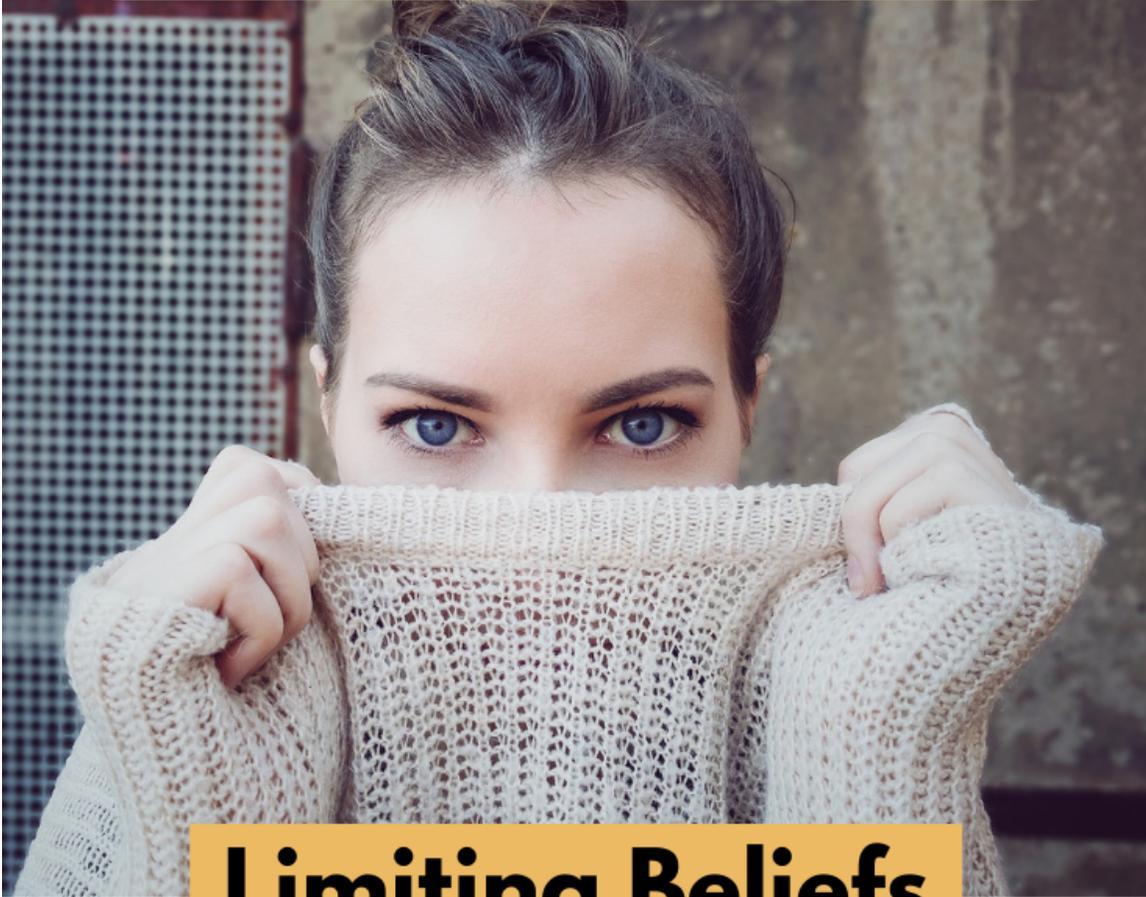




Blowing Past



Limiting Beliefs

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Are you plagued by unhelpful thoughts that derail you? Thoughts like, “I can’t pursue my dreams because I might fail ...,” “Nobody cares what I have to say.,” “I’m not someone who follows through,”?

These are limiting beliefs. If you don’t address and challenge your beliefs, they will prevent you from achieving your highest aspirations.

Limiting beliefs are beliefs that no longer serve us. They cause us to be afraid, paralyze action, and force us to play small. They cut us down and are highly self-critical.

In my coaching practice, I help people tap into how they want to express their passion in life or work. Specifically, we look at where they are making compromises for financial security or for the sake of meeting others’ expectations. My clients possess beliefs like “I can’t just do what I want” “My husband needs me to...” or “I need the security of a salary.” To blow past their limiting beliefs, I teach them the same technique that you’ll learn through this eBook.

