



1b) Suspicious paranoid thoughts towards others.



2. Micro-suicidal Injunctions



3. Overtly Violent thoughts

Behaviors

Verbal build up toward self.

Alienation from others, destructive behavior towards others.

Addictive patterns. Thoughts luring the person into indulging.

Aggressive actions, actual violence.

Source

Parental build up

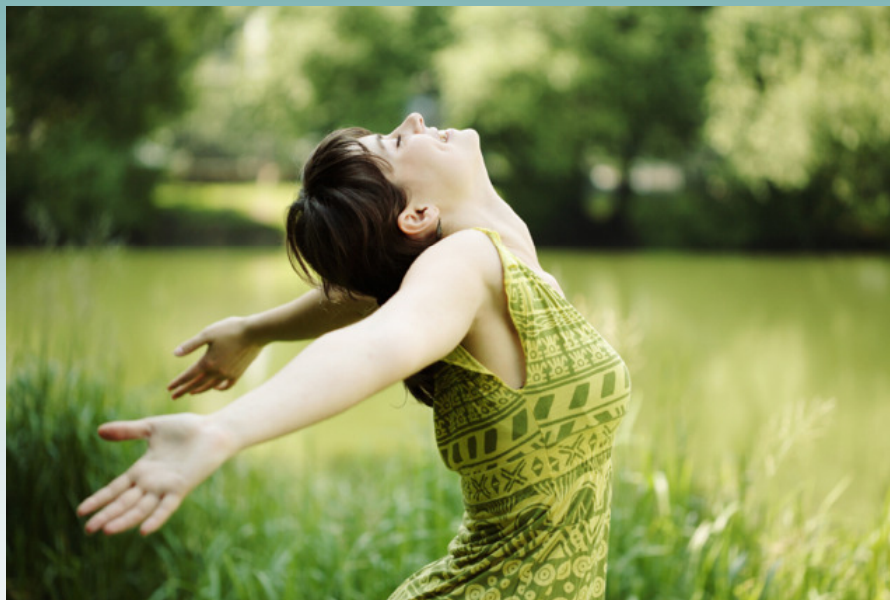
Parental attitudes, child abuse, experienced victimization.

Imitation of parents' defenses.

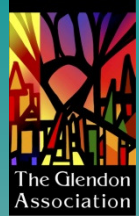
Parental neglect, parents' overt aggression (identification with the aggressor).



Part Two: Challenging Your Critical Inner Voice



Identifying Your Critical Inner Voice



1. Recognize the Events That Trigger Your Critical Inner Voice
2. Recognize the Specific Outside Criticisms That Support Your Critical Inner Voice
3. Become Aware of Times You May Be Projecting Your Self-Attacks onto Other People
4. Notice Changes in Your Mood

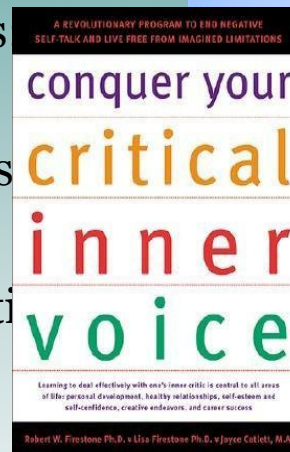


Exercise 1.1: Visualizing the Real You



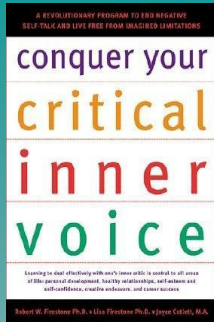
All exercises from Conquer Your Critical Inner Voice

- ❖ My physical abilities
- ❖ My positive qualities
- ❖ My interests and activities
- ❖ My long-term goals:
- ❖ My short-term goals:
- ❖ Where do I stand in relation to my goals?





Poll #6: How many of you have ever experienced self-critical thoughts in the second person (as “you” statements)?



