

UNITED WISDOM

Whose voice sounds in an inner demand?

Human Nature and Inner World

Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

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@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

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Epigraph

“making a choice” — John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, Chapter III. Primary text. The Russian edition supplies an original editorial translation. This brief fragment concerns exercising human faculties in choice, rather than promising to find a single authentic voice.

What this article is about

On Saturday, someone plans a walk but notices an inner demand: first do something useful. It sounds familiar and convincing. Perhaps people spoke like that at home. Perhaps it is a workplace rule. Perhaps the person themselves recognizes the benefit of finishing a task. The question of the voice arises before the walk: who is demanding now, and why should their words govern this day?

This question has an attractive trap. Finding a supposed author of the phrase can lead to declaring the demand foreign and no longer examining its content. But a similar intonation does not prove origin, and external origin does not prove error. This article considers familiarity, present grounds, and actual action separately. Self-determination theory and Mill's argument supply limited distinctions; hypothetical scenes and practice belong to editorial analysis. No biography is reconstructed from one phrase, and nobody is assigned blame for internal pressure. The unknown past can be retained while choosing today's action more accurately.

I. A familiar intonation does not establish an author

An inner demand sometimes resembles a particular person: a teacher's short command, a relative's irritated remark, a manager's rule. This is an observation of similarity. It may be accurate and important, but contains no complete history of the demand's formation. The same words sounded in different places; memory connects them with a vivid episode; current circumstances add their part. First record the exact phrase and confidence in the memory, without converting association into proof of causation.

In our scene, someone remembers a family rule: rest after work. They may actually have heard it. But today's demand adds that useful activity is always insufficient and the walk must wait for complete satisfaction. Did earlier words contain that addition? Possibly. Perhaps today's habit

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

of judging a day supplied it. When information is absent, honestly preserve both possibilities rather than organize the entire examination around one convenient version of the past.

The origin question must not become an investigation of someone else's personality. One phrase cannot establish that a relative wanted to suppress independence or a manager determined all future life. Known treatment, its circumstances, and its experienced effect can be described. Another's intention remains a separate question. This limit does not devalue an unpleasant memory; it prevents adding claims that the person cannot yet support.

Sometimes no external source is recalled at all. The demand does not then automatically express one's deepest personal value. It may be habitual wording, an accidental generalization, or a response to a current task. Missing memory does not prove autonomy, just as remembered influence does not cancel it. Practically, a modest description suffices: I now hear this rule internally and want to understand on what grounds I am prepared to follow it.

Inner voice here is an ordinary metaphor for self-address, rather than a clinical symptom description. We consider thoughts, phrases, and rules through which someone directs action. If voice evokes another meaning, the proposed analysis should not be transferred to it. Accessible self-description matters here, rather than finding hidden psychic structures. Clarifying language prevents presenting a familiar life scene as a diagnosis or a specialized treatment procedure.

II. An internal location differs from an accepted reason

In their 2000 paper, Ryan and Deci distinguish introjected regulation—internal pressure without fully accepting a rule—from regulation through recognized personal importance. Selected definition pages were read, rather than the entire paper. This is a self-determination theory distinction, not a method for identifying a reader's biography. A narrow proposition suffices: a demand arising internally does not by itself show that someone consciously endorses its grounds. [S1]

Now return to Saturday without assigning a theoretical label. Someone may work primarily to stop an unpleasant feeling arising when trying to leave. They may also want to finish because the family needs the result that evening. These reasons differ even when the action coincides. No single reason needs immediate selection. Several can be named to examine which determines scope, timing, and the stopping condition in this particular episode.

If the central condition is to stop regarding oneself as lazy, finishing a task may not end the demand. Another task appears, then another. The walk remains hostage to a judgment difficult to check externally. This is an editorial observation about a possible scene, rather than a claim about everyone experiencing guilt. Examine whether conditions actually shift this way or the task has a clear end after which the rule ceases to operate.

