**B Mm Criticism**

**I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually. *(James Baldwin)***

**Criticism can be the best medicine to help you to success -- provided you are willing to swallow it. *(O. A. Battista)***

**Before you criticize somebody, ask yourself three questions: 1. How do I feel about offering this criticism? Does it give me pleasure of pain? If part of you is looking forward to it, hold back. Your motives are probably at least partly insincere (you don’t so much wish to help the person as relish cutting him down to size) and your listener will probably respond defensively and reject your critique. If the thought of criticizing another pains you, yet you feel impelled to speak up, do so. Your motives probably are sincere; your concern for the other person will shine through, making it likely that he or she will be able to accept or at least hear, your criticism. 2. Does my criticism offer specific ways to change? 3. Are my words non-threatening and reassuring? When criticizing, avoid the words “always” (You’re always irresponsible”) and “never” (“You’ve never thought about anyone else’s needs”). Such words one-dimensionalize and demoralize the person being criticized and will probably impel her to deny everything you’re saying. Who would admit, “Yes, it’s true. I’ve never thought about anyone else’s needs”? Be particularly careful to avoid speaking such words to children. Their egos tend to be especially vulnerable, and such rebukes could result in their feeling worthless. Keep in mind the words of Johann Paul Friedrich: “If a child tells a lie, tell him that he has told a lie, but don’t call him a liar. If you define him as a liar, you break down his confidence in his own character.” *(Joseph Telushkin, in Words That Hurt, Words That Heal)***

**Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you’re a mile away and you have their shoes. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Unjust criticism is usually a disguised compliment. It often means that you have aroused jealousy and envy. Remember that no one ever kicks a dead dog. (Dale Carnegie)**

**It does take experience and discipline on the part of a people not to regard conscientious criticism as really subversive. *(George Anastaplo, constitutional scholar, 2004)***

**Nobody wants constructive criticism. It’s all we can do to put up with constructive praise. *(Mignon McLaughlin)***

**The difference between constructive and destructive criticism is simple: the former is what you give while the latter is what you get. *(Frank Walsh, in National Enquirer)***

**It is much easier to be critical than to be correct. *(Benjamin Disraeli)***

Solitary shots should be ignored, but when they come from several directions, it's time to pay attention. As someone once said, "If one calls you a donkey, ignore him. If two call you a donkey, check for hoof prints. If three call you a donkey, get a saddle." *(Marshall Shelley, in Well-Intentioned Dragons)*

**When the pastor of a rural Tennessee church died, the congregation insisted that my uncle, the most senior deacon, take over until a replacement could be found. My uncle approached the first Sunday’s service reluctantly, expecting a lot of criticism at his feeble efforts to fill the pastor’s shoes. He did not, however, come unprepared. “How many of you have brought a pencil?” he asked immediately before services. Hands went up all over the auditorium. “And a piece of paper?” he continued. Envelopes, cards and grocery lists were waved aloft. “Good!” he exclaimed. “We are going to have a contest. I want you to listen very carefully this morning for any mistake I might make and write it down. Don’t hold anything back. The more critical your lists the better. The lists will be taken up at the end of the service.” He then fixed the congregation with a stern gaze and paused for effect. “And the one who has made the longest list,” he pronounced, “will win the Grand Prize – of getting to preach next Sunday.” *(Joe Prentis, in Reader’s Digest)***

**We tend to forget that criticism sometimes expresses greater respect than praise. It is surely more of an honor than flattery. As a professor, you challenge a student because you consider her capable of learning. You question her premises because you think she’s game enough to re-examine them. *(Wendy Kaminer, in The Atlantic Monthly)***

**Fat shaming backfires: When people have a weight problem, their friends, family members, and doctors often nag them to stay away from calorie-rich food and point out how much weight they’ve gained. But a new study has found that “fat shaming” may in fact have the reverse effect and make overweight people eat more, reports The Washington Post. British researchers studied 2,944 adults aged 50 or older, over four years. They found the 5 percent of volunteers who reported day-to-day “weight discrimination” – such as being treated disrespectfully in shops or at work – gained an average of 2 pounds, whereas the others lost 1.6 pounds over the same period. Shaming people for their weight, researchers concluded, doesn’t make them cut calories; it makes them feel discouraged and depressed, so they resort to comfort eating and pile on more pounds. “Weight discrimination is part of the obesity problem and not the solution,” said researcher Jane Wardle. “Everyone, including doctors, should stop blaming and shunning people for their weight.” *(The Week magazine, October 3, 2014)***

