

## Ep #221: How I Handle Critics and Haters



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Dr. Una**

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Hi docs, welcome to *The EntreMD Podcast*, where it's all about helping amazing physicians just like you embrace entrepreneurship so you can have the freedom to live life and practice medicine on your terms. I'm your host, Dr. Una.

Well, hello, hello, my friends. Welcome back to another episode of *The EntreMD Podcast*, I am super pumped. Today we're going to be talking about something that I get asked about a lot and I have to deal with a lot. And that is how I respond to critics and haters, okay?

Funny story, this happened when I first started my practice. I had a mom come in, I don't remember what she came in for but we took care of her, we took really good care of her. But there were some forms that she had to fill when she was in the office and so she went online and give us a one star review and said, you know, how we should have given her the forms before time instead of having her come sit down in the office and fill them out.

Mind you, these forms were like two pages long, right? And all of that stuff. And I remember being so sad. Like really sad. And I was traumatized and all of that. Now, this was 12, 13 years ago and so I laugh about it now, but it was not funny at all then, okay?

And the reason why I say that is just to say that I get it. But to also say that you can come to the other side where you can handle criticism. You can handle critics, you can handle haters as a boss, and I want all of you to get there. Okay, so that's what we're going to be talking about today, it's going to be a lot of fun.

But before we get there, I do want to read a review. This is a review of The EntreMD Method book. And if you haven't bought it yet, you really want to go get it, okay? You can get it on Amazon, you can go to my site [entremd.com/book](http://entremd.com/book) to get your copy.

And this is from Dr. Szabo, she is amazing. She's a dermatologist, she owns her own practice, very successful practice. And she's a part of the EntreMD Business School. And this is what she said, she gave five stars,

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which I love. And she said, “An essential read for all physicians and non-physician aspiring entrepreneurs.”

And then she goes on to say, “If you're a physician, you are trained to diagnose and treat medical conditions. We do not get training on the business end of medicine. This one of a kind book fills this gap. This book is very practical and approachable for anyone with an interest in becoming a physician entrepreneur. I should say it's the entrepreneur how to.

It is obvious right from the start that the author has been there, done that. She offers actionable advice, useful techniques and fresh ideas. Dr. Una created a simple blueprint that if followed, can and will create a successful business, starting with the right mindset, creating the daily habits, cultivating one's strength, and developing a roadmap from idea to mature marketing machine. What else do you need?

Dr. Una's message is encouraging, very positive, and easy to break down to exact action steps. The book is fully packed with practical suggestions and step by step guidance for the first time entrepreneur. Don't do it alone, use Dr. Una's book as advice as from your very own coach, you will get to your goals much faster and more efficiently.”

My goodness, that is so good. Thank you so much, Dr. Szabo, for leaving this very kind review. I really appreciate it. Thank you for helping us get the word out there. And you heard her, if you haven't got your copy, go get it. If you have read it and you loved it, please leave us a review and please get a copy for someone else, they'll thank you forever, okay?

So let's talk about critics and haters here, okay? Now, I did want to start off by doing this though, I wanted to look at the dictionary definitions because you do want to realize who's a critic and someone who is a hater, right? And, you know, because your response to them is going to be a little different.

And so a critic is a person who expresses an unfavorable opinion of something, okay? A person who expresses an unfavorable opinion of

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something. So this is someone who, you know, left you a three star review or told you that what you do sucks because X, Y, Z, right?

And a hater is a person who greatly dislikes a specified person or thing, right? So expresses an unfavorable opinion, this other person just dislikes a specified person or thing. And we may have those people in our lives, right? People who no matter what we do, it sucks. No matter what we do it's not good. They don't like us, they don't like our product, they don't like what we stand for and all of that stuff.

Okay, so for the haters, I ignore them. Okay? I completely ignore them. And I don't wish for them to go away. I don't go like, "Why do I have haters?" Because this is a conclusion that I've come to. I'm a doctor, I doctor. I'm a mother, I mother my kids.

There are haters, they hate, the end. Like that is their job description, that is their life's purpose. And me trying to get them to stop and try to understand why and all that is not going to work. Like that is what they do. I doctor, okay? So I ignore the haters, okay?

So these are people, it doesn't matter what you do, they always have an issue. Like I leave them alone, okay? I can't fix that, that's above my pay grade, apparently it's the way of the world. I've looked at really successful businesses, businesses doing great things, amazing things that people love, and they have haters. So apparently, that's the way it goes, okay?

So for haters, I don't try to figure out why. I don't try to figure out, you know, why would people hate this thing that I do that's so good? I don't, I let them be great, okay? That's what I do to haters.

But with critics, you do need critics, right? And as painful as that sounds, we do need critics because you don't want to surround yourself with what I call yes men, right, who are people who they wouldn't want to hurt you so they'll tell you everything you do is good. They won't want to call you out, they won't want to say change this, or tweak this, or I wasn't happy about this or whatever.