An endorsed value need not be pleasant either. Someone may regard a difficult action as necessary without wanting to start. Tension therefore does not prove a rule foreign, and pleasure does not prove independent decision. More useful is asking what explanation can be given without threatening dignity. For example: I want to prepare lunch because I agreed to a meeting. That explanation has a subject, recipient, and observable outcome even if cooking is unenjoyable today.

The theoretical distinction helps pose a question rather than replacing its answer. Reading a page cannot establish that all unpleasant obligations are imposed and all freely chosen actions good. A questionable aim can be voluntarily accepted; pressure can surround useful work. Evaluating content, performance, and other people's participation remains necessary. Examining internal regulation does not cancel ordinary consideration of whom an action helps and what cost it creates.

III. A borrowed rule can be accepted anew

Many useful rules come from others: warn about delays, return borrowed items, check important work. Learning them does not make them foreign forever. Someone can examine a rule and recognize it as their own ground for action. Form can change while content remains. Warning about a delay matters for a shared plan; never upsetting anyone does not follow from that task and requires separate examination.

In our scene, finishing work before walking may have suited a particular period. Perhaps necessary work previously had no time left after the walk. Today is organized differently. Ask whether the original reason remains. If it does, the rule has present grounds. Otherwise, sequence can be revised. This requires neither declaring past upbringing entirely wrong nor proving that every external influence must be removed from one's life.

Renewed acceptance differs from ritual agreement. Saying I decided this myself does not yet demonstrate examination. Name why it is accepted, for how long, with what exceptions, and when it is reviewed. Everything cannot be anticipated, but room for circumstances can remain. A rule prohibiting any question about its application gains authority over checking as well as action. That prohibition deserves separate attention.

Independence need not be proved through an opposite action. If home demanded tidiness, deliberately disorderly work does not become free merely because it opposes the demand. It may still revolve around someone else's rule. Someone can choose tidiness for a new reason or reject excessive presentation because of an actual limit. Action's direction is less informative than the possibility of explaining its subject and considering an alternative without immediately defeating an earlier authority figure.

Sometimes renewed acceptance preserves the same sequence: lunch first, then a walk. Now, however, lunch has a definite scope, and the walk does not depend on eliminating every possible task. Outwardly, the day changes little; internal grounds become clearer. This need not resemble radical transformation. Evaluate whether it became clearer what the person does, why, and where this particular task ends, rather than where permission for their own life begins in general.

IV. Custom supplies information but does not decide for someone

In Chapter III of On Liberty, Mill considers following custom and applying one's own judgment to circumstances. This is a philosophical defense of individuality, rather than an empirical model of the inner critic. We use only the question of examining a habitual order, retaining the distinction between personal choice and others' rights. The selected passage licenses neither treating every custom as mistaken nor every desire as sufficient justification for action. [S2]

A habitual sequence can preserve practical knowledge: prepare what is needed before leaving, communicate plans beforehand, reserve time for completion. But that knowledge should be separated from a condition of belonging. If the rule operates because otherwise someone supposedly ceases to be a worthy family member, task and personal judgment merge. Useful order can remain while endless proof of conformity is removed. This is our application of Mill's question, rather than an account of his entire philosophy.

For example, a family Saturday previously meant shared cleaning. Now someone lives alone, while the demand retains its former intonation and scale. Part of cleaning can remain for convenience, its time can change, or an unnecessary part can be dropped. The value of the shared past need not be denied. Today's situation has different participants. Respect for tradition and accurate application do not require retaining every earlier arrangement regardless of changed conditions.

In another scene, someone really lives with relatives and shares work. Individual decisions then affect others. Questioning one's grounds grants no right silently to leave an agreement by declaring it foreign. Examine each contribution, agreed scope, and possibilities for change. If the rule was unfair, discuss its content. The name custom by itself establishes neither fairness nor unfairness in how labor is distributed today.

This comparison retains two independent checks. First: can I understand and endorse the rule's reason? Second: what happens to others through my decision? They may yield a difficult answer when personal preference and shared tasks diverge. Difficulty does not abolish choice. Options and each option's cost can be considered. One need not present a variant as the only possibility merely because it sounds more familiar than the others.