This is life or death stuff. How you work through the beliefs that limit you will determine the quality of your life. I know this from personal experience and from the transformations that I’ve seen clients experience as they’ve embraced the part of themselves that exists beyond these self-imposed constraints.

You were endowed with your passions because they express you at your highest form. That is what you are here to do: show up in your life to the fullest extent of the law. If you’re not, then you’re breaking the laws of the universe.

Kyle Cease, author of *The Illusion of Money*, puts it like this: “How much we’re accessing our brilliance depends only on how much we’re attached to the limited story that cuts us off from it. If you could find a way, for just a second, to let go of your limited story that is telling you that you’re not a genius . . . BOOM—your genius would show up instantly.”

If you’re thinking that this is b.s. that’s your limiting beliefs talking. Their job is to keep you playing small. They think it’s safe there. Your first job is to stop arguing for your limiting beliefs. When you stop that self-sabotaging behavior, you will free up limitless energy. You’ve been driving with the brakes on.

Some of my clients are already doing what they love. But you know what, they are not loving what they are doing. Often, it’s because there are aspects of the role that they hadn’t considered. It’s like this for a lot of solopreneurs. They’re finally working for themselves, but guess what? Suddenly it’s hard to motivate themselves. You know why, it’s because one foot is firmly on the brake of limiting beliefs. Maybe deep down they believe they shouldn’t out-earn

their husbands or their fathers. Or they may think, “who am I to be an entrepreneur” or “I’m just deluding myself that I can write a book.” Burn out is created by driving with the brakes on.

The Challenge of Limiting Beliefs

Surprisingly, limiting beliefs usually came from a well-meaning place. Such thoughts might have protected us when we were young (7 years old, say) and naïve. Among other things, they protected us from disappointment when we were emotionally insecure.

But guess what: you’re not the person you were when your brain first adopted these beliefs. Now, these beliefs are just choking off your potential. They are malicious code you’ve installed in the software of your mind.

Beliefs are fundamentally drivers of our actions. Let’s explore why that’s so.

My coach training is based on a simple formula that goes like this:

A Circumstance occurs, we have a Thought about that (C)ircumstance, our (T)hought leads us to feel something, that (F)eeling inspires action. Our (A)ctions drive the (R)esults we experience. So:

C → T → F → A → R

Now, it might seem like events cause feelings, but they don’t. It’s our Thoughts about those events that generate Feelings. That’s why people have different feelings about the same event.

Master Coach Instructor Brooke Castillo identified the CTFAR model. Personally, I like to back up a step with the model. I say our thoughts don’t just come as a response to circumstance. They arise from our beliefs. Our beliefs color how we see the circumstance, what we notice about it. Our beliefs, coupled with the circumstance, give rise to our thoughts. So, to honor the role of beliefs, I like to think of the model like this:

Beliefs → Thoughts → Feelings → Action → Results

Beliefs lie at the root of our results. We’ll explore the model in greater detail a bit later. For now, let’s just recognize that working with beliefs is tricky business.

As Tony Robbins writes, beliefs are challenging because:

- “1) most of us do not consciously decide what we’re going to believe;
- 2) often our beliefs are based on misinterpretation of past experiences; and
- 3) once we adopt a belief, we forget it’s merely an interpretation.”