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And there are people who will love you that way. And that's fine, right? There are people who will, like it doesn't matter what you do, they love what you do, right? Because they bought into you. But you also want to have that person who's like, but change this or but could you make this better? Or could you make this go away? Or could you add this.

You want to have those people too, because in your business you always want to be innovating. And innovation is not always like, you know, well I make cars and now we're going to go to Mars, okay? Like Elon Musk. It doesn't have to be that dramatic. If you are the person who you decide, every day I'm just going to make my business 1% better, not 10%, not 5%, not 50%, 1% better.

If you do that every day for a year, your business is 365% better. That's a lot of better, if I may use that term, right? And so your critics give you that opportunity. Now, some of them are not very skilled at giving you constructive criticism, but it doesn't mean you want to throw it away.

Okay, so I'm going to kind of walk you through my process for it, and you can adopt it and you can start practicing it. And the beautiful thing about this is it's a muscle, right? And the more you practice it, the better you'll be at making criticism work for you, okay?

Now, before we go into it, I will say it doesn't mean that it won't hurt, especially in the beginning, okay? But we're going to walk through some things that will make it less and less and less painful and all of that.

Okay, so first things first, in the process of handling criticism like a rock star, you want to separate yourself from your business, right? Like, my business is like my baby, my business is me. And then so sometimes when people bring criticism, you see it as a reflection of you. It's not a reflection of you, it's a reflection of a project you have, which is your business.

You are separate, you are two completely separate entities. And the better you separate it, the more objective you can be about taking criticism and making it work for you. That's the important thing, we're all going to get

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criticized. But the question is are you going to make it work for you or against you? So the first thing you do is you separate yourself.

All right, so I worked with a mentor, and this was back in the day when I didn't have a very healthy self-esteem and I didn't think I could accomplish a lot. And so I had all this self-doubt and, you know, weird stuff going on. And so whenever I would get criticism, it's almost like I would fall apart. Fall apart meaning, oh, that means I'm no good, I'm not good at this. I never get it right. Like all of those kinds of things, right? And sometimes we do that with our businesses.

And my mentor taught me something that I'll never forget. This is, wow, this is a decade and a half ago. And what he taught me was this, he says "Listen, there is you and there is an issue, okay? And you are completely separate, completely separate." So, there is you and there is the fact that you had this project.

You are one entity and your project is a separate entity. And so if I am bringing criticism about your project, it has nothing to do with you. You're a separate entity, you're amazing, you're wonderful, you're going places, you're going to accomplish this vision, all of that stuff. That's you.

On the other side is this project that needs tweaking. And so what he said to me is, now you can approach it one or two ways you can marry yourself with your project and then decide every time I bring correction or I bring criticism, I give you constructive feedback that I'm attacking you as an individual. Or you can see it as two separate entities, and then you can partner with me to fix the project.

Do you see that? So there are three entities here. There's you, there's a critic, there's your business. Completely separate, right? You are not one with your business. Your business is not your, I know we say my business is my baby, but your business is not like a family member. Okay?

It is a project and what you want and what the critic wants, right, especially this is constructive criticism, right, so not from a hater. But what you guys

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want is for the project to be better. So believe it or not, you guys want the same thing, right?

But the only way you can look at it objectively, is to separate yourself from the project, to separate yourself from your business. Okay, so you are one entity, your business is one entity, your critic is one entity. And isn't it funny that you guys want the same thing? You want the entity to be better. You want the project, the business to be better.

Okay, so the starting point of it is separation. You are not your business, your business is not your baby, it's not your fifth child and all of that. I know we say that, it's okay for you to say that if you understand it's not a baby, like a family member like, you know, it's a project, okay? All right.

So it's a project, it's your business, it's separate. That's the first thing. The second thing is you want to separate the truth from the lie, okay? So I will use Google reviews just because, you know, it's written in front of you. But that could be anything, that could be somebody calling you and telling you, it doesn't matter. But let's use Google reviews, right?

Someone writes you a Google review and you're like, "I can't believe after everything we've done for that patient, they would go on there and do that." So you need to go back and you need to say, okay, what is true here, right? What is true here? And what is a lie? Okay?

So I've had a person who wrote me a review and she said, you know, her practice looks like something out of a rural part of Nigeria and blah, blah, blah, and, you know, came up with all this stuff. I was like, Lord have mercy, right? Is there truth to it? No, there's no truth to it.

On the other hand, I hosted the, we do two in-person events for the EntreMD Business School. And so in October, we have a vision retreat, where we go to set our intentions for the following year, because I start my year in October, if you listen to the podcast you know that. And then the second event is a Business Makeover Mastermind in April, and that's where we do some nuts and bolts in business and stuff like that.



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So we hosted that, you know, this year in April, and someone walked up to me and said, “Oh, it was so amazing, everything was great.” She was like, “Oh, but one thing, for next time let them include protein in their breakfast. Like the second day there was Greek yogurt and all of that stuff, but we would like more protein for breakfast.”