Exercise 1.2: Your Critical Inner Voice Attacks

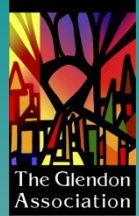
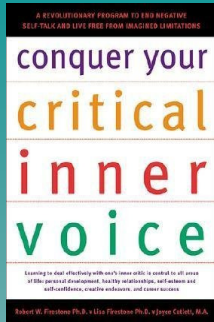


❖ Self-critical attacks as “I” statements

Example: “I don’t think I’m an attractive person.”

❖ Self-critical attacks as “you” statements

Example: “You’re not attractive.”



Exercise 1.3: Keeping a Journal:

Your Critical Inner Voice/The Real You

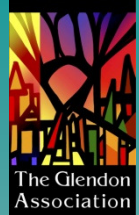
- ❖ My critical inner voice
as “you” statements

Example: “You’re so stupid.”

- ❖ The real me
as “I” statements

Example: “Sometimes I struggle
with work, but I catch on quickly
and then usually do a good job.”

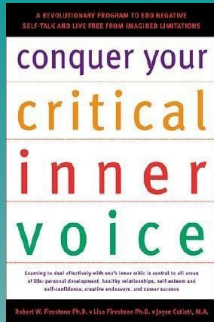
PsychAlive Workshop & Journal



Journal on PsychAlive at <http://www.psychalive.org/category/psychalive-workshop/>

A screenshot of the PsychAlive website home page. The header includes the "PSYCHALIVE" logo and navigation links: Home, About PsychAlive, Blog, Subscribe, My Profile. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a large image of a woman kissing a baby, with text overlays: "Alive to SELF", "Alive to INTIMACY", and "Alive to PARENTING Read What Is Your Attachment Style". Below this, there are sections for "Most Popular on PSYCHALIVE" and "VIDEO". The "Most Popular" section includes a "FREE WEBINAR" and several article thumbnails. The "VIDEO" section shows a video player with a play button.

A screenshot of the PsychAlive Workshop journal entry form. The header includes the "PSYCHALIVE Workshop" logo and navigation links: Home, About PsychAlive, Blog, Subscribe, My Profile. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a large image of a woman and a man sitting on the grass, each using a laptop. To the right of the image, there is a "PSYCHALIVE Workshop" banner with links to "Alive to SELF Workshop", "Alive to PARENTING Workshop", and "Alive to INTIMACY Workshop". Below the image, the text "PSYCHALIVE Workshop" is displayed. A navigation bar includes links for "My Profile", "My Workshop", "Journal Exercises", and "My Journal", with a "New Entry" link highlighted. The form itself consists of a "Title/Subject" field, a "Text" field, and two buttons at the bottom: "Write Journal" and "Cancel, back".



Exercise 1.4: A Plan for Action

❖ Actions dictated by my critical inner voice

Examples:

“Have another piece of cake.”

“You should just be on your own.”

“You can’t trust anyone, so don’t get too close.”

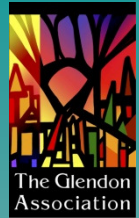
❖ Actions to take that reflect the real me

Examples:

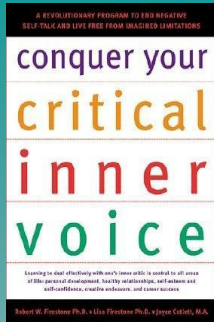
“I want to eat healthy and take care of myself.”

“I don’t want to be isolated and will seek out friends”

“I want to stay vulnerable in my close relationships.”

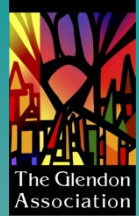


Poll #7: How many of you are aware of actions you take that go against your goals?



