

A dramatic scene featuring a warrior in a red cape and a helmet with a white plume. The warrior is in a defensive stance, holding a large, glowing shield that is being struck by a powerful, fiery attack. Sparks and fire are flying off the shield. The warrior's right hand is raised, holding a sword. The background is a dark, smoky battlefield with streaks of fire in the distance.

DEFENSIVENESS

A small silhouette of a warrior, possibly the same character, standing in a similar pose to the main figure. The warrior is holding a sword and has a cape. The background around the silhouette is dark and smoky, with some fire visible.

THE
WARRIORS PATH

WHAT IS DEFENSIVENESS & WHERE DOES IT STEM FROM

Defensiveness arises when individuals aim to protect themselves, their self-esteem, or their beliefs. This often involves adopting a defensive stance or attitude, which can manifest as denial, counter-attacks, blame-shifting, or avoidance. Such behavior can impede open communication, problem-solving, and emotional intimacy in both personal and professional relationships

Defensiveness often stems from several underlying factors:

1. **Perception of Threats:** When we perceive criticism or feedback as a threat to our self-esteem or identity, our brain triggers defensive behaviors to protect us.
2. **Insecurity and Fear:** Low self-esteem or deep-seated insecurities can amplify defensive reactions. We may feel the need to protect ourselves from perceived attacks.
3. **Ego:** Our sense of self-importance can lead to defensiveness when we feel our ego is threatened.
4. **Childhood Experiences:** Early experiences, such as harsh parenting, neglect, or bullying, can shape defensive behavior patterns that carry into adulthood.

Understanding these root causes can help in managing and reducing defensiveness. Have you noticed any specific triggers for defensiveness in your interactions?



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WHAT IS DEFENSIVENESS & WHERE DOES IT STEM FROM

- Individuals with a history of trauma or negative experiences, particularly those involving criticism or rejection, may exhibit defensive behaviors as a form of self-protection.
- A person with low self-esteem or insecurities might view criticism, even if it's constructive, as a threat to their self-worth. Defensiveness can serve as a way to preserve their self-image and avoid feelings of inadequacy or failure.
- When someone feels threatened by the potential loss of control in a situation or relationship, they might become defensive to regain a sense of power or autonomy.
- Accepting responsibility for one's actions or mistakes can be difficult. Defensiveness can be a way to avoid admitting wrongdoing or facing the consequences of one's actions.
- Defensiveness can sometimes stem from misunderstandings or misinterpretations of another person's words or intentions. When someone feels attacked or criticized, even if that wasn't the intent, it can lead to defensive behaviors.
- Shame is a powerful and painful emotion that stems from feelings of guilt, embarrassment, or the perception of being flawed or unworthy. When someone experiences shame, they may become defensive to avoid confronting these painful feelings or admitting their shortcomings. Defensiveness can act as a shield, protecting the individual from further shame or judgment from others.



THE ROAD TO ELIMINATING DEFENSIVENESS

1. Pause and breathe: When you feel yourself becoming defensive, take a moment to pause and breathe deeply. Slow, deep breaths can help calm your nervous system and give you a chance to reflect before reacting

2. Self-awareness: To gain insight into your emotions and triggers, ask yourself the following questions:

A. What am I feeling right now?

B. Why am I feeling defensive?

C. What might be triggering these feelings?

D. Are my emotions proportional to the situation?



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THE ROAD TO ELIMINATING DEFENSIVENESS

- **Seek understanding:** Rather than focusing on feeling “blamed” or assuming the other person is “wrong,” try to understand their perspective. Ask yourself:
 - A. What is the other person trying to communicate?
 - B. What might they be feeling or experiencing?
 - C. Can I find any validity in their perspective?



THE ROAD TO ELIMINATING DEFENSIVENESS



- **Practice empathy:** Imagine yourself in the other person's position and try to understand the situation from their perspective. This can help you approach the conversation with more compassion and openness
- **Focus on the issue, not the person:** When addressing a problem or disagreement, concentrate on the issue at hand instead of assigning blame or making personal attacks. Ask yourself:
 - A. What is the real issue we need to talk about?
 - B. How can we solve the issue together?



THE ROAD TO ELIMINATING DEFENSIVENESS

- **Take ownership of your feelings and emotions:** Use “I” statements to express how you feel and take responsibility for your emotions, rather than attributing them to someone else. For instance, say, “I felt hurt when you didn’t include me in the decision” instead of “You always leave me out.”
- **Foster self-compassion:** Understand that everyone makes mistakes and feels vulnerable at times. By being kind to yourself, you can become more receptive to constructive criticism
- **Engage in active listening:** Give the other person your undivided attention, echo their words to show understanding, and ask questions to clarify their perspective



WE ARE ALL FALLIBLE

Admitting self-fallibility, or acknowledging your own mistakes and imperfections, can have several benefits:

1. **Builds Trust and Respect:** When you admit your mistakes, others see you as honest and trustworthy. This can strengthen your relationships both personally and professionally.
2. **Encourages Personal Growth:** Recognizing your flaws allows you to learn from them and improve. It opens the door to self-reflection and continuous improvement.
3. **Enhances Resilience:** Accepting your imperfections can make you more resilient. It helps you bounce back from setbacks and view challenges as opportunities for growth.
4. **Promotes a Growth Mindset:** Admitting mistakes fosters a growth mindset, where you see abilities and intelligence as qualities that can be developed through effort and learning.



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WE ARE ALL FALLIBLE

- 5. Reduces Stress: Letting go of the need to be perfect can reduce stress and anxiety. It allows you to focus on doing your best rather than striving for unattainable perfection.
- 6. Improves Problem-Solving: Acknowledging mistakes can lead to better problem-solving. It encourages you to address issues head-on rather than ignoring or denying them.
- 7. Fosters Authenticity: Being open about your imperfections makes you more authentic and relatable. It shows that you are human and can connect with others on a deeper level.
- 8. Encourages Constructive Feedback: When you admit your mistakes, you become more open to receiving constructive criticism, which can further aid your development.

Overall, embracing your imperfections can lead to a more fulfilling and balanced life.



THE
WARRIORS PATH

THE WARRIORS WORD

- No more dependency (I don't look outside for the answers to my emotional problems)
- No more expectations of the external environment (I am responsible for meeting my needs)
- No more blaming anyone for my pain (I must heal myself; their change of behavior cannot heal me)
- No more excuses about why I am unhealthy (I take extreme ownership for my life)
- No more seeking validation (I recognize my worth and value before others do)
- No more lack of boundaries (I stand up for myself with self-respect)
- No more inauthenticity (I own who I am and how I feel)
- No more minimal effort (I give myself my best everyday/ I have a personal standard)
- No more negative self-talk (I build my self-confidence with positive/ encouraging self-talk)
- No more broken promises (Anything I tell myself; I do my absolute best to adhere to)
- No more self-sabotage (I stop getting in my own way. I work hard for myself)