V. Today's task needs its own scale

Inner demands often extend beyond accessible action: be organized, useful, independent. Even if these qualities matter, they do not plan Saturday. What should happen before the walk? How much time remains? Who awaits the result? Without such information, a broad formula can expand the task endlessly. Specifying scale permits considering a value without finally proving it through one day or one attempt.

Someone chooses to prepare documents for Monday. A sufficient minimum can be defined: assemble known materials and identify what is missing. If proving seriousness through perfect presentation becomes another requirement afterward, examine it separately. Perhaps presentation really matters to the recipient. Perhaps it is a new condition of internal satisfaction. The distinction is established through the task and information, rather than which version conveniently permits the walk.

The voice question then becomes less dramatic and more accurate. Rather than finding a final author of all severity, someone observes: this part concerns today's work; this part demands general proof of personality; the latter's origin is currently unknown. A fictional history need not close the unknown. One can temporarily decline to follow an unsupported addition while retaining the possibility of returning later if new memories or actual information emerge.

Sometimes scale is externally established and cannot change through one internal decision. Work has a required format, an event a time, a shared project dependencies among participants. Examining self-address does not cancel these conditions. It clarifies what is required and what someone adds beyond it. Self-treatment can change while a technical standard remains. The standard can be discussed with a responsible participant. It cannot be declared changed merely because earlier wording feels foreign.

Checking also needs a scale to avoid becoming endless work. Every thought of the day need not be analyzed. One phrase and one moderately important action suffice. Time for recording can be set, stopping after clarifying the next step. If reflection postpones the task or demands complete knowledge of the past, name that limit. Incomplete analysis can provide enough information for a particular decision without claiming complete understanding of an entire biography.

VI. An unpleasant feeling is not the sole judge

Internal pressure may remain after clarifying a task. Documents are assembled, but the walk still feels premature. This matters as an observation of one's state, yet establishes no new obligation. Check whether forgotten information appeared. Otherwise, the feeling remains a feeling and the decision retains its earlier grounds. The experience need not be declared false; it simply need not become the sole way of knowing whether work may end.

Calmness does not confirm correctness either. Relief can follow deciding not to keep a difficult promise while another person remains uninformed. Retain two questions separately: how am I now, and what happens to the task? Their answers may diverge. Discomfort can accompany a reasoned choice, or calm an unconfirmed one. The article does not suggest ignoring one's state, but considering it alongside other information.

One correct intensity of feeling cannot be established in advance. Someone notices mild worry, another strong awkwardness. Different levels of independence cannot be assigned from that difference. In a small scene, describe which action remains available: take a short walk, complete a necessary stage, communicate postponement. If no available action is yet visible, seek information and support without explaining all difficulty through immaturity or personal weakness.

Support need not insist that the rule has entirely disappeared. Someone can say: the demand is familiar, I notice it, but I now see a definite scope of work and will choose accordingly. This editorial wording can be adapted to personal language. It is not a technique with established clinical efficacy. Its purpose is preserving decision without first requiring an internal feeling to agree completely and stop objecting.

VII. External conversation must not become a trial of the past

Sometimes someone wants to approach the person whose intonation the demand resembles. Conversation may clarify a particular memory or present agreement. But it guarantees no single explanation. Another may remember differently, not remember, or agree with only part of the description. First understand what information is needed. Asking how work was distributed on a particular day is more precise than accusing someone of creating all one's severity and requiring them to explain it now.

If someone describes an experienced effect, separate it from established intention: I remember these words and now notice a similar demand. This permits discussing one's experience without claiming the other person previously intended today's outcome. A response may matter or may not change the inner task. The rule can still be examined on present grounds without confirmation of a complete account of its origin.

