

The Silver Lining of Unlikely Faults

“You’re much too agreeable.” “You’re much too assertive.”

“You’re far too focused.” “You’re far too curious.”

“You’re much too perfectionistic.” “You’re much too fast.”

In the course of your life, you’ll likely hear one of each of these pairs of criticisms (or ones like them). If you’re really growing your personality over time, you’ll hear both.

If you’re growing, you will change from someone who is too compassionate to someone who occasionally comes off as too assertive – or vice-versa.

If you’re growing, you will change from someone who is more widely curious to someone who is zeroed on – or again, vice-versa

Remember that when you’re hit with one of these criticisms. If you’re an agreeable person, you might be surprised as being labelled combative. If you’re perfectionistic, you might be surprised at being accused of cutting corners.

Think about it for a second and you’ll find something to celebrate here.

For someone to find an unlikely fault in you, you must have grown out of an old pattern of personality or behavior in some noticeable way. And while you should pay attention to reigning in new faults, there’s nothing to mourn about losing the old ones. To be guilty of being too assertive is also to be innocent of being too passive, and so on.

If given a choice between the same old faults and new opposite ones, I might lean toward the new ones. At least I’d be growing toward them. And I’d rather be faulted for going too far in correcting my weaknesses than for not correcting them at all.

Originally published at JamesWalpole.com.