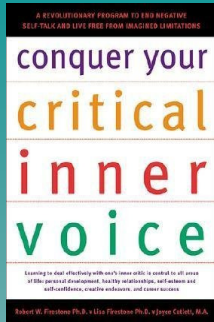
Exercise 2.1:

Seeing Your Parents Realistically



A. Describing Your Parents' Traits and Behaviors

1. Did you experience any long-term separations from your parent or parents during your childhood? Through death? Divorce? Illness? If so, describe your reactions at the time.
2. What do you think your parents offered you that has been the most valuable to you in your adult life? Describe these traits, values, or ideals.
3. What faults or weaknesses did you dislike in your parent or parents? Describe these traits.
4. Were your parents strict or overly permissive in their discipline of you and your siblings? Describe an example of how they disciplined you.



Exercise 2.1:

Seeing Your Parents Realistically

B. Your Parents' Behaviors That May Have Caused You Shame or Guilt



Mother

Father

Yes No

Yes No

As a child, were you beaten or scolded in the presence of others?

Yes No

Yes No

Did your parents show with words and gestures that they liked you?

Yes No

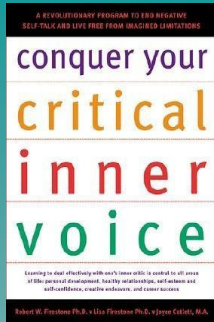
Yes No

Did you ever feel humiliated by things your parents did or said in front of others?

Yes No

Yes No

Did your parents begrudge you things you needed?



Exercise 2.5: *How Your Parents Saw You/ How You See Yourself*



❖ How my parents saw me

Abilities:

Qualities:

Talents:

Special Interests:

❖ How I see myself

Abilities:

Qualities:

Talents:

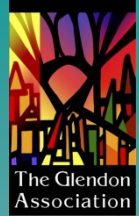
Special Interests:



Poll #8: How many of you are students or professionals in the field of psychology?



The Therapeutic Process in Voice Therapy



Step I

Identify the content of the person's negative thought process. The person is taught to articulate his or her self-attacks in the second person. The person is encouraged to say the attack as he or she hears it or experiences it. If the person is holding back feelings, he or she is encouraged to express them.

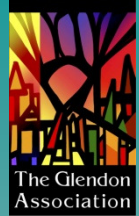


Step II

The person discusses insights and reactions to verbalizing the voice. The person attempts to understand the relationship between voice attacks and early life experience.



The Therapeutic Process in Voice Therapy



Step III

The person answers back to the voice attacks, which is often a cathartic experience. Afterwards, it is important for the person to make a rational statement about how he or she really is, how other people really are, what is true about his or her social world.



Step IV

The person develops insight about how the voice attacks are influencing his or her present-day behaviors.



Step V

The person then collaborates with the therapist to plan changes in these behaviors. The person is encouraged to not engage in self-destructive behavior dictated by his or her negative thoughts and to also increase the positive behaviors these negative thoughts discourage.

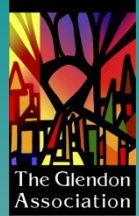
If you are interested in attending a voice therapy training or in finding a therapist who practices voice therapy please contact jina@glendon.org

Self

Anti-Self



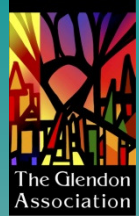
Guidelines for Continued Personal Development



- ❖ Be Aware of the Fear That Accompanies Change
- ❖ Realize That Psychological Pain is Valid
- ❖ Develop a More Realistic View of Your Parents
- ❖ Differentiation – Unlearn Old Behaviors, Learn New Behaviors
- ❖ Become More Aware of Specific Defenses Against Feeling
- ❖ Recognize the Value of Friendship
- ❖ Seek Your Own Personal Meaning in Life

