

Muting the Inner Critic

Written by Shelley Lowther
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As human beings, we are more alike than we are different. No matter what our social or economic status, at our core, human beings all experience the same range of emotions. Yet almost from the womb, we strive to distinguish ourselves from others. In our quest for success and happiness, we risk falling into the trap of comparison.

My own inner critic has always been there to whisper, and sometimes scream, "You are not good enough. Look how much better she is. He is smarter than you. Why can't you do this better?" I call this voice my BIC (Bitchy Inner Critic), and I want to push her mute button.

When I let down my guard, or my spiritual armor, I easily fall into the BIC comparison trap. My successes are lessened, my shine tarnished, and my happiness averted. The very thing I strive for is stifled by none other than myself!

Theodore Roosevelt said it well: "Comparison is the thief of joy."

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Ain't *that* the truth. Each time we compare ourselves to others, on or off the yoga mat, our BIC grows stronger and louder. I don't know about you, but I'm trying to quiet that BIC and not give her more power! And while I am always afraid that the BIC will meet the OUTER critic, I am practicing the art of being vulnerable so that I can have what I really want.

It doesn't mater what you call it. Joy. Happiness. Bliss. I want to be happy. So I *choose* happiness. I will only doubt my doubts. I will not hesitate to pursue my dreams. Keep your comparison; I choose joy.

One of my goals for 2013 is to mute my BIC more often, until she can only speak in a whisper. I know that I may not ever silence her completely, but I can choose to listen to the voice that says, "I am awesome." I am strengthening my belief that I am not only good enough, but that I excel. It's a new muscle, but I'm looking forward to flexing it.

Even publishing something that boldly states, "I am really good at what I do!" invites my BIC to chatter. There is only one thing to do. Press *MUTE*.

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