The Nature of Beliefs

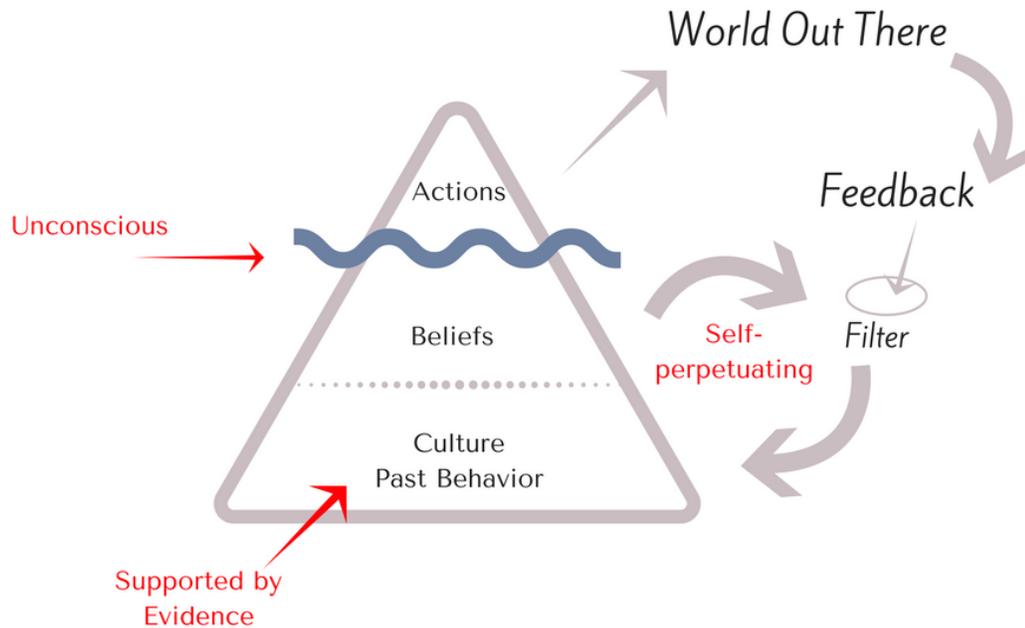
Let’s take a closer look at how this system works. In the diagram on the next page, you can see that beliefs are at the center of the system, in the middle of the triangle. Think of the triangle as an iceberg. Only what appears above the waterline, our actions and what we say, is visible to others. But our actions are rooted in what is below the waterline, often below even our conscious awareness: our beliefs. And our beliefs are influenced by our experiences, our education, our culture, and our past behavior.

When we act, our actions influence the world out there, and the world, in turn, gives us feedback about the effect of our actions. However, this feedback passes through a filter and that filter is comprised of our beliefs, assumptions, and values. Think about it: it is hard to take in feedback that is not consistent with what we already believe to be so.

As a leader in Corporate America, my employees regularly presented to upper management. I liked to write down all the positive things that the VP said during these interactions. When I shared the feedback with my employees, 90% of the time the positive feedback hadn’t registered with them. They’d been in the same room, and the feedback had been directed *at* them. But I knew from experience that often employees wouldn’t hear it. They were too busy monitoring for any signal that they were off course. That meant they missed the positives.

Such filtered feedback influences how we come to understand our past behavior. For example, when only attending to the negative, my employees might assume that the presentation didn’t go well.

And, finally, our past behaviors influence our beliefs, thus completing the cycle.



There are three qualities about limiting beliefs that make them insidious. See the red text in the diagram above. On the left-hand side you will see that beliefs are often below the threshold of awareness. We are not conscious of them and this allows them to operate unchallenged. Secondly, our beliefs are often supported by evidence. The evidence might be flimsy – based, for example, on only one incident – but some evidence generally underlies our beliefs. And finally, on the right-hand side of the diagram, you will see that our beliefs are part of a self-perpetuating system. Our beliefs impact our interpretations of events and those interpretations feed back into the beliefs that we hold.

All of this points to three general strategies that we can adopt for overcoming our limiting beliefs.

- 1) We can bring our limiting beliefs to conscious awareness,
- 2) we can find new evidence that undermines our limiting beliefs, and

- 3) we can break through the self-perpetuating cycle through a technique called Thought Stopping.

The Nature of Beliefs in Action

Let's see how all this plays out in an example.

Thelma is a teenager who believes she's not a good driver. Where did she get this belief? In the town she grew up in, everyone talked about how women can't drive well. Her Dad seldom lets the females in the family drive, while her brothers got practice before they were 16. This is cultural conditioning.

The first time she drove, she hit a stop sign. This is some past evidence that supports the belief.

When Thelma completes Driver's Ed she takes the driver's test. She's nervous and she hits the brakes too hard at the stop sign. She jerks the steering wheel when she parallel parks.

The test supervisor frowns a few times, and he scribbles on his pad. Waiting for the test results, Thelma reflects on the supervisor's behavior. She's looking at it through the lens of her beliefs. Since she thinks she's not a good driver, she assumes that the supervisor will draw the same conclusion.

