HOW TO OVERCOME THE FEAR OF JUDGEMENT
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You have much latent energy, potential, and inner-greatness ... just willing to express itself. But do you ever let fear of judgement of others get in your way, or prevent you from expressing yourself, sharing your artwork, or just being you?

Criticism and critique is judgment

In modern life, many of us are afraid of criticism or critique. I did some research on the words "criticism" and "critique" and they both are essentially the same word -- which goes back to the ancient Greek word "kritikos" which means judge/judgement.

Thus, all criticism/critique is judgement from others.

Why is living in society important to us?

Now, we live in a society with other humans. To be judged by other humans affects our survival and thrival (thriving) in life. For example, if you are judged positively by other humans in society, you will most likely prosper more, have more access to food, shelter, and resources. If you are judged negatively by others in society, you might have a harder time getting a job, paying bills, and having access/opportunities to doing things you want in your life.

Thus, we all care how we are judged by others-- because we can either profit from favorable impressions/judgements others have of us, or we can suffer when others judge us in a negative way.
Why fear judgement from others?

To be honest, we don’t really have anything to fear in modern day society. We’re not gonna starve to death or die. I think ultimately, all of our fears stem from the fear of death, impoverishment, and disenfranchisement.

I find that the best way to conquer my personal fears is to imagine the worst case scenario, and then try to accurately and logically judge how I will actually feel in the future.

For example, let’s say you want to do something in life— what are your biggest fears, in terms of how others will judge you? Some ideas:

1. Others might criticize you for being foolish, dumb, or stupid.
2. Others might judge you as being selfish, evil, or a bad person.

So imagine the worst case scenario... if it actually happened, would it really be that bad?

In other words, do you care if others think you’re foolish, dumb, stupid, selfish, evil, or a bad person? Doesn’t your own opinion of yourself, your own motives, and how you feel about yourself matter more?

Your social circle isn’t sinister

Going deeper, realize that anything you want to pursue in life is going to “upset” others. You might upset others who have differing opinions from you. You might upset your parents or elders who have certain expectations of you. You might upset your friends who don’t approve of your non-conformist behavior. It isn’t that your friends, family, boss, or social circle is sinister and want to see you fail—it is because if you decide to do something “out of the norm”, extraordinary, or unusual—they’re just going to feel uncomfortable, or perhaps be worried or concerned for you. Or perhaps they might even be a bit envious, to see you spread your wings, and they might want to drag you down into the bucket, like
crabs trying to claw their way out.

Regret minimization framework

What is going to be your life story at the end of your life? Imagine yourself at age 90, recounting your life story. Are you going to regret not taking more risks? Are you going to care about all the negative judgments others had of you in your life?

I think that at the end of my life, I’m going to NOT want to have any regrets before I die. I would rather take a risk and fail, rather than having the regret of never attempting to take the risk in the first place. Also personally, I would prefer to ruffle some feathers and upset some people, than never taken certain risks in life that I wanted to do for myself.

Selfish isn’t evil

To be selfish, or self-centered is not evil. To be selfish is just to focus on yourself, your own behavior, for you to follow your own passions in life, for you to follow your own unique voice, and for you to march to the beat of your own inner-drummer.

Know in order to live an epic life, you must be selfish, and self focused. And for myself, I seek to be self-centered in order to maximize my own self-development, in order to become the strongest person possible, to eventually best help others and society.

In other words, empower yourself before you seek to empower others. Because if you’re not strong enough, how can you help others?
Ideas for action

Some ideas to overcome the fear of judgement:

1. Know that your actions are selfish, self centered, and be okay with that. Know that you’re focusing on yourself, in order to eventually help the greater good, and all of society (present and future of humanity).
2. Imagine that everyone hates you — are you okay with that? Would you really care?
3. What is the worst case scenario if you take certain risks in your life and fail? Do you fear financial ruin, or social criticism and stigma?
4. Cut off the social world and isolate yourself for certain periods of time (zen monk mode) to focus on your own self development. Keep your phone in airplane mode, go certain days without checking your email or messages, and block the external stimuli of the outside world. Ignore social media, ignore the news, and other current events. Focus on yourself for periods of time, treat this as “fasting” from external information to improve your own mental health. Also as a tip, spend certain periods of time turning off your phone, and going on nice long walks with no headphones or distractions (bring a camera along to snap some photos).
5. Think to yourself — what are some epic projects you'd like to work on and launch before you die? What are some dreams you had as a child, and do you still dream big?

Your life is short. Remember you will die. Don’t let fear of judgement hold you back.

BE BOLD, ERIC