

# Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

## Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

Aaron J. Jacobs

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You're listening to the *Storied Life Coaching* podcast with Aaron J. Jacobs, episode number two.

In this episode, we're diving into how to become aware of and take the power away from your inner critic. Mine is named Frank the Parrot. I'll tell you all about it in just a moment. Forward!

What if you could write your own life story? How would you spend your time? What would your career or business look like? What kind of parent or partner would you be? Welcome to *Storied Life Coaching*, the only podcast that will show you how to stop living life by default, and teach you how to build a thriving business that fuels an amazing life on your terms. I'm Aaron J. Jacobs, and as a master coach and CEO of OMH Creative and Storied Coaching, I've had the privilege and opportunity to learn what it takes first hand to rewrite your own life story. It's never too late for a rewrite.

Hello, my friends. I am very excited to bring you this topic this week. And oh my gosh, it is just a beautiful day. We're here in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. There was kind of this like, cozy fog this morning, and then it all lifted, and now I'm able to see outside of my studio doors. It's all glass on this side, and I'm able to see outside to across the street where I have a beautiful view of the South Puget Sound as well as the elementary school directly across the street where my daughter actually goes.

I have the wonderful experience multiple times a day of these little amazing beings busting through the doors for a slice of freedom as they run toward the monkey bars, swings and to have fun and run around just full of joy. It is just the most wonderful thing as an adult to be reminded of that kind of unencumbered joy that can happen. It reminds me of the possibility that we all have and that we can try new things and explore new things when we're kids. As we get older, we start to develop what we're going to be talking about today, which is an inner critic.

I will talk about why it's happening and why evolution kind of pushed us in that direction. Still, it's something that can hold us back if we're using it to stop us from creating new stories. New stories that propel us toward what

## Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

we want to what we want to achieve, to that new job you want or that new role you want to pursue or that new hobby you want to try or anything really.

In fact, I've lovingly named my inner critic Frank the Parrot, and I'll tell you how I deal with him. But, I had a wonderful example of this just a couple of weeks ago when as a family, we were gathering around to once again move through the Harry Potter series. There is a specific movie in the Harry Potter series where they have an amazing example of this. I love the way that they address working with their inner critic because what they do is there's this scary monster-type thing.

I believe it's called a Bogart that is trapped in a closet. Each child has to line up in a line. This monster that's in the closet knows what's in their head and knows what they fear the most, what holds them back from fulfilling their potential, what scares them even if they've never told anyone before. It will present itself as that as a direct copy of whatever it is. So, if you're scared of spiders, you're going to see a giant spider. If you're scared of brooms, there's going to be the biggest, scariest broom you've ever seen.

And each of them has to line up and, with the spell, look it directly into the eyes and say ridiculous. When they do that, it changes because they have personified it as something silly and not worth obsessing over. Then, it's able to have no power over them anymore. They can dismiss it and move toward what they really want. And I thought this was such a beautiful example of what we can do as adults with our inner critic. So, why do you want to do this? You want to learn how to identify, make friends with, and ultimately quiet your inner critic, and that's exactly what I'm going to show you how to do today.

How to become aware of your inner critic, that's the first thing we're going to talk about because once you train your brain to be curious about it and to be aware of when it's happening, you can start to build that muscle where you start to not let it have as much control over you even if you didn't realize that it was happening because, man, that inner critic can be insidious with just a couple key phrases or words or flashes of images of

## Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

things that didn't go right for us in the past. It can stop us from speaking up in the meeting, expressing our ideas fully, and pursuing what we want to do.

And that's not something I want for you. It's not something that I wanted in my life, and it's something that I was able to start to wrestle with and then ultimately get control over, and that's the gift I want to give to you too. So, I'm going to show you how to become aware of your inner critic and then have that be the key to dismantling your imposter syndrome. So, this is going to allow you to build that muscle like I said, so that you know when it's happening. You can move toward growth even though it's slightly uncomfortable at first.

This will help you to pursue your goals. It's just a complete game-changer, and I want to give this to you. So, let's talk a little bit about where this stems from. So, it comes from a very, very good place because from an evolution standpoint, we all have something baked into us. Literally, it's right above our brainstem. There's an area of our brain that handles the lower functions. It's right above the stuff that handles just the basics like the heart continues beating when we're sleeping, all of the things that happen in our body automatically that we don't need to think about.

Right above that level is something that's meant to keep us safe, and we call it fight or flight or lizard brain, as I refer to it as well and other people refer to it. It's that thing that's supposed to keep you safe. It's supposed to when you see a dark alley make you question whether you should walk down it or not. Are we safe right now? Should we move toward or away from something? Should we fight or flight?

It's a wonderful thing to have. It kept our ancestors from being eaten by saber tooth tigers. It's a wonderful skill to have. The thing is, as we evolved and as our brains kept growing and growing forward, we developed more and more skills to process information and make our own decisions not just based on animal instinct. That part of our brain is still there, and it wants a job. It wants to keep us safe. It has the best intentions for us.

## Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

But, the thing is that part of our brain really wants to rely on what's happened in the past. What did we not do well? What did we fail at? What were those emotions, those negative things that made us feel bad that we didn't feel safe? It wants to keep us from having that happen again. It's trying to keep us safe. The thing is if we want to grow, if we want to progress, if we want to move toward stories that ultimately will make us more fulfilled, we can't allow that to hold us back that fear, that inner critic, those small thoughts and sentences and words of oh I'm not going to be able to do that.