Thelma sees her father with the supervisor, and they laugh. Her father pats the supervisor on his back. The supervisor comes over and tells Thelma that she has passed.

She wonders how this can be and she suspects her dad did something to influence the situation. This is an example of Thelma seeing through her beliefs.

Thelma continues to worry about her poor driving, and she avoids it whenever she can. A friend points out she's never had an accident or gotten a ticket.

"That's because I haven't driven much," Thelma insists. This habit means she doesn't collect a lot of new information about her driving.

Thelma is stuck in her limiting belief. She's even *arguing* for her limiting belief. She isn't likely to break out of it until she changes her thinking.

We can see how Thelma's beliefs were formed in the first place, how these beliefs led to thoughts that came from, and supported, the beliefs. Thelma probably felt feelings of discouragement and that led to actions like not driving as much. By not driving, she reinforced the belief that she couldn't drive. We'll see in a moment how Thelma can overcome this insidious cycle by identifying her beliefs, creating new evidence, and breaking through the cycle.

Avoiding Pain and Seeking Pleasure

Beliefs are rooted in the avoidance of pain and the seeking of pleasure. They are reinforced through consequences and the information we pay attention to. Remember, when our limiting beliefs were first encoded, they most likely served a helpful purpose.

Let's suppose that I believe that I'm not someone who follows through. This makes me reluctant to sign up for tasks that call on the trait. That might spare me, and others, some heartache. Such a belief probably stemmed from situations where I was trying to avoid the painful consequences of my own shortcoming. Perhaps it was all rooted in just one situation where I failed to follow through. But I adopted a more globalized belief about myself as protection from some imagined future failure.

While limiting beliefs may have originally emerged for our benefit, long term they are harmful. Continuing with the above examples, we see that the belief is damaging because it allows me to use excuses to avoid new experiences. The same thing happens to Thelma. And, when I do take on projects, it sets up the likelihood of a self-fulfilling prophecy that will derail my efforts. For Thelma, her belief makes her tense and overly cautious. She is heavy footed on the brake and over-reacts when steering.

What Thelma and I really need in this situation are ways to challenge our self-deprecating labels. Taking on new projects where I can demonstrate accountability is one way to create new information, or references, around my belief. For Thelma, it would be driving more, especially for short, well-known trips where she can accumulate positive evidence. Another technique for me would be to remember situations where I did follow through. Next, I can adopt a new belief, perhaps something like "I have great follow through" or "I'm a responsible person," or, if these

feel unrealistic, then perhaps, “I am dedicated to being accountable.” Thelma might try, “I haven’t had any tickets,” or “Driving takes practice and I’m getting better and better.”

Let’s revisit Brooke Castillo’s model that I referred to earlier. Remember, in Brooke’s version, it look like this:

Circumstances → Thoughts → Feelings → Action → Results

The model is intended to give you insight into the relationship between your thoughts, feelings, actions, and results. The model is deceptively simple. It’s also a power tool that can blow you away with valuable insight.

It works like this. Something occurs in the world. We call this a circumstance. The most important thing about a circumstance is that it be an objective, neutral (i.e. not emotional or judgmental) description of the facts. I wouldn’t say “I’m fat,” instead I would list my actual weight and what I would like to weigh. That’s my circumstance.

Next, you identify what thought you have when that circumstance occurs. This is followed by the feeling that the thought elicits. Next, you identify what actions you do, or don’t do, when you are feeling that way, in that kind of situation. Finally, those actions lead to some kind of result. That result will always tie back in some way to thought you had. This model shows us that our thoughts create our reality.

Warning: this is an incredibly brief introduction to a fairly deep topic. You can learn more in Brooke’s book, *Self-Coaching 101*.

It helps to see the model in play, so let’s look at an example. In this case, we’re going to build the model backward. This is a good technique to use to understand what thought is leading you to a particular result.

A client named Marie came to me because she wasn’t happy with where her life was going. Her last child had recently left for college, and Marie found herself working in a job she hated, too exhausted when she came home to do the hobby she loved.

Marie's result might be "not following my passions."