**Some people criticize football players as being a special breed of people who love violence. Have these critics ever tried to get a hot dog at halftime? *(Bits & Pieces)***

**For every action, there is an equal and opposite criticism. *(Harrison’s Postulate)***

**Drama is a cinch. You’ve got an hour and a half to impress an audience. Comedy is a lot tougher. You have an instant critic – laughter. As soon as you do a bit, the laughs have got to come or you begin to bomb. *(Jackie Gleason)***

**The goal of criticism is to leave the person with the feeling that he or she has been helped. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**You have been criticizing yourself for years and it hasn't worked. Try approving of yourself and see what happens. *(Louise Hay, motivational speaker)***

**Honest criticism is hard to take, particularly from a friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger. *(Franklin P. Jones)***

**To escape criticism – do nothing, say nothing, be nothing. *(Elbert Hubbard, American author and publisher)***

**People in positions of authority have to find fault with their associates from time to time. It’s part of the job of leadership to help people recognize how they can improve. But much as the job needs doing, it’s also important to know how to do it correctly. The reason is obvious. Most of us resent being told that our work may need improving – especially if the person who does the criticizing is direct, tactless, and forceful. Harsh criticism can hurt morale, damage egos, and sometimes create lasting resentment. How, then, should you go about it? In the first place, be sure of your facts. Be certain that you’re not making a mountain out of a molehill. If the mistake is important and has upset you, cool off first. Let things settle down a bit so you don’t say things you’ll be sorry for later. Pick your time carefully. It can be very upsetting to a person to be censured just before tackling an important piece of work. And, of course, always discuss the situation in private. No one likes to be criticized in front of others, especially fellow workers. Ask questions first – don’t accuse. Be sure people have a chance to state their side of the case first before you blame anyone. If they know they’re at fault, they may admit it willingly. That makes the situation easier all the way around. Before you criticize, let people know you appreciate some of the good things they’ve done. They will accept your criticism much more gracefully if you do. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Try to be charitable in your judgment of others. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes, so don’t be too harsh about them. It may seem superior, smart, and clever to be critical, but it’s a poor way to make or keep friends. Furthermore, it seldom accomplishes as much as a friendly, understanding reminder. Sharp criticism makes people angry, not sorry. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**When you feel like criticizing the kids just remember who raised them. *(Jesse Andrews)***

Nothing new about criticism of trial lawyers. In 1641, the Massachusetts Bay Colony made it illegal for anyone to earn money by representing another in court. In 1658, the Virginia Legislature passed a law to expel all lawyers. *(L. M. Boyd)*

**Every young man should learn to take criticism. He'll probably be a parent someday. *(Franklin P. Jones, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**There are two insults which no human will endure: the assertion that he hasn’t a sense of humor, and the doubly impertinent assertion that he has never known trouble. *(Sinclair Lewis)***

**If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won’t amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference. *(Abraham Lincoln)***

**The loudest boos always come from those in the free seats. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**I love criticism just so long as it's unqualified praise. *(Sir Noel Coward)***

**You know you’re a Mother when . . . You stop criticizing the way your mother raised you. *(Tidbits)***

**Criticism never yet built a house, wrote a play, painted a picture, nor built a business. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Insects do not sting out of malice but because they also want to live: likewise our critics – they want our blood, not our pain. *(Friedrich Nietzsche)***

**Nothing is easier than fault-finding; no talent, no self-denial, no brains, no character are required to set up in the grumbling business*. (Robert West)***

Establish a policy of taking all criticism as friendly. Once you insist to yourself that the other person is well-intentioned, you’ll get value from legitimate criticism, if there’s any there to get, and you won’t be bothered by the rest. When you concede a critic’s good will, you disarm an attacker and encourage an ally. *(Carroll O’Connor)*

Gary Kissel of San Diego went back to his executive post at Pacific Southwest Airlines after open-heart surgery but on slightly modified terms laid down by his doctors. When pressure began to build, Kissel sat back and beamed at one of his bosses. “My doctor,” he said quietly, “doesn’t allow me to receive criticism.” *(Neil Morgan, in San Diego Tribune)*

**Wit has truth in it; wisecracking is merely calisthenics with words. *(Dorothy Parker)***

**If you take pleasure in criticism, it’s time to hold your tongue. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Praise can give criticism a lead around the first turn and still win the race. *(Bern Williams, in National Enquirer)***

Companies bashed by President Trump on Twitter don't suffer long-term damage to their stock price. An index of 12 firms that Trump has tweeted about since February 2016, including Lockheed Martin and Nordstrom, has slightly outperformed the overall stock market over the past year. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 10, 2017)*

