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Why do I feel judged?

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An atheist once chanced upon a man of God, a priest. Wanting to taunt the priest, the atheist asked him if he had ever spoken to God. The priest replied that he spoke to God every day.

The atheist said, "The next time you speak to God, ask if he has forgiven my past sins." The priest promised to do so, and when he met the atheist later, said that he had spoken to God, who had told him, "I don't remember the misdeeds of the atheist, so there's nothing to really forgive."

So it is with me. I often think people judge me and stew in this unwarranted pain. Yet, I find most people who know me actually do not judge me. It is I who have an impression of myself, and then seek to ratify these impressions.

Recently, I was once again a victim of such thought when I burdened a friend with the pain I was feeling in being evaluated or judged by him. He said that he had not judged me at all, and in fact, had accepted me the way I chose to be.

I realised, that perhaps the ghost in my mind, the constant de-valuing that I do to myself, was causing me to self-judge. But I was foisting it on others.

So, before assuming I am being judged, it is best to pause for a few minutes when such thoughts arise and ask myself, where is this judgment welling from? Is it emanating within or is it coming from without? Most often, I realise that it is coming from my self-critic and internal bully — both within me.

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