Now, let's use the thought model to find the belief behind it. The next step is that I would ask Marie what actions she is taking (or not taking) that lead to that result. For Marie, her actions are:

- Not figuring out what I really want
- ignoring longings
- Doing what others want
- Exhausting myself with unpleasant work

Next, we are going to see what feeling leads to those actions. I asked Marie how she must be feeling in order to act that way?

Marie realized that resignation would drive these behaviors.

The next step is to find the thought that drives those feelings. For Marie, it was "If I try to do what I want, I'll fail."

Finally, what is the belief that drives that thought?

For Marie it might be: "I don't deserve to get what I want," or "I'm a failure."

Marie chose "I don't deserve to get what I want."

Marie's model would look like this.

B: I don't deserve to get what I want.

T: If I try to do what I want, I'll fail.

F: Resignation

A: Not figuring out what I really want; ignoring longings; Doing what others want; Exhausting myself with unpleasant work

R: I don't follow my passions

So, that's how you can identify a limiting belief that might have been a bit below the surface of awareness. I'm going to show how we eliminate that limiting belief in a moment, but first let's reflect on what we've done here.

Marie didn't know what she really believed, but she could see the results she was creating in her life: She wasn't following her passions. This came from her actions: she kept working at that job she hated, she didn't take the time to figure out what she really wanted, etc. Why?? Well, because she was feeling resigned. And she was feeling that way because of the story she was telling herself: "If I try to do what I want, I'll fail."

She was signing up for certain failure (the results she was getting) instead of risking POSSIBLE failure to go after what she wanted. But of course, Marie couldn't go after what she wanted because she didn't believe she deserved it. We don't do what we don't believe in.

Finally seeing the belief that lay behind her behavior, was a real revelation for Marie. Next, we had to undo that false belief.

OVERCOMING LIMITING BELIEFS IN SIX STEPS

So, how do we end the nasty cycle of limiting beliefs? There are six steps:

1. Name the limiting beliefs
2. Understand their original value proposition
3. Destabilize the old belief
4. Choose a new empowering belief
5. Reinforce the new belief
6. Activate the new belief

Let's explore each step in detail.

1. NAME THE LIMITING BELIEFS

What is a disappointing result you are achieving in your work or personal life? It might be: I don't have enough clients. Clients don't pay me on time. My partner is taking advantage of me. This will be the Result in your model.

What are you doing, or not doing, that leads to this result? This will be the Action line.

What must you be feeling in order to do (or not do) these actions? It might help to imagine someone else. If you saw someone else taking these actions, how do you assume they are feeling? This is your Feeling line.

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What is a thought that would lead to this feeling? You might generate several ideas, but pick just one. Remember, it should relate directly to the Result. For example, if your result was “My partner takes advantage of me,” your thought might be “I disrespect myself but having poor boundaries.”

What belief do you think has generated that thought and ultimately led to your unwanted results?

Now, for your reference, rewrite your model here:

Belief:

Thought:

Feeling:

Action:

Result:

If you're having difficulty generating the belief from the thought, study the following information which provides insight into how our brains work.

Automatic Negative Thoughts

Let's dive into the nature of negative thinking. One classification comes from *Change Your Brain Change Your Life* by Dr. Daniel Amen. He identified nine types of Automatic Negative Thoughts (or ANTs). As you review the following types of ANTs, consider whether you have limiting beliefs that may take on the qualities described.

The nine ANTs are:

- All or nothing thinking: One example proves the theory. Missing one workout means you're lazy.
- Always thinking: Overgeneralizing. Using the words "always," "never," "every time," or "everyone."
- Focusing on the negative: Seeing the glass as half empty. "I lost 10 pounds, but I wanted to lose 15, so I'm a failure"
- Thinking with your feelings: Assuming your feelings are correct. "I feel like my skin is never going to clear up."
- Guilt beating: Using excessive guilt to control behavior. "I should," "I must," "I have to." Raises our natural resistance.
- Labelling: Name calling. "I'm a loser"; "I'm a failure"; or "I'm lazy." A defeatist attitude.
- Fortune telling: Predicting the worst. "I just had a biopsy; I am sure it is cancer."
- Mind reading: Knowing what someone else is thinking without asking them.
- Blame: Blaming others. "It's your fault." Victim thinking that removes personal responsibility.

You will find that most limiting beliefs fall into one or more of these categories.

