

## 7 Critical Steps to Unleash Your Potential

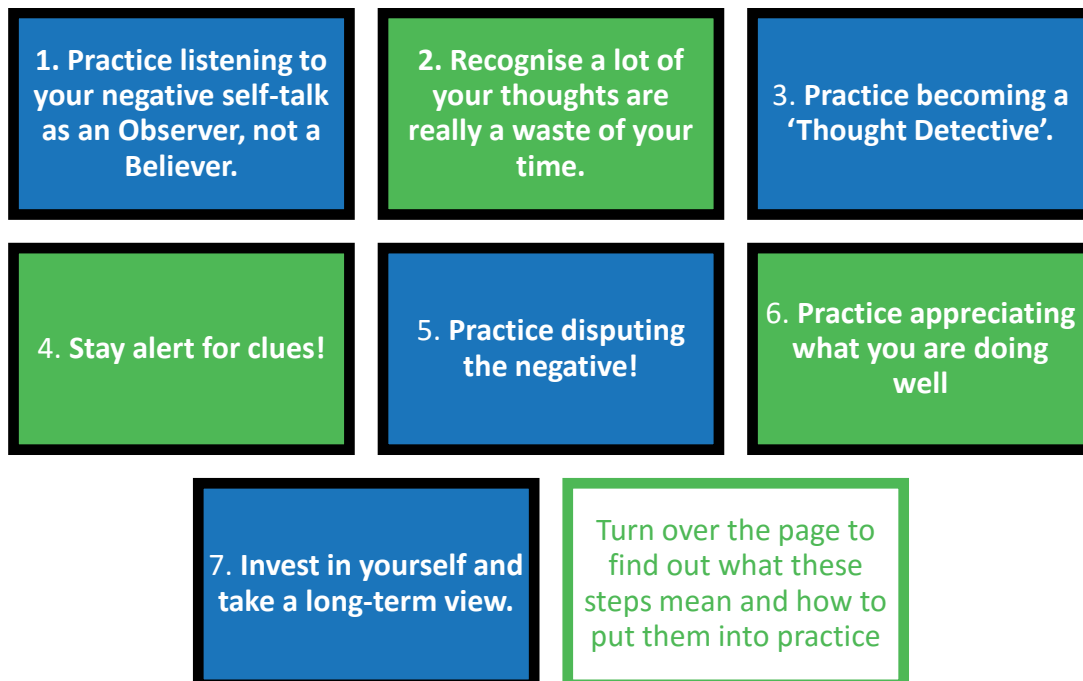
We all so often underestimate our potential to create our dreams and overcome our fears.

You can put your Inner Critic to bed and unleash your full potential! If you're sick and tired of the persistent inner struggle between what you dare to dream and that often relentless inner voice that tells you – “No you can't have that” Read on.

Here are some really critical and practical steps you can to really liberate yourself from feeling trapped by the repetitive self-defeating inner conversations we all face that stop you from putting your personal and professional strengths, shine, spark out in front.

With these **7 simple reliable practices** you can start to strengthen the inner conversation you really want to have. Trust in yourself more. Increase your confidence. Make effective plans to move towards toward what you really want and know you can get there.

These **7 Critical Steps** will work if you are prepared to do a little work, take a little time and put in some commitment.



For more information and resources about realising your potential and your purpose, contact Elizabeth Williamson Solutions, for expertise in counselling, coaching and conflict resolution services.

To discuss further book a FREE 15 minute consultation now with Elizabeth Williamson via website, phone or email [info@elizabethwilliamsonsolutions.com](mailto:info@elizabethwilliamsonsolutions.com)

### 1. Practice listening to your negative self-talk as an Observer, not a Believer.

YOU are the person listening to yourself think. These are just thoughts. Not reality. Not a series of 'facts'. Just thoughts. You probably learnt a lot of this self-talk as you grew up, went to school, and in your family. Negative 'self-talk' is usually based on what someone has said to you at some time when you were young, that was inaccurate, hurtful or just plain wrong. YOU are listening to history, perhaps someone else's ideas about who you are. You are never trapped by your past.

### 2. Recognise a lot of your thoughts are really a waste of your time.

A lot of thinking is really routine, predictable, well-rehearsed sentences that you repeat to yourself over and over again. Negative thoughts run like a well-worn groove in our minds. It really is okay to stop thinking so much, so often. Most of us could do with more space between the rush of thoughts, worries, and to do lists, etc.

Pause and take notice of your breathing, your body, the environment. Look up and around you, rather than getting lost in your internal world. The goal is to have some really interesting new thoughts that describe your optimistic future that is outward focused.

### 3. Practice becoming a 'Thought Detective'.

Track those negative thoughts and find out when and where your Inner Critic wants to take over! Driving the car home from work is a really common time to zone out, and your Inner Critic runs a commentary of arguments and disagreements. Then 20 minutes into the drive, you realise you've been arguing with yourself, or somebody else, there in the back of your mind. This just sets you up for feeling irritable or moody. Certainly not optimistic. Perhaps there are people that you interact with that really trigger you into negative thoughts and a downward mood spiral. Watch out, perhaps even write a list so that you can improve your work on **Step 1**.

### 4. Stay alert for clues!

Notice when you are most vulnerable and when you feel more in control and positive. Treat any sentence with the words *Should*, *Can't*, *Must*, or *Have to* with suspicion. These are words your Inner Critic loves to use! They will lead you astray. You'll often end up feeling frustrated, guilty or look at a situation trying to find who's at fault or to blame. And you'll miss opportunities that are right there in front of you to be creative, curious and confident.

Write down your Inner Critic's favourite thought lines: the 'should' and 'have to' moments that crop up most frequently, and that trip you up and take your confidence or creativity away. Take a good look long at these and you'll be ready for **Step 5**.

#### 5. Practice disputing the negative!

Interrupt and challenge repetitive negative thoughts, rather than using distraction, avoidance or giving in to feeling overwhelmed. Sometimes you just have to say “No!” or “Stop!” or “I’m just not going to listen to you” to that Inner Critic. Sometimes you need to just say “Shhhh” to yourself and breathe slowly, be a little gentler and all kinder in the moment when things are difficult.

#### 6. Practice appreciating what you are doing well.

Start to notice what you are doing that works well, rather than aiming for perfection. That Inner Critic just loves the perfectionistic whip. Ouch! Practice ‘good enough’. Practice a little self-forgiveness often. You could even say to yourself “Well done”, “I like that”, “I’m going in the right direction”.

Practice appreciating the compliments you receive from others. Don’t throw them away whether automatic, predictable response that dismisses what other people seeing you and ultimately dismisses your own value to yourself. Pause, breathe and say “Thank you”. Smile, breath again, take in another person’s appreciation and let it settle right into your body, rolling down your spine and allowing yourself feel good! Oh, and go back to **Step 5** when your inner critic interrupts to tell you that it’s not true.

#### 7. Invest in yourself and take a long-term view.

When you want quick, immediate results it’s often fear-based thinking, and lead you into ‘either/or’ problem-solving. Don’t cut yourself short by trying to find the quick fix. The result is that you can end up feeling trapped with limited choices that you don’t really want, and are leading you away from your real goals.

It’s not unusual to overestimate what you can achieve in the short term, and underestimate where you might be more patience, practice and support. This means learning to live with discomfort, disappointment, mistakes, and misunderstandings. See these difficulties as opportunities to challenges, first your negativity and secondly, as opportunities for curiosity rather than fatalism. Don’t settle for less. Learn to ask for you want. Reach out and ask for support and share your struggle. You’ll probably find the person you’re speaking to has more understanding than you thought.

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