

## Ep #2: Dialing Down Your Inner Critic



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Diana Murphy**

[Empowered Wellness for Leaders](#) with Diana Murphy

## Ep #2: Dialing Down Your Inner Critic

Welcome to *Empowered Wellness for Leaders*, a podcast that teaches CEOs, entrepreneurs and sales leaders how to deal with the unique challenges of balancing a high-stress career, family, AND their own health. Here's your host, Certified Executive Wellness Coach, Diana Murphy.

Welcome back to the podcast. I don't know about you, but I've been experiencing some cabin fever this winter. And finally, this last weekend, I was able to get out and take a really, really long walk. As I walked in the door though, I realized I was experiencing a lot of pain from a nerve trigger.

Oh no, I could barely lift my right leg. And then it happened... This rush and gut-wrenching feeling because the voice in my head was, "Are you kidding me? You knew better than to walk. You're having trouble running; this triggered the same thing. You're an idiot. You'll never get back to movement again. You're so old." And most of it was, like, "You're so stupid that you took a walk today."

Wow, that, my friends, is the inner critic. Needless to say, it's healed and I'm back in the gym this week. But what's the deal with the – I take this step for this beautiful activity, great day, and I get this barrage of mental activity that really made me feel awful.

I literally remember, and this will help you later in my podcast when I explain, but literally, in that moment it was way too early, but I was like, "I need a glass of wine," to recover from this barrage.

This is why I want to share with you how sneaky and prevalent our inner critic is around our best intentions, around our wellness and in life in general. This inner critic, I find, only speaks up when we've tripped up on our goals. But sometimes it actually pipes up when we're doing something great. What is the deal?

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Don't worry; during this episode, I'm going to give you some simple but powerful steps to dial down your inner critic. And before we get started on this important episode, let me thank you in advance for your reviews and comments. I'd really appreciate your feedback as I start this podcast for you. I want to know what subjects are near and dear to your heart and would really appreciate you taking the time to place your review on iTunes. In fact, there are directions for this in my show notes and on my website.

I'll be choosing listeners from time to time, honoring you with special giveaways and shout-outs in the coming shows; so, I'll see you there.

Okay, so let's get back to the inner critic and why it is my favorite topic. In fact, when I start coaching a new client or speak to a group, it is absolutely the first thing I talk about. But why do we want to avoid this conversation? Like I know I'm already uncomfortable in even creating this episode; bringing up the inner critic and talking about it so much. I feel it actually in my gut, so I know it is even being triggered talking about the topic for you, even today.

But I know how valuable it is to increase our awareness around when the inner critic pipes up so we can actually take some more empowered action that disrupts it and turns things around.

One of the biggest outcomes when we stop or interrupt our inner critic is that it helps us to move into a more empowering and confident mindset overall. And it absolutely works in every area of our lives, but we'll focus on my favorite; wellness.

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Imagine this – have you ever stayed up too late binge-watching Netflix after making a promise to yourself to go to bed early? And then you actually end up beating yourself up and punishing yourself for it? Have you committed to a workout plan this week and you didn't even get to the gym? Have you told yourself you were going to eat healthier, only to find yourself at McDonald's for the third time this week? Or you said you were going to hit the gym to battle that stressful day because you know it really helps, but happy hour at the neighborhood pub happened instead?

And then it hits you... “You idiot, are you kidding me? What the heck, can't you ever stay on your plan? Look at you, you're a failure again. You can't do anything right.” That is the inner critic voice. It makes us want to quit. And what is doubly cruel, it actually makes us want to go right back to the behavior we were trying to change in the first place.

Let me show you what I mean. Think of the Netflix moment I shared. Well, I don't know about you, but after being spoken to that way in my mind, I might need another show to calm down and go back to bed. In the fast food moment, when you feel like a failure, it's hard to go back and go try it again, so we give up. What the hell – that's a “What the hell moment,” many times. And in the working out example, when we stop seeing success in our goals, we just give up and we might just stay at the office and work, because that might make us feel better.

Wine o'clock moments are so classic for all of us. We know that, deep down, either yoga or a really healthy routine might help us with our stress, but that wine o'clock moment really calls us, and it works very quickly. What's really sad is we think we deserve to be spoken to in this way. We think that berating ourselves is actually helpful, but it is not.

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And it may be the only reason you're having trouble taking really good care of your health, so that's why it is so important I speak about it today. There are three steps that I've identified that can help you turn around these frustrating loops and moments, and I'll unpack these for you here.

They are very simple, but they work; number one, notice the inner critic voice. Second, allow the emotions that that voice created. Third, choose a different reaction. Now, many times we want to choose the different reaction. We want to quickly – “Oh, I'll work out tomorrow morning. Oh, I'll get this right.” And sometimes that works, but turning it around too fast without noticing what's going on doesn't create lasting change. And I want that for you.

So let's go at this a little more slowly. And it will take a little bit of practice, so don't worry if you don't get it right the first time. Believe me, you won't. It takes a little practice and it comes up all the time for us; this is just human behavior.

First, I want you to notice. Increase your awareness and notice when that inner critic pipes up. There may be common scenarios when this happens for you. Choose one to practice. How you might know that it is happening is – you may not know it with the thoughts in your mind yet; you may know it in your body first. You notice a bit of tension or a gut-wrenching feeling.