Types of Limiting Beliefs

Here are some more examples of limiting beliefs:

Survival beliefs:

It's not safe to draw attention.

I can't be myself or I will be judged.

I can't ask for what I want because I might get rejected.

Paralyzing beliefs:

I don't know what to do.

I don't know enough.

I don't know...

Beliefs about money:

I won't be able to make money doing this.

I don't deserve it.

Global beliefs:

I can't handle it.

I'll never succeed.

It's too late to pursue my dreams.

Shame based beliefs:

I'm not enough.

I don't deserve success.

Comfort zone beliefs:

Marketing is just not me.

Beliefs about the way the world works:

If things don't just materialize, then they weren't meant to be.

Blaming beliefs:

It's because of my childhood.

My boss is too controlling.

My partner doesn't do their share.

If Then beliefs:

I'm a loser because my _____ failed.

Fundamental beliefs:

I can't stand rejection.

I have to be perfect.

I can't survive outside my comfort zone.

The last category, fundamental beliefs, is particularly insidious. Fundamental beliefs often lie at the root of other beliefs. For example, consider the belief "I can't be myself or I'll be judged." The fundamental belief that might underlie this belief is: "I can't stand to be judged," or "I'll fall apart if I'm judged." To gain traction on limiting beliefs, they are best identified at the root level. Go back through your limiting beliefs and see if you can articulate any fundamental beliefs that add intensity to your original belief.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE ORIGINAL VALUE PROPOSITION OF YOUR BELIEFS

The next step to developing your conscious awareness around your limiting beliefs is to understand where they came from. Remember that limiting beliefs almost always arose for a useful purpose and were designed to protect you. They have only become dysfunctional if you have clung to them and applied them in inappropriate circumstances.

Consider the category of global beliefs. Those beliefs may have been useful in a one-off situation, but when you engage in All or Nothing or Always thinking, then you are acting as if the trait is always true of you. One failure morphs into the unhelpful (and incorrect) assumptions that you will always fail.

Here are some questions to consider in thinking about where your beliefs came from.

How has this belief served you?

Was there a time when the belief was true?

What experiences support this belief?

Next think about the consequences of holding this belief. How has holding this belief held you back?

What assumptions underlie the belief?

What could you accomplish if you knew the belief was untrue?

Finally, thank the belief for having served you. Acknowledge that it arose with good intentions. This might seem odd. We do this to avoid resisting. You are not attempting to suppress the belief but rather to move on.

Now that you have brought conscious awareness to identify and understand your limiting beliefs it is time to use focused intention to create a shift.

3. DESTABILIZE THE OLD BELIEF

This process starts with challenging the limiting belief.

You can challenge your old belief by considering times when the belief was/is not true. Can you remember a time when you did not hold the belief? What were you able to accomplish then?

In what ways is the belief false?

What famous quotes counter your belief? (Try WikiQuotes or Brainy Quote for inspiration.)

What will the consequences be if you are unable to make this change and eliminate this limiting belief?

How has holding this belief been painful?

The purpose of this section has been to illuminate how damaging the belief has been. Before proceeding, make sure that you have fully articulated how painful and inhibiting it has been to embrace this belief. The pain of holding the belief must outweigh whatever benefits you may derive from it. Now you will sever ties with the belief.

4. CHOOSE A NEW EMPOWERING BELIEF

Now you're going to take deliberate control over your thought process. You can intentionally create your life and it all starts with a new belief. Choose a new belief that counters the old. There is only one rule: make sure that it is believable. If your limiting belief is "I can't ask for what I want because I might get rejected", it may be too much of a leap for you to go from there to "I embrace rejection" or "I assertively address my needs." Instead, you might try "I am learning that I can handle rejection."

Write down your new empowering belief.

The goal here is to release yourself from messages that beat you down so that you can unleash your potential. Choose a new belief that speaks to that potential in a way that you can fully embrace.

5. REINFORCE THE NEW BELIEF

Your old belief was held in to place by your efforts to seek pleasure and avoid pain and by the references that you have for that belief. You are now going to bring conscious awareness to the fact that your new belief is a healthier choice for you. It is superior because it does a better job of providing pleasure and/or avoiding pain. The consequences of holding this new belief far outweigh the consequences of embracing the old belief. And most important, you are viscerally aware of these dynamics. Your old belief has been exposed as unworthy. It's time to ditch it and embrace a new reality.

