

PARALLEL LEADERS

S2.O3: KELLY STICKEL **MASTERING SELF EVALUATION: TAKE CONTROL OF CRITICISM!**

EPISODE NOTES

1. KNOW YOURSELF—this is a reality issue.

The higher you go in leadership, the greater the target of criticism you will become.

When criticized, determine whether your leadership position or a personal blindspot that prompted the negative remarks.

When you know yourself, all your strengths and weaknesses intimately, you can better assess an incoming criticism and its ultimate purpose.

If it's positional, realize it's not personal. Learn to let it go. While it may not be easy to release, understand that ultimately it's not about you but the other person's perceptions and pain.

2. CHANGE YOURSELF—this is a responsibility issue.

"You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you mad." ~Aldous Huxley

Feel your feelings. Don't label them as good or bad but work to identify your feelings. Mad, guilty, hurt, sad or shameful? The goal here is not to judge your feelings but to understand them. Especially when they seem extreme. By sitting with your feelings, you can gain insight into what's causing them. Once you know why you're feeling a certain way, you can process it properly and adjust your behaviours or actions if necessary. Be aware that your emotions are there to teach you something important.

How do you properly process your feelings?

- When criticized, ask who criticized me. The source matters. Adverse criticism from a wise person with a good track record is more to be desired than the enthusiastic approval of a fool.
- When criticized, ask how it was given. Was it hostile and judgmental, or was it spoken with kindness and with the benefit of the doubt?
- When criticized, ask why was it given. Was it delivered out of personal hurt or for your benefit? Remember, hurting people hurt people; they lash out or criticize to make themselves feel better, not help the other person. But criticism can also be given because people are genuinely trying to help you grow.

When receiving criticism, try to maintain the right attitude by

- Avoid being defensive.
- Look for the ounce of gold. Sometimes you have to shift through the dirt to find the truth.
- Make the necessary changes.
- Take the high road. Don't avoid your critics. If it's for your benefit, they want to see your best. If it's because they are hurting, you can help them find freedom.

"To be an effective leader, you need to let others tell you what you need to hear, not necessarily what you want to hear." ~John C. Maxwell

3. ACCEPT YOURSELF—this is a maturity issue.

"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."
~Carl Rogers

Being who you really are is the first step in becoming better than you really are. If you worry too much about what other people think of you, it's because you have more confidence in their opinion than your own. (Or you are trying to hide who you really are.)

But if you know and admit your weaknesses, and you know your strengths and work within them, you can be yourself with confidence. This is where personality tests can be beneficial. Not to put you into a box or become an excuse but to help you identify your strengths, potential weaknesses and tendencies so that you can work within or compensate for them.

"Real confidence comes from knowing and accepting yourself—your strengths and limitations—in contrast to depending on affirmation from others." ~Judith Bardwick

4. FORGET YOURSELF—this is a security issue.

Secure people forget about themselves so they can focus on others. This doesn't mean you think less of yourself; it means you think of yourself less.

And when you focus on others, criticism is simply a means to help you identify your blindspots and become better at leading others.



RESOURCES + LINKS

- [Book: The Self-Aware Leader by John Maxwell](#)
- [Book: 5 Levels of Leadership by John Maxwell](#)
- [Personality Test: Enneagram](#)
- [Personality Test: Meyers Briggs](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS + ACTION STEPS

1

What things have you learned about yourself over the years based off of criticism you've received? (Samples: I am not a great listener. / I am impatient. / I am unrealistic about the time things take and how difficult the process is. / I overestimate the ability of others and delegate responsibility too quickly. / I make decisions quickly and expect others to do the same.)

2

Identify one that frustrates your team/boss the most. What action steps can you take to help compensate or grow in this area?

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