

PEPPER TIME 21: TAMING THE JUDGE

Timing: 3–5 minutes, whenever the Judge’s voice shows up (or once daily as practice).

What you’ll need: Just you, a quiet moment, and optionally, your journal.

What it’s about: This practice creates distance so you stop obeying your Judge and start choosing for yourself. The more you rehearse, the faster you’ll spot it and the weaker its grip becomes.

How to do it: Follow the steps below without overthinking.

1. Notice & Label. The instant you hear that inner critic, pause and call it by name: “Oh, I’m hearing my Judge right now.” That one line is the foundation. It reminds you: This isn’t me.
2. Separate “I” from the Judge. Language is powerful here. Instead of saying, “I’m freaking out,” switch to, “My Judge is having a freak-out.” Instead of, “I’m not good enough,” try, “My Judge is telling me I’m not good enough.” This small shift trains your brain to see the Judge as just one of many voices.
3. Give It a Character. Name it. Visualize it. Personify it so it feels less like you and more like a noisy sidekick. Maybe yours looks like a cranky boss tapping a pen, a gremlin whispering in your ear, or a lawyer in a ridiculous wig objecting to everything. Humor cuts its authority. Gave it a name: Judging Jane or Becky Brain.
4. Ask Its Motive. This step matters because every Judge line is rooted in fear. Gently ask, “What are you trying to protect me from?” Often the answer is rejection, humiliation, failure, disapproval. Instead of fighting, thank it: “Thanks for trying to keep me safe, but I’ve got this covered.” This flips the Judge from enemy to misguided ally.
5. Play With the Volume. Imagine a dial in your mind, and turn it down to a whisper. Or imagine the Judge’s voice fading into the distance, like a radio losing signal.
6. Move It Out. Physically pantomime placing Judge-thoughts into a cup, box, or jar and setting it aside. Or visualize walking your Judge character to the door and sending it on vacation. The body loves rituals—they make the shift feel real.
7. Find the Humor. When your Judge says, “You’ll ruin your reputation forever,” exaggerate it until it sounds absurd: “You’ll fail and the entire galaxy will collapse.” Laughing at its drama breaks the spell.

What to expect: More distance from self-criticism, quicker recovery from doubt, and less energy wasted arguing with yourself. With practice, the Judge shows up—but you no longer take it seriously. Attention returns to what matters.

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