



MONDAYS

with Mike

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Handling criticism with grace

John C. Maxwell, in his book *The Self-Aware Leader*, shares the following four-step process that helps him deal with criticism.

1. Know yourself – This is a REALITY issue. Self-awareness is your friend. Here's why: When a leader is criticized, it's really the leadership position that prompts the negative remarks, not the individual leader. You need to be able to separate the two. When it is directed at us as the leader, we need to become even more self-aware. What are true and real are the things we should own and work on.

2. Change yourself – This is a RESPONSIBILITY issue. We need to examine criticism objectively:

- > Don't be defensive.
- > Look for the grain of truth.
- > Make necessary changes.
- > Take the high road.

People can change for the better only when they are open to improvement and when they are willing to receive criticism with grace.

3. Accept yourself – This is a MATURITY issue.

Two quick quotes that summarize our ability to nurture maturity:

The easiest thing to be in the world is you. The most difficult thing to be is what other people want you to be. Don't let them put you in that position.
Leo Buscaglia

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 and focus on others. It helps us take the high road with people. We can greet them, valuing them as people, regardless of their attitude toward us.

When I was younger, I spent a lot of time worrying about how the world saw me. I now realize that the world was never paying that much attention.
John C. Maxwell

This week, let's do a personal assessment on our Reality, Responsibility, Maturity, and Security. Properly balanced, we lead with grace!

Have a great week!