

Typical attacks from the inner critic

PERFECTIONISM ATTACKS

1. PERFECTIONISM

My perfectionism arose as an attempt to gain support in my neglectful family. I do not have to be perfect to be safe or loved in the present. I have a right to make mistakes. Mistakes do not make me a mistake. Every mistake is an opportunity to practice loving myself in the places I have never been loved.

2. ALL-OR-NONE / BLACK-AND-WHITE THINKING

I reject extreme or over-generalized descriptions, judgments or criticisms. One negative event does not mean I am stuck in a never-ending pattern of defeat. Statements that describe me in “always” or “never” are rarely true.

3. SELF-HATE / SELF-DISGUST / TOXIC SHAME

I commit to loving myself. I am a good enough person. I refuse to trash myself. I transfer back the shame and disgust to the person who is judging me for my normal emotions of anger, fear and sadness. I especially refuse to attack myself for how hard it is to completely eliminate the self-hate habit.

4. MICROMANAGING / WORRYING / OBSESSING / OVER-FUTURIZING

I will not repetitively examine details over and over.
I will not jump to negative conclusions. I will not endlessly second-guess myself. I forgive all my past mistakes. I cannot make the future perfectly safe. I will stop hunting for what could go wrong. I will not try to control the uncontrollable. I will not micromanage others or myself. I work in a way that is “good enough”. I accept that sometimes, my efforts bring desired results, and sometimes they do not.

Typical attacks from the inner critic

PERFECTIONISM ATTACKS

5. DEVALUING COMPARISONS TO OTHERS OR MOST PERFECT MOMENTS

I refuse to compare myself unfavorably to others. Sometimes, reality is not as it seems. You only see what others want you to see. In a society that pressures us into acting happy all the time, I will not get down on myself for feeling bad.

6. GUILT

Feeling guilty does not mean I am guilty. I am no longer a victim. I will not accept unfair blame. Guilt is sometimes camouflaged fear: "I feel guilty and afraid, but I am not guilty or in danger". If I end up hurting someone, I will apologize, make amends, and let go of my guilt. I will not apologize over and over. I will allow myself to be human.