The right to criticize must be earned, even if the advice is constructive in nature. Before you are entitled to tinker with another person’s self-esteem, you are obligated first to demonstrate your respect for him as a person. When a relationship of confidence has been carefully constructed, you will have earned the right to discuss a potentially threatening topic. Your motives will have been thereby clarified. *(James Dobson, in What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About)*

**Do what you feel in your heart to be right -- for you'll be criticized anyway. *(Eleanor Roosevelt)***

**The rule of carving holds good as to criticism; never cut with a knife what you can cut with a spoon. *(Charles Buxton)***

Charlie Brown: “Did you read the paper today? Did you read about all the terrible things going on in the world? It’s very depressing.” Lucy: “I’ll thank you not to criticize my year!” *(Charles Schulz, in Peanuts comic strip)*

Silence is sometimes the severest criticism. *(Buxton)*

Time is the only critic without personal ambition. *(John Steinbeck)*

It takes a good man to give criticism objectively. It takes an even better man to accept it without resentment. *(Bern Williams)*

**The most ubiquitous typeface in history, Times New Roman, came about as a result of a damning letter to the editor back in 1931. After criticizing the British Times for being badly printed and typographically out of date, Stanley Morrison was commissioned by the newspaper to create the serif typeface. *(Harry Bright & Jakob Anser, in Are You Kidding Me?, p. 185)***

**Criticism is easier to take when you realize that the only people who aren't criticized are those who don't take risks. *(Donald Trump)***

After writing the runaway best seller Uncle Tom’s Cabin, Harriet Beecher Stowe was bombarded with hate mail. Out of one package that she received fell the ear of a slave. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 202)*

**Once the New York Times ran an article ridiculing Unity, entitled “Christian Science Outdone.” “This is a good piece, with very good testimonials,” wrote Mr. Fillmore, and proceeded to reprint the entire article. He thanked the author for writing it, commenting that he had received numerous letters from people asking help who had never heard of Unity until they read the article in the New York Times. Over and over the history of Unity has shown this to be the case: the main effect of critical articles has been to interest people in Unity. (James Dillet Freeman, in The Story of Unity, p. 143)**

**In the face of unjust criticism we can become bitter or better; upset or understanding; hostile or humble; furious or forgiving. *(William Arthur Ward)***

**Writing criticism is to writing fiction and poetry as hugging the shore is to sailing in the open sea. *(John Updike)***

**No one appreciates the value of constructive criticism more thoroughly than the one who’s giving it. (Hal Chadwick)**

Lucy: “And you’re weak, and spineless and wishy-washy!” Linus: “She really took you apart, didn’t she, Charlie Brown?” Charlie Brown: “Uh, huh. Step by step, verse by verse and line by line.” Linus: “You sound like a victim of higher criticism!” *(Charles Schulz, in Peanuts comic strip)*

**All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism. *(S.C.U.C.A. Regional Reporter)***

**Whatever you have to say to people be sure to say it in words that will cause them to smile and you will be on pretty safe ground. And when you do find it necessary to criticize someone, put your criticism in the form of a question which the other fellow is practically sure to have to answer in a manner that he becomes his own critic. *(John Wanamaker)***

**A Russian man spent a month starving in a forest after fighting with his wife about a bowl of soup. Yuri Ticuic, 69, stormed out of his home in a remote region after his wife served him soup he felt was not hot enough. Ticuic became lost in the woods, and survived for a month on berries and leaves until he was finally found, suffering from malnutrition and frostbite. "No matter what happens," he said, "that's the last time I criticize my wife's cooking." *(The Week magazine, December 28, 2012 - January 4, 2013)***

**Criticism of women drivers has diminished, now that you can’t tell whether the driver ahead is a woman. *(James Thom, in Nuggets)***

**Criticism won’t hurt you unless it should. *(Grand Island, Nebraska, Weekly Shopper)***

**Criticism is a word with blood on its teeth because we know that one definition is “the act of finding fault.” Criticism’s unsavoriness was drummed into us by our parents: “If you can’t say anything nice about someone, don’t say anything at all.” But who obeyed? A person who doesn’t have anything bad to say about someone – or about a work of art – may be a saint, but he’s more likely a bore. We define ourselves, in part, by the discriminations we make. The value of what we love is enriched by our understanding of what we dislike. *(David Ansen, in Self)***

**The worst criticism seeks to have the last word and leave the rest of us in silence; the best opens up an exchange that need never end. *(Rebecca Solnit, critic)***

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