



mattmcwilliams.com

# This 1 Thing Will Silence Your Critics Forever

## **Who are your biggest critics?**

Think about that question right now. Who are the people in your life that are most critical of your dreams?

Do you want to know how to deal with them?

Before we go any further, let me be clear on the definition of "critic."

A critic is not someone who brings up legitimate concerns or occasionally points out flaws in your logic. A critic is not someone who tells a 300-pound man who hasn't exercised since the Clinton administration that he should lose some weight and get on a training plan before running a marathon. There is a big difference between a realistic friend and a critic.

A critic is someone who tells you that any dream beyond their bubble of understanding is ridiculous or impossible. They label you a dreamer or a child. They believe it is impossible to live a dream and still provide for your family. They think that happiness on the job and responsibility are mutually exclusive. When you leave a critic's presence, your energy is depleted, your joy stripped, and your dreams crushed.

## **So how do you deal with these critics?**

You leave them.

Entirely. Or as much as possible.

You deal with them the same way you deal with negative people, because that is exactly what they are.

You may be just like me. You have an unsettled feeling about abandoning people, no matter how negative or critical they are. But I've learned that since we are all world-changers, it often means leaving people behind. The positive influence we can have on hundreds or thousands (or more) of

others is often dependent on eliminating the one or two negative voices in our lives. It's a sacrifice we must be willing to make.

Much of my unease in leaving people behind comes from my faith. My faith says that God leaves the 99 obedient sheep to find the one lost soul. My faith says to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. I *thought* my faith basically said leave no critic behind.

But then I read Jesus' own advice to His followers when he first sent them out on missionary journeys:

If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet.

Matthew 10:14

In other words, if people aren't receptive to you, and that includes your dreams, goals, and plans, leave them behind. As a matter of fact, *shake any trace of their criticism off of you.*

### **Maybe my critic is right...**

Years ago, I worked for a critic.

After finally leaving the company, I received an email from him that basically tore me apart. It called me lazy, unfocused, incompetent, and questioned my integrity. Even now, as I write those words, it causes a certain level of pain. Even now, I questioned rather I should even mention it.

For months afterwards, from time to time, I would pull up that email. I would read it over and over. I thought I was using it as motivation, but in reality the words just sank deeper and deeper into my soul. I began to question myself.

*Maybe I am lazy.*

*Maybe I am unfocused.*

*Maybe I will never amount to more than I did working for him.*

*Maybe I will never live out my dreams.*

I thought all of those things. His words were implanted in my memory. They would come to me anytime I sat down to write or when I would get ready to make a sales call. They would haunt me if I slept in on a Saturday morning.

*You are lazy, they whispered. Look at you sleeping in. If you were worth anything, you would have been up already.*

And then I left his town and shook the dust off my feet.

*I permanently deleted the email.*

And over time those words left me. Sure, they would rear their ugly heads occasionally, but I'd taken the edge off of them. My anger at this man subsided. The harshness of the words became softer and softer, like a sharp knife morphing into dull butter knife.

Jesus is telling you to do the same thing he told His followers 2000 years ago.

He didn't tell them to change their methods or adjust for their critics. In other words, He told them what I am telling you...keep doing what you are doing. Don't change for them. Run *your* race. Live out *your* dreams.

**Action item:** Identify one negative critic in your life today. Consider ways to remove that person from your life.

Remove every trace of that relationship.

Delete that email.

Remove the contact from your phone. I have a friend who did exactly that with the same guy who sent me that email. Months after they severed ties, he deleted him from his contacts. He told me that he instantly felt better.

Remove them from your social media.

Block them from commenting on your blog. I've never personally had to do this, but if someone's sole purpose in life is to criticize what you write, get rid of that person.

Do everything you can to remove your critics from your life. You will both be better for it...and the world will benefit from a more positive and productive you.

***What can you do to remove your critics from your life today?***