In a family or team, conversation often concerns current arrangements first. Who does the work? What scope counts as sufficient? Can timing change? Such questions may clarify an actual agreement faster than debating pressure's deepest source. An absent agreement can be created; an unequal one discussed for revision. Discussion, however, does not automatically mean consent. Retain each participant's actual answer rather than declare a desired arrangement already in force.

Conversation is not always accessible or appropriate. Someone may not want to revisit an old episode, another may be unavailable, or the task may concern only today's personal decision. Without conversation, examination remains possible. Honestly record information not externally checked and avoid using it as established fact. Choosing a small walk generally needs no full external confirmation of the past; establishing another's intention would still need more than that.

VIII. A counterexample: a demand may indicate a real obligation

Imagine another Saturday. Someone promised to collect shared belongings at a definite time, and somebody awaits their action. The demand resembles a strict relative, but the task is real. Declaring the intonation foreign and walking without a message confuses words' origin with a current agreement's content. A more accurate response is: unpleasant tone can be revised, while the promised action requires performance or honest discussion of change with whoever depends on the outcome.

This example does not show that every demand deserves performance. It guards against the opposite automatic assumption that all severity is imposed. A good decision can criticize humiliating self-treatment while recognizing particular responsibility. Someone can say more calmly that they need to leave at the appointed time. Changed resources can be communicated. The earlier threat need not remain to preserve the task; the task need not be canceled to reject the threat.

Another counterexample concerns important learning. An exercise may be boring and repetition necessary for a chosen skill. Someone endorses the aim and understands the exercise's connection with it. Lack of pleasure does not make the rule foreign. Scope or method can change, but first examine what actually helps learning. The article gives no professional skill standard. It limits the assumption that independent action must feel easy and pleasant from the first minute.

Some rules' content invites justified disagreement. Refusal can then be appropriate even with gentle intonation and a beloved source. Origin guarantees correctness in neither direction. Name what is unacceptable, the desired alternative result, and whom the decision affects.

Serious conflict needs separate consideration of circumstances. A small editorial practice does not resolve it automatically or permit disregarding all consequences of one's choice.

IX. Change is checked in the next episode

After examination, someone may feel the rule has finally become theirs or lost authority. This state matters, but change is usefully checked in the next similar case. Did a precise task appear? Could a sufficient result be named? Was revision possible? Familiar intonation need not disappear immediately. It may arise again while treatment of it already differs. The check concerns accessible action rather than ideal purity of an inner world.

In our hypothetical scene, the following Saturday brings new tasks. Someone first defines what is necessary and communicates available time to a relative. The walk again involves awkwardness but no longer waits for every imaginable task. This is a partial result that can be described accurately. If no walk occurs, examine circumstances. A new necessity may have arisen, or the demand expanded again. These explanations need examination of the actual day rather than advance selection.

A record helps if it remains short and specific. Preserve the earlier wording, selected grounds, and actual step. Every thought need not be counted or one's proportion of freedom calculated. That assessment would require clear measurement the article does not supply. Several episodes may reveal a recurring condition: pressure increases with uncertain scope, waiting for a response, or comparison. Such observation directs the next question rather than establishing a final cause.

Without change, the demand for independence should not immediately intensify. It is time to eliminate foreign voices can become another command without clear action. Check the approach instead: is the scene too broad, necessary information available, or a real external dependency still unexamined? Sometimes help with particular organization or conversation is needed. Sometimes reducing the question's scope suffices while preserving its honesty and importance.

X. One's own voice permits refinement

Independence can be imagined as finally recognizing a pure internal voice that never errs again. That aim makes every doubt threatening. Something else is more practically available: naming grounds, considering an objection, learning something new, and changing a decision. This is the article's editorial understanding of its task, rather than a complete philosophy of personality. Possibility of refinement matters more than confident intonation because circumstances and information really change and an earlier answer may need revision.

A personal decision need not be entirely original. It may coincide with a family rule, a teacher's advice, or a shared norm. The question is how someone now connects the rule with the task and participants' rights. Learning from others can coexist with personal examination. Respect for a source can coexist with disagreement over a particular application. Independence requires no continuous rupture of relationships and does not make every borrowed term a suspect trace of outside power.