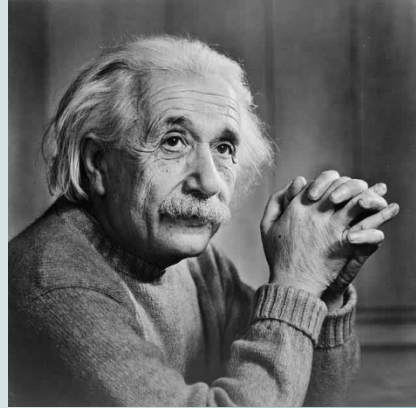


Guidelines for Further Developing a Meaningful Life



- ❖ Practice Being Generous in All Your Relationships
- ❖ Become Aware of Existential Realities
- ❖ Develop a Spiritual Perspective and Appreciate the Mystery of Existence

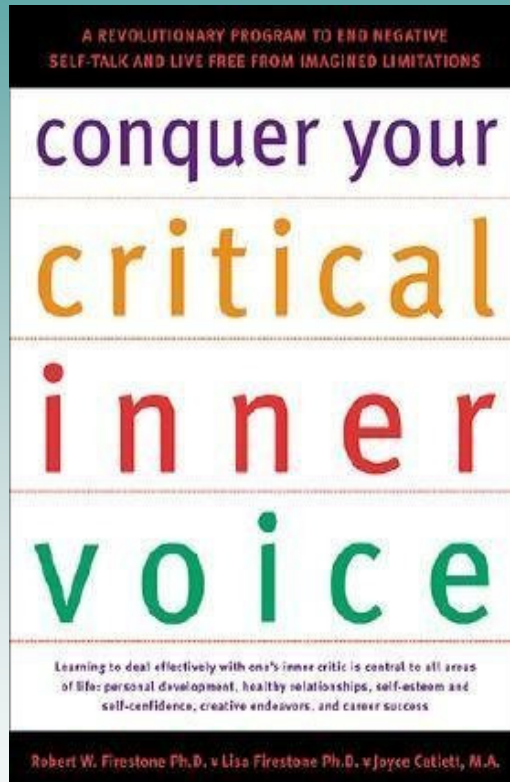




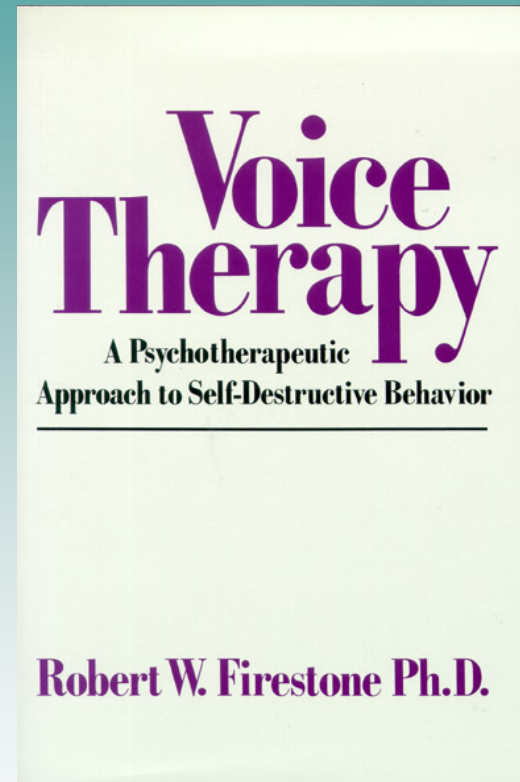
A human being is a part of a whole, called by us 'universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest... a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security."

- Albert Einstein

Resources: Books



For Public and Professionals



For Professionals

Visit www.psychalive.org for resource links

Next CE Webinar for Professionals:



Helping Parents to Raise
Emotionally Healthy Children

Tuesday, November 2

11 am – 1 pm PST

Register: www1.gotomeeting.com/register/987433273

Next Free Webinar for the Public:



How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children

Tuesday, November 16

11 am – 12 pm PST

Register: www1.gotomeeting.com/register/664297465

All upcoming webinars can be found at www.glendon.org



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Conquer Your Critical Inner Voice Workshop at Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California



Weekend of January 14-16, 2011, Earn 10 CE's
www.esalen.org



Contact:

glendon@glendon.org

800-663-5281



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