To reinforce your new belief, ask: How will my new belief help me to achieve my goals?



How does it feel to hold this new belief?

What benefit will I derive from the new belief?

What evidence supports this new belief?

Who am I now that I hold this new belief?

At this point, you can create a new thought for your new belief. This time, you will work forward from your new belief:

What's a circumstance where you want to believe this? What thoughts do I have when the circumstance happens AND I believe this (pick one)? How do I feel when I think that thought? When I'm feeling that way, in this situation, how do I act (or not act)? What results would I create by acting this way? Map the results back to your thought.

C:
B:
T:
F:
A:

R:

VISUALIZATION

Use visualization to help imprint this new belief. Think of a situation where you have previously been tripped up by your old way of thinking.

For example, I used to be painfully shy and held beliefs like "People do not want to hear what I have to say." This belief was particularly activated when I had to bother people with a request or when I wanted to reach out to someone. I'd feel a sheepishness that would often delay taking

action, or even prevent me from taking action all together. After I had sent an email, the feeling would continue, and I'd have a strange sense of shame. I developed a new belief, "Some people definitely want to hear what I have to say, and it is my job to reach out."

For purposes of the visualization, I would imagine a situation where I would reach out to an old acquaintance. I would imagine how I would do it and how I would feel as I composed the email or dialed their number. I would envision the conversation, seeing how I would confidently share my updates with them and how I would listen with curiosity to what they had to say. I would imagine having a positive impact on them.

The most important part of the visualization is to imagine how you're feeling as you go through the new behaviors that have been spawned by your new belief. Really breathe into the self-confidence that you would feel (or whatever feeling you imagine... make it a positive feeling!) Focus on feeling the feeling with as much intensity as possible.

In your visualization, you might even prepare for some of the things that might go wrong. If you're calling them, you might imagine that you have to leave a message. So, mentally rehearse leaving that message. Imagine maintaining a positive feeling even if they don't get back to you right away. Focus on your own responsibility within your belief, for example, think to yourself: "It is my job to reach out."

Studies have shown that mental rehearsal is just as potent as actually performing the act. It turns out that our brains don't know the difference between practice and performance. Engaging in a daily visualization will help you to establish a place of primacy for your new belief. You want to use your conscious effort to strengthen the belief so that it begins to dominate even when you are unaware of it.

Visualization leverages brain dynamics. You've probably heard the saying "Nerve cells that fire together, wire together." This means that when you do two things at the same time, for example intentionally feeling confident while you imagine emailing an old acquaintance, the network in your brain brings to associate the two mental activities. The more you practice it, the more you will naturally feel confident while reaching out.

Now it's your turn to try the visualization. Imagine yourself engaging in the new behaviors that

your new empowering belief supports. Focus on the good feelings associated with this new belief. What do you see yourself doing? What are the positive feelings that arise from this behavior? How are you moving toward achieving your goals and your ultimate desired state? How does it feel to move toward your desired state? What do you feel in your body as you engage in the new behavior? How do others respond to you? What happens as the result of your action?

You can also reinforce your new belief through embodiment. This means to develop a movement or hand gesture that will symbolize your new belief. One of my favorite movements to use to encode a new belief comes from the old Mary Tyler TV show.

There's Something About Mary

If you're of a certain age, you might remember in the opening credits how Mary stops on a crowded city street and tosses her hat in the air with glee. There's an old lady in the background who stares at Mary like she's crazy. For me, this moment embodies everything about the cultural significance of the Mary Tyler Moore show. Mary had the courage to strike out on her own as a 30-something career woman when women like were supposed to be bare foot and pregnant. Remember the theme song: "You're going to make it after all."

When I'm thinking of a new thought or behavior I'd like to embody, I do so with the flick of a wrist, imagining I'm tossing my hat in the air.

Quotes are another great way to bring a tangible reminder into your environment. See if you can identify quotes that help support your new empowering belief. Then make or find a beautiful graphic of the quote. Pinterest is an excellent source for this. You can create your own graphics using a tool like Canva.