Return to the opening. Someone hears that useful work must precede walking. Instead of finally answering whose voice it is, they clarify: which task, for what reason, for whom, and toward which outcome? The intonation's history remains partly unknown. Present grounds become clearer. A definite task can be finished before leaving; walking can come first if sequence lacks an actual reason; change can be agreed if someone relies on help. Each option needs its own examination.

The voice question can now receive a cautious answer: the phrase resembles the past, but the decision is made here. This promises no complete control over thoughts. It permits withholding automatic full authority from familiar wording. Dignity remains during doubt, responsibility during choice, and entitlement to new information. Such accuracy does not remove demands from life; it distinguishes demands with a subject from those merely sounding habitually convincing.

What this means in practice

Choose a small recurring demand and record its exact words. Note whether an external source is remembered, how confidently, and what is actually known. Identify similarity as similarity. Do not begin by reconstructing the entire relationship or explaining another's character. If origin is unknown, retain that status and proceed to today's task without inventing an origin for a complete account.

Name the demand's subject, timing, recipient, and sufficient result. Separately record an added condition of personality, such as proving usefulness in general. Find present grounds you are prepared to consider without insulting yourself. These may confirm action, change scale, or leave the question open. Check whether someone's agreement is affected; if so, change requires an actual conversation rather than merely new internal wording.

Choose one feasible step and a checking time. Do not require awkwardness to disappear beforehand or use relief as proof of correctness. After acting, record state and task outcome separately. This editorial practice has no established clinical efficacy. It collects information about a moderate situation, replaces no professional examination of serious difficulty, and permits no cancellation of substantial external requirements.

In the next similar episode, compare wording, grounds, and action. If clarity improved, name the specific change. Otherwise, refine the obstacle and reduce the checking scope. Avoid another verdict because familiar intonation returned. The question is not whether an inner world has been cleansed of all borrowing, but whether you can examine a rule now and answer for chosen action with available knowledge.

Key quotation

“deliberate decision” — Mill, On Liberty, Chapter III. Text. The Russian edition supplies an original editorial translation. This fragment concerns holding to a decision, without precluding revision through new information or establishing a psychological diagnosis.

Connections between traditions

Mill's defense of individuality and psychology's theoretical regulation distinction differ. The article compares only examining a rule and present grounds for action. I25 concerns the inner critic's verdict; I26 sufficiency criteria; I-13-N01 deserving a pause; I-13-N02 promises and another's participation. These are catalog links rather than publication information.

Sources

S1. Richard M. Ryan, Edward L. Deci. Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. American Psychologist55(1),2000,68–78. DOI10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68. Author PDF. Selected pages72–74 on regulation definitions and autonomy were read, rather than the whole paper. The authors research motivation; the paper names the University of Rochester. Brief definition paraphrase without quotation, scales, or diagnostic inference; further reproduction rights not established.

S2. John Stuart Mill. On Liberty,1859, Chapter III; Project Gutenberg34901. Selected chapter passages on choice, custom, and judgment were read, rather than the entire book. Mill was a nineteenth-century British philosopher. Two brief fragments and limited comparison; territorial rights and host conditions are not declared universal. Philosophical argument is no experimental validation of practice.

Tags

inner demand, inner voice, rule, independence, grounds, choice, memory, uncertainty, responsibility, autonomy, introjection, self-determination, Ryan, Deci, Mill, custom, tradition, dignity, inner critic, sufficiency, walk, agreement, learning, pressure, personal decision, practice, United Wisdom

About the authors

Andrey Zarinsh is the author and founder of United Wisdom. He explores inner transformation, the unity of traditions, intercultural dialogue, and contemporary spiritual discipline. Instagram: @andrey.zarinsh.

Maria Evilkut is a coauthor of United Wisdom. Alongside research, she seeks to test these ideas in practice and observe how principles of unity and mutual understanding work in real life between people and cultures. Instagram: @ilkutki.