You notice your brain saying, or hearing yourself say, “Oh I should do this,” or, “I should do this better.” I want you to stop right there; that's right where you can notice. Then ask a few questions in this moment. As you're noticing it, why do I feel this way? What am I saying to myself? Totally take notice of what's happening in that moment.

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Next, take a deep breath. It will not be a natural reaction. I want you to allow all those emotions you just created with those ugly thoughts. Remember, this might help you to allow this. Open the door to that feeling. You've already created that emotion. You're feeling it in your body.

Remember, emotions are just a vibration in your body. It will pass very quickly if you don't resist it. And resistance makes it grow – it actually creates more anxiety around it. So remember, it's just a vibration; open your door to the emotion and allow it to pass.

Sometimes we can just feel better noticing and allowing. But I love being more empowered in this moment by choosing differently right here. It helps interrupt the, "What the hell," and "Do nothing about it," space. We choose from a different place by interrupting it, by asking much better questions. First of all, all those thoughts that came up in the notice segment, "Is this really true? Am I wrong here? Am I really a failure?" Most cases, I know the people that I work with, they are the farthest thing from failure, in their businesses and many facets of their lives. So it's not really true. You're not a failure; I know that.

Is it really true that you never workout? No, you've just had a bad run. So ask those questions. Come to better answers. My favorite is, "What's another way to think about this?" And a perfect shift in the moment, especially if you're doing a quick turnaround, "What can I do now?" Not, "What should..." Not, "What's the best way?" Not, "What's the perfect way?" "What can I do right now?"

And that might be jumping up and walking for 15 minutes to relieve some of the stress of just even the inner critic moment. It might be you just went to McDonald's and you wait until you're hungry again and you bought amazing fresh items from the store. Interrupting this takes these three steps, and it takes practice. Notice when that gut-wrench happens, allow it,

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let those emotions flow through your body and choose from a different place by asking, “What can I do now?”

Do you want to feel better right now? Well, I’ve created a worksheet for you that lays out these steps so you can study them and really lay down what happens for you in these moments. It’s really a little bit different for all of us. There’s a link in the show notes, [DianaMurphyCoaching.com/2](https://DianaMurphyCoaching.com/2). So you’ll find that in all of the show note, but you can just go directly to [DianaMurphyCoaching.com/2](https://DianaMurphyCoaching.com/2). Dial down that inner critic.

Again, the next time your inner critic pretends to be a helpful voice in your life and you’re feeling awful, notice and use this process. All of us find ourselves in these loops, but by using the awareness of noticing, the empowerment of allowing these emotions, you can also then reframe by choosing differently. We put ourselves in a place of taking a lot of healthier action towards our wellness. And I don’t know about you, this can be used in anything; in making cold calls, in standing up in front of a crowd. It is just the goal of dialing down that inner critic can affect so many things in our lives.

Nothing has gone wrong if it pipes up. Our inner critic pretends to keep us safe, it pretends to be necessary; protecting us. But our brain loves familiar patterns. It loves routines, and when we step into something new or try to break up a routine or habit in our lives, it very commonly pipes up.

One of my inner critic voices was actually created when I was in middle school. When I was growing up, I loved school. I became a geek about it. I got a lot of attention for my good grades, and this created a little bit of perfectionism, by the way. My inner critic was always raising its voice.

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Now, once I'd realized I could work hard and get good grades, I became a little less resilient. I kept expecting the A pluses. I was always on this mission to get that zing from that professor, or teacher in this case. Certainly, in high school, "Oh, Diana, you did it again. You got the best grade in the class..." I loved it. Who doesn't, right?

But my brain got into this pattern of always having to be right. So whenever I try something new, "You did it wrong," comes up all the time. I really believed this was developed to protect – quote end quote, remember me, it's a false protection – protecting me from getting it wrong because I loved the getting it right; the type A, the type A – that A plus on the grade.

I'll constantly hear, every time I do something brave, "You did it wrong." But now, now I know to expect it. I actually allow it, and I almost smile knowing what is up. We can have a little compassion for ourselves in these situations, that actually when we're growing and shifting and changing routines in our lives, will be triggering our inner critic.

And remember what I shared in episode one, judgment slows us down in taking new action, but curiosity helps us to move forward. That's why it's so important to recognize when this mean voice pipes itself up, and to get more curious and confident in these moments.

Remember, I've created a couple of resources for you if you'd like to feel better, right now. The first is the worksheet that's in the show notes, [DianaMurphyCoaching.com/2](https://DianaMurphyCoaching.com/2). And second, if you're looking at becoming more confident around your overall wellness, check out my video series, Empowered Wellness Now. You can sign up from my front page of my website, [DianaMurphyCoaching.com](https://DianaMurphyCoaching.com).

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Okay, I cannot wait to see you in the next episode. Yes, the wellness coach is finally going to talk about food, and most likely, not in the way that you expect. Join me on episode three, Feel Focused, Not Diet Focused. See you there. Have an amazing and empowering day, and remember, you've got this.

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Empowered Wellness for Leaders!* If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, download our Free Video Series: Empowered Wellness Now. Visit [dianamurphycoaching.com](http://dianamurphycoaching.com) to sign up today!