I could have gone like, oh my goodness, after everything I put into that event duh, duh, duh... No, that person wants the mastermind to be better next time. I want the mastermind to be better next time. So we're on the same page, right? And then she says that, and that is a truth.

That is a truth, so yes, there was protein for day two, or day one, I don't know. The first day we had breakfast there was no protein, the second day there was. And so there is truth to that. So what is my job? My job is now when I do the debrief with my team I have a list of tweaks. Like these are the things we want to tweak to make better.

And so I'm like, oh, we have to make sure when we're looking at the breakfast menu, that there's protein. Do you see what I'm saying? So you have to separate the truth from the lies. This is an objective thing. That's why separating yourself from the business is important, otherwise you can't really look at it objectively.

So even though this stings, this hurts, is there truth in it? Because that is an opportunity for innovation. That is an opportunity you have to make your business better and you don't want to have the pain of the feedback, but not get the reward of the pain, right? And so separate the truth from the lies. Okay, that's number two.

Number three, then I take that truth I convert it into a project and then I throw away the lie. Okay, so it is what it is. You go like, why would they write that? Because critics criticize, haters hate, and doctors doctor. Okay? So why do they criticize? Because that's what they're supposed to do, okay?



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And critics are not bad people, I hope you understand they're no bad. Now, some of them need to learn how to give constructive criticism, right? So there's a whole spectrum, but some of them are your best people, will bring you feedback like that. You need it, right?

Okay, so you take the truth and you convert that into a project, right? And you take the lie and you throw it away. There may be some truths that you may not be able to act on right away.

Okay, so I've had somebody tell me, "Well, I would join the business school if you did weekly one on one coaching with everybody in the school." Okay, there are 100 doctors in the school. And so am I able to do 100 one on one calls? No, right? And so am I able to do that? No, I'm not, right?

And so there are some truths that you may not be able to act on at all, or you may not be able to act on right away. And it's okay for you to acknowledge that, but at least it's in your project book, it's in your project list, like this is something that I'm going to work on.

Or you may look at how can I help people get the same results even though I can't give it to them in the way they want it, right? And so someone who is looking for one on one, why are you looking for a one on one? Well, strategy for my kind of business or accountability and stuff.

Okay, are there other ways to introduce accountability that does not involve one on one? Yes, and so we do that, right? Do you see what I'm talking about? And so you improve based on the truth and you throw away the lies, okay?

So let's talk about this a little bit, all right? So I want to be a person who is able to take constructive criticism like a grown up, like a rock star entrepreneur, right? And I want to use it to make my business better. Even if sometimes the person who delivers the feedback or the criticism is not really good at doing it, AKA they hurt my feelings in the process, right?

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Okay, so number one, separate yourself from your business. You are not your business, your business is not your child, your business is not a member of the family. Okay? Your business is one entity, you're one entity, you side with your critic to make your business better, okay?

Number two, separate the truth from the lies. Number three, improve based on the truth and throw away the lies, okay? Now, remember, the overarching thing, don't go, "I don't know why people would do that." Because that's what they do, it is a job description. If that individual doesn't do it, somebody else will. There will always be haters, there will always be critics. And these are not bad things, okay? So don't be confused when people do their jobs.

So what I want you to do is I want you to pick up on the last time you were criticized, or the last time someone brought constructive feedback, or the last time somebody hated on you, or whatever. And I want you to start practicing doing this because in the beginning this is going to hurt. It is a human response, this is going to hurt. But the more you practice it, the bigger your muscle will get and the better you will be at handling criticism.

And when it comes you can objectively go like, "I'm separate from my business. My critic and I, funny enough, even though this person has no idea how to give constructive criticism, we want the same thing. We're going to make this work, we're going to make the business better." You're going to identify the lies and not worry about them. You're going to identify the truth and convert those into projects and make your business even better, that is a muscle that can be built. Okay?

So I want you to pick the last time you were criticized, maybe you have a review that you're like, "Oh my goodness." I want you to look at it and I want you to practice these three things, you need to separate yourself, separate the truth from the lie, make a project out of the truth, throw away the light. Okay?

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Practice it, the next time you get criticized practice it. Practice, practice, practice, and what will happen is you'll become that person who is okay welcoming, right? Has this ever happened to you where you send out a survey and you had palpitations because you don't know what the people are going to tell you, right?

You want to be that person who now you're like a grown up entrepreneur, a rock star entrepreneur, you're looking for constructive criticism. When people criticize you and it seems negative the way they did it, you're still able to turn that into a positive for your business and you're not falling apart because of it. You're not getting upset, you're not re-imagining your business and going like, "Should I really be doing this anyway?" You're not doing any of that anymore because now you know how to handle criticism, okay?

So happy practicing and my goodness, please share this episode with every physician entrepreneur you know because this is a big legit pain point, okay? And together we can all be those doctors who know how to handle this like rock stars. All right?

So go share it and I will see you, my friends, on the next episode of *The EntreMD Podcast*.

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