Or for some of our clients, for instance, that work with us on our *Storied Teams* course when they're first learning how to engage with the camera, even turning on the camera can be, when that red light comes on. I've had executives, huge executives at large corporations that are amazing in front of a board room. As soon as that red light on that camera comes on, they have all kinds of self-doubt and stuff that kicks in. All of a sudden, they might have a little bit of trouble.

So, everyone has this inner critic. It's that thing that says, you know, ugh, I bet I don't look that good right now, or I'm not going to do that well, or I said that why did I say that way that must have sounded stupid? All kinds of little things that this inner critic is trying to do to keep us safe, keep us from looking like a fool, and keep us from emotional harm. It thinks that we're going to be harmed. Now, mine, as I've said before, I have lovingly nicknamed Frank.

Frank is this horrible-looking molting; he might have a little bit of mold in there. I'm pretty sure he smokes two packs a day of cigarettes. He's a parrot. He likes to sit on my shoulder and has a very raspy voice. He likes to remind me of all the ways that this could go wrong that we should probably worry about all kinds of stuff. It's probably better to just not pursue that new idea or new goal or new objective because in the past, we tried something similar, and it didn't work.

So, let's just not do that. Or, oh my gosh, I can't believe you said that that way, Aaron. You should have made a different word choice. You should

## Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

have done that differently. In the moment, while I am actively working, while I'm doing things, it can be so distracting. So, we want Frank to have a new job. Instead of Frank being in charge and telling us what we're going to do, we're going to go ahead, and some of you might think I want to banish Frank, and I don't. I'm glad he's there.

I'm just choosing with the forward part of my brain not to listen to him anymore. So, this is what you do. You say, Frank, I realize you're there. I totally get that you're trying to keep me safe right now, but what I want you to do is I want you to sit in the backseat. I'm driving right now with the forward part of my brain, and I'm in control. We're going to be fine. We could get hurt. Who knows? It could happen, but I'm in control, and I've got this now.

Now, Frank does not like hearing this at first, and your version of Frank won't either. They're going to be like an angry toddler in the backseat that throws their Cheerios everywhere and their juice and is just having a full-on, go to 11, meltdown because you need to listen to them. We could get hurt here. Something bad might happen. It's true, or I might have made that wrong word choice. It might be something small that might have happened. That's okay. I'm going to keep moving forward.

Suppose you start listening more and more to Frank, to your own inner critic. In that case, that actually distracts you and gets you more off message, more off-topic, further away from the stories that move you toward your goals. So, here's what I want you to do. I want you to actually pick a totem for your inner critic. Suppose everyone has one, and this is a direct link to imposter syndrome. In that case, we want to identify it, and we want to do our own version of saying ridiculous in the Harry Potter example.

We want to go ahead and make this inner critic our friend. We're going to be curious about it. We're going to notice that Frank is there. I want you to pick a totem that works for you. It might be a camel dressed in a tutu. The sillier, the better. Pick one that is absolutely ridiculous, something that makes you smile. And I want you to visually picture becoming aware of

## Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

when your totem when your Frank is telling you that you can't do something, that you can't move toward something, that you've just screwed up in the moment, I can't believe you just did that, you know.

Some of you do this at night too. Some of you do this at night. You lay in bed, and you think of all the dumb things you did that day right as you're going to bed. I know you. I know you because I am you. I want you to notice that. I want you to pick a totem. I want you to say, hey, we're not doing that right now. You can absolutely be here, thank you so much for trying to keep me safe, but you're going to sit in the backseat. Here, I'm going to give you a new juice. Here are some more Cheerios.

I'm going to strap you in, and you can throw a tantrum if you want, but I'm in charge right now, and we're moving forward. We're moving forward with momentum toward what we want toward the story that we want toward more fulfillment. Because if we listen to the imposter, if we listen to Frank, then we don't move toward growth even though it's uncomfortable. So, that's what I want you to do. Those are the steps.

I want you to realize that you have an inner critic. Start to become curious and notice when it's happening in the moment. I want you to assign a totem the sillier, the better, and then I want you to acknowledge Frank, your version of Frank, and put him in the backseat. It will be fine. Just let him know, hey, it's totally fine that you're worried about that. Thank you so much for keeping me from getting eaten by a sabretooth tiger, and thank you so much for keeping my ancestors safe, but I don't need your services right now.

You still get to be a part of the team. You're here, but you're not going to be making the conscious decisions that we're doing in order to move forward with what we want in our lives. So, that's what I want you to do. If you're able to address this. If you're able to go ahead and start noticing your inner critic, I promise you that imposter syndrome that the things and the stories you've built up over time have been keeping you from pursuing what you want and moving toward the life and the goals that you want. All of a



## Ep #2: Taking the Power Away from Your Inner Critic

sudden, those barriers are going to get thinner and thinner until you're able to start walking and then running after what you want.

Alright, thank you so much for listening this week, my friends. I will talk to you soon.

To celebrate the launch of the show, I'm going to be giving away an amazing on-camera kit which includes a high-quality webcam, lighting set up, and a microphone. This is the very same kit we provide to students enrolled in our storied team's course that is used by our storied clients like Microsoft and SAP.

I'll be awarding three lucky listeners who follow, rate and review the show. It doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope you love the show. I just want your honest feedback so we can create an awesome show that provides tons of value. Visit [storiedcoaching.com/podcastlaunch](https://storiedcoaching.com/podcastlaunch); again, that's [storiedcoaching.com/podcastlaunch](https://storiedcoaching.com/podcastlaunch) to learn more about the contest and how to enter. I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode.

Thanks for listening to *Storied Life Coaching with Aaron J. Jacobs*. If you want more information or resources from the podcast, visit us at [storiedcoaching.com](https://storiedcoaching.com).