

The Poisonous Parrot

The Poisoned Parrot is a metaphor used to describe those nagging criticisms that pop into your head during the day – the “negative self-talk”.

Imagine if you will, that you have been gifted a parrot. A mean, sardonic, scornful little thing that only repeats, in classic parrot fashion, the very worst and hurtful things.

As poisonous as this parrot is, it isn't intelligent, it doesn't understand what it is saying and has no insight or wisdom to discern the impact of its 'words'.

Parrot Squawks

This gifted parrot sits within earshot and squawks at the most inopportune moments. You forget an appointment. "Absent minded fool" it blurts out. You find yourself running late for something. "Late again! So stupid!" it screeches. Repeatedly its trained voice mimics back words "Useless", "Waste of space!", "Stupid!"

How long would you put up with this poisonous parrot before you got rid of it, covered the cage or even re-trained it?

Internal Parrot

And yet our own 'internal' parrot is gifted a reprieve from us. We put up with the abuse it drolls out for far, far longer, decades even. We hear its words and often attribute a wisdom and intelligence to them, which naturally if we were to believe them would get us upset. If left to speak its mind, its words can even affect how we live, how we behave, what we think and how we think about ourselves. Which is a lot of power for something with no greater intelligence or wisdom.

Antidote

Fortunately, there is an antidote to this poison.

By recognising when the parrot is speaking and realising that you do not have to listen to its berating, bullying ways, you will strip it of its power.

Retraining

Retraining this parrot can be difficult, it is stubborn and will not bow to your efforts at first, but eventually it will, and its squawks will lessen. In time, it may even realise that it takes far too much work to be heard. That there are perhaps better ways to 'talk'.

