

Fear of Criticism: Is it Sabotaging Your Success?

The fact is most of us do not like to be criticized. Many of us tend to take it as a negative experience. Criticism can make us feel angry, sad, frightened, resentful, defensive, depressed, and/or discouraged.

In the popular book, *Think and Grow Rich*, author Napoleon Hill says a fear of criticism shows up as self-consciousness, lack of poise, an inferiority complex, extravagance (overspending), a lack of initiative, and a lack of ambition. Hill further says a fear of criticism destroys initiative and discourages creativity. Whew! No wonder the fear of criticism sabotages success.

Anyone who has been innovative, creative, or adventurous has faced criticism. An untold number of people have abandoned their dreams simply due to the fear of criticism. It is inevitable, we will all face criticism from time to time, especially if we are venturing outside the norm and moving toward our dreams. Criticism can be either constructive or destructive and often times it is our own interpretation labels it as one or the other.

While watching an interview of the famous opera singer, Renee Fleming, on a recent episode of CBS Sunday morning, I was impressed when she described her reaction to the criticism she continually endured from her instructors while attending The Julliard School. She loved it! She knew it would make her better and stronger. What an awesome perspective! Rather than view the criticism as a negative experience she viewed it as a positive, inspiring experience. That is the perspective of success!

Consider how the fear of criticism is manifesting in your life. Do you cower when criticized or does it empower you? Do you feel resentment or inspiration?

If you struggle with the fear of criticism it is silently sabotaging your success.

To begin overcoming the fear:

1. Recognize that some criticism, whether negative or constructive can actually help you.
2. Understand that others can not always see your vision.
3. Work with a coach if you are stuck in your fear of criticism.

Realize it may take a while to become comfortable with criticism but eventually you may come to view it as inspiration, then criticism will no longer inhibit your success it will inspire your success.