7. SHOULDING

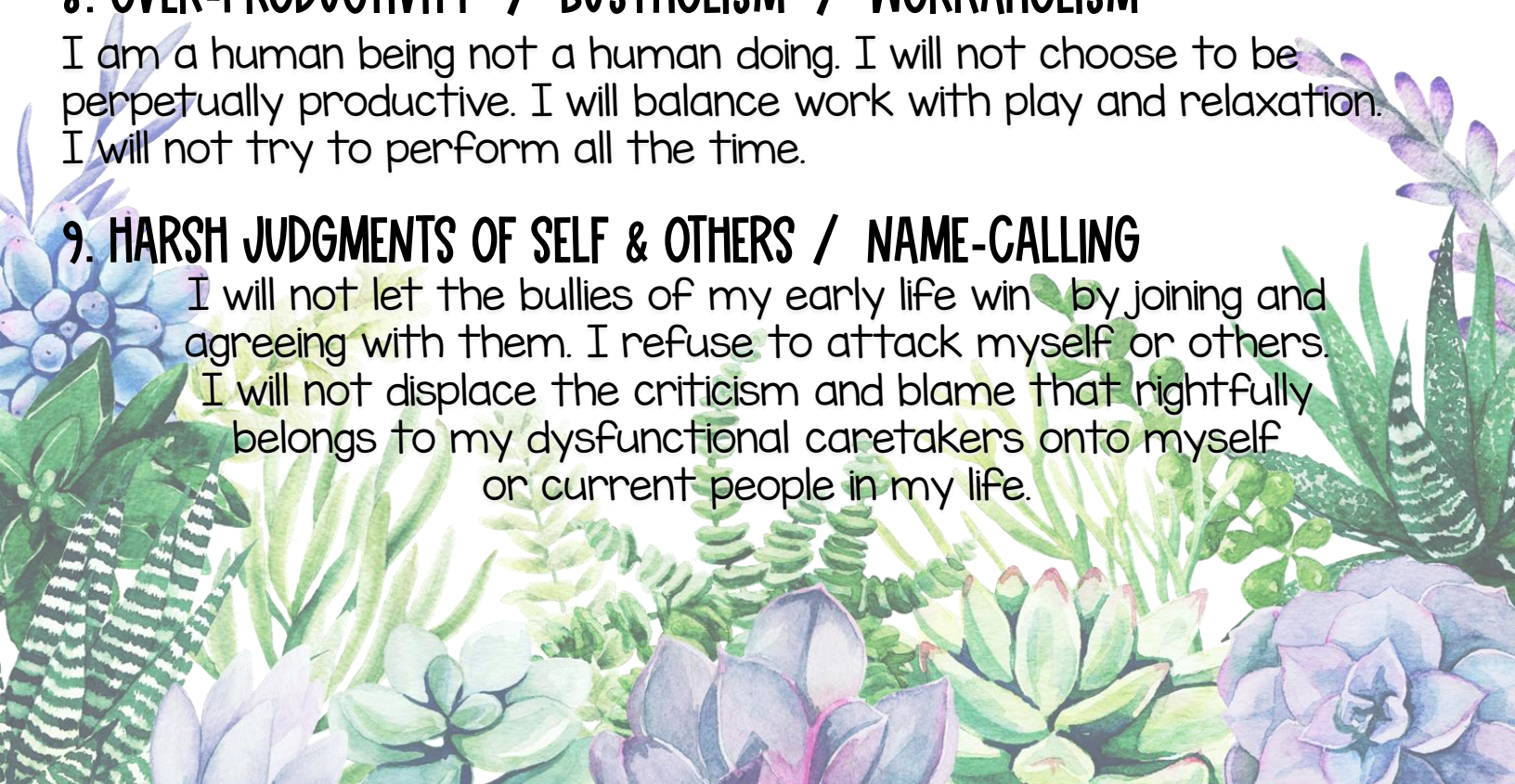
I will not put unreasonable demands and pressure on myself. I will focus on what I really want to do and what is important to me.

8. OVER-PRODUCTIVITY / BUSYHOLISM / WORKAHOLISM

I am a human being not a human doing. I will not choose to be perpetually productive. I will balance work with play and relaxation. I will not try to perform all the time.

9. HARSH JUDGMENTS OF SELF & OTHERS / NAME-CALLING

I will not let the bullies of my early life win by joining and agreeing with them. I refuse to attack myself or others. I will not displace the criticism and blame that rightfully belongs to my dysfunctional caretakers onto myself or current people in my life.



Typical attacks from the inner critic

ENDANGERMENT ATTACKS

10. DRASTICIZING / CATASTROPHIZING / HYPOCHONDRIASIZING

I feel afraid but I am not in danger. I am not in trouble with my parents anymore. I refuse to scare myself with thoughts and pictures of my life deteriorating. I will not turn every ache into a story of me dying. I am safe and at peace.

11. NEGATIVE FOCUS

I renounce over-noticing and dwelling on what might be wrong with me or life around me. I will not minimize or discount my attributes. Right now, I notice, visualize and enumerate my accomplishments, talents and qualities. I remember the many gifts and beauties of life.

12. TIME URGENCY

I am not in danger. I do not need to hurry. I am learning to enjoy living at a relaxed pace. I slow down my breathing and relax my muscles.

13. DISABLING PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

I reduce procrastination by reminding myself that I will not accept unfair criticism. I will not ask myself to be perfect and allow myself to make mistakes. Even when afraid, I will defend myself from unfair criticism. I won't let fear make my decisions.

14. EXPECTING AN ATTACK FROM OTHERS

I will not project my past bullies onto others, unless there are clear signs of danger. Most people are peaceful. I have legal authorities to aid in my protection against those who aren't. I invoke thoughts and images of my friends' love and support.

AUTHOR:

Pete Walker, from the book *Complex PTSD: From Surviving to Thriving*