

CRITICISM

INTRODUCTION

We live in a world that is filled with cut throat competition. Inside the house, at the school, in the office premises, the common word we hear is competition. Students, even from preschool days are engaged in numerous competitions to make them aware of the competition that's a big deal in the world today. If a boy in the neighborhood has scored an A grade in his exams and another one in the same neighborhood has scored a 'B' grade, even before the boys take a breath, they know they are surrounded by a mist of criticism. Criticism from parents, teachers, friends, relatives etc. But why does anyone criticize at all is the next big question. Going back to the same example, one boy has performed very well and he will be lauded for his efforts and achievement. The other boy, who has not performed up to the mark, receives flak from people around him. They would think it is an outcome of his laziness, non-performing attitude, no discipline towards studies, dedication almost being nil and a lot of other things. So when parents think of their boy as having non-performed due to these lazy attitudes, they rebuke him. They hold him responsible for his failures. They criticize him.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CRITICISM

There could be two aspects of criticism. Positive and negative criticism. When an author writes a new book, people grab the available copy of the book, start reading it and draw their opinions. Everybody has the right to exercise his/ her opinions. A section of the media or people who are authors themselves may express their opinions in a positive state of mind. Philosophers or thinkers may not agree with the book author's views and therefore might question his thoughts. All this amounts to criticism from the society on the author's views. What usually happens is, if we are in such a situation where people criticize us for not doing the right thing in the right way, we take it for granted that the criticism is hailed directly on us. We fail to recognize that criticism applies to people's ways of thinking, the way they do a certain thing or their thoughts, etc. Criticism hits badly on our heads since we think people around us, criticize us as a person. We don't see where the criticism is hit. It is hit at the task the person has done and not on himself. Going back to the book author's example, if the author has received criticism, positive or negative, it means he has received criticism for the views he has expressed as an author and not on himself.

If we understand this minute difference between criticisms then we would start taking things in a better perspective. When people point out flaws in writing and uphold legitimate errors, they are being critical, but in a positive way. They are giving us scope for improvements. They are not trying to bring us down with their criticism, rather extending support to portray right methodologies. If the writing and the book score well, yet the author is compared to an amateur writer or people find faults in his writing, just for the heck of it, then that becomes negative criticism. It creates a bad impact on the person and he starts to have a negative influence around him. He starts feeling negative and loses motivation for keeping the next step.

We hear in papers that a certain movie was critically acclaimed for certain reasons by the jury, but the same movie probably could not perform well at the box office. It happens many a times. A movie that was critically acclaimed should no doubt be a really good one, yet the non-performance also stands as a dim reality. Why does it happen so? Film makers who are not associated with the film view a particular film and review the movie from the core aspects of film making. May be the story lacked a strong plot, but the highlights of the movie were so many that just a mere plot of the movie wouldn't be a very big factor. So, the jury chooses that particular movie as a critically acclaimed movie. The general audience who views the movie in the same way expects a certain entertainment while watching it. For this section of the audience, the plot or story of the movie becomes a major factor as the core theme of the movie is what provides the viewers good entertainment.

So what we are arriving at, is the gentle difference between criticism and comments. Going back to the movie example, the general audience watches a movie for three hours and after that, if they liked the movie, a good response is sounded. Else they pass bad comments on the movie and simply write it off. So what exactly is the difference between criticism and comments.

CRITICISM AND COMMENTS

Criticism comes from people who are aware of its subject area, they know the ins and outs of the matter before giving an opinion on it, criticism on a certain topic comes amidst a background, where the background is usually a larger framework consisting of connections with the matter. In case of the movie illustration, the way film makers present their opinions on a movie and the way in which a common man presents his opinion are totally different things. We can see film makers taking note of the movie by getting fully involved into the movie, trying to look into the technical aspects of the movie, the arrangement of sequences, the editing, music scores, art works and a whole lot of other things. But a common man has a certain expectation looking at the banner of the movie. Once he enters the movie hall, he is looking out whether the story meets his pre-conceived expectations or whether it does not. If it meets the expectation and the story and the plot look good and attractive, the common man is happy. If there is more focus on the technicalities of the movie with little regard to only concentrating on the story, then it draws flak from them.

Therefore, criticism comes from a person who has previous knowledge of the matter regarding which he is framing opinions. People pass comments with or without thinking. Comments could be passed blindly too, without thinking. Criticism looks heavy compared to mere comment passing. If we look at a tree that has not grown in proper shape and has spread its branches unevenly in all directions, we could probably be a little unhappy that it might reach out to the roofs our buildings and cause damage to the wall. If we look at the tree and think how badly it has grown, we are thinking of the tree. If we groan at its branches touching our roofs, we are reacting to the bad growth of the tree. If we call the forest department and ask them to cut down the tree and blame them for not having looked into the issue themselves, we are passing comments on the forest department personnel. They may or may not have a connection in bringing down the tree, but since it comes to our thinking that it's their responsibility to look into it, we pass uneven comments on them. If a forest department person himself appears at the scene and volunteers to cut down portions of the tree and argues with affected house members for not

raising their voices, then the forest person is criticizing the house members. So, here we see the differences in various co-related aspects.

POSITIVE WORLD OF CRITICISM

We have to learn when people criticize us. Criticism is meant to alter or improve a certain state of mind into a better one. If we start taking criticism in a positive light, we may start improvising on our tasks. If somebody thought the dress we wore to the party looked too long and passed comments, then we may or may not give it weightage. But if another person walks in with a certain understanding of the dress and knows why the particular dress appeared so, then his remarks could be given certain weightage as he could be legitimate about sounding his opinion. If the drawing we made looked good to everyone in the house and all of them patted our backs for the excellent art work, then they have given their comments to us. Next day, when we show the same drawing to our teacher and she points out the rash use of colors and non-fitting theme in the drawing, then she is being critical of the drawing. She is not underestimating our efforts or trying to be bad to us, but she is offering her true remarks of the drawing and allowing a scope for change and improvement. That is criticism.

For more info visit www.studytoday.net