A final way to reinforce your new belief is through a totem. A totem is a small object that you associate with your new belief. It could be a stuffed animal, an object from nature like a pinecone or a leaf, a memento or cheap trinket that you pick up online. The only thing that is important is that you can see it or feel it and that it reminds you of your new empowering belief.

6. ACTIVATE THE NEW BELIEF

This final step is fairly straightforward. Just start embracing your new belief. Adopt the new

behavior associated with it. In this step, you also want to be mindful of any recurrence of the old belief or the behavior that stems from it. A great technique to use for this is called Thought Stopping which comes from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

The Neuroscience of Feelings

It is also helpful to be aware that your brain is addicted to certain feelings. Feelings are produced by neuropeptides and hormones in the brain. According to Dr. Joe Dispenza, “Neuropeptides are chemical couriers that signal different glands of the body to make hormones.” Neuropeptides do their thing by docking on cell receptor sites. As you think certain thoughts a chemical signature is released in the brain causing the appropriate peptides to link up with the appropriate cells thereby releasing the chemical process for the corresponding feeling.

As Dr. Joe explains it, “As you think certain thoughts, the brain produces chemicals that cause you to feel exactly the way you were thinking.” But here’s the thing. *The chemistry of the brain begins to adapt itself to the thoughts and feelings most often experienced.* If you spend a lot of time experiencing shame, your brain starts to create more shame receptors at the cost of, say, happiness receptors. And then the brain starts looking for more of the same (e.g., shame) in order for things to feel normal. The brain’s job is to keep things in homeostasis.

Say that you are a ninja at feeling guilty. From your brain’s perspective, guilty thoughts and feelings become the status quo. When you are not feeling guilty, the chemistry of your brain is out of whack, it’s looking for a guilt rush just so that it can feel normal. You could say that your brain wants you to feel guilty. You’ve literally become addicted to guilt.

So how do you break the cycle? Conscious awareness. Just reading the above has started the process. When you decide to change your behavior and stop indulging in feelings of guilt, the first thing that will happen is that your brain will let you know it’s craving the guilt. Don’t listen to it. Tell it that you’re no longer playing that game.

You can do this by literally yelling “Stop!” when you have a thought that you’re trying not to indulge. I’m not kidding. I’ve done this and it works. If you can’t yell out loud, then scream internally as loud as you can. Toss your imaginary hat into the air. The point is to be disruptive, to cause a pattern interrupt in the brain.

After you've stopped the thought, invoke your new Empowering Belief and invite in the more positive feelings associated with it. Remind yourself that you've been addicted to your old feelings. They probably won't go away immediately. But they will diminish over time if you use this technique.

You want to get new nerve cells firing together. You want to produce different emotional associations between thoughts. And you want to flood your brain with those new emotions. You can change your brain chemistry.

Wrapping Up

So, to recap here's what we've covered:

- 1) Identifying your limiting beliefs so that you can find the soul-sucking little buggers and eliminate them.
- 2) Understanding the original value proposition of the limiting beliefs so that you understand their allure and how they came to dominate you.
- 3) Destabilizing the limiting belief so that it no longer holds sway over you.
- 4) Choosing a new empowering belief so that you can sprinkle fairy dust over the old beliefs and make them wither away.
- 5) Reinforcing the new belief so that it will be more powerful than the old belief and will keep that bad boy firmly banished, and
- 6) Activating the new belief so that you can start reaping its rewards.

I hope that you found this approach and these techniques valuable. Being held under the sway of a limiting beliefs is exhausting. It can feel like you've got one foot on the brake as you're trying to accelerate down the highway. Lift that foot off the brake and embrace what it feels like to soar.

Want more? In my coaching practice I love to help blow past their limiting beliefs. Many people get a lot of traction just doing the exercises in this eBook, but when you explore your beliefs and habits with one-to-one support, you can a lot more territory in less time. It's especially helpful to have someone point out how limiting beliefs are emerging in ways unconscious to you.

For others, they want to dive into what comes next: embracing abundance. That's what starts to open for you as you shed your limitations.

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Let's chat about your experiences with limiting beliefs and abundance. You can schedule time for a free discovery session to explore the possibilities at <https://kira.as.me/discovery>. You can also check out my website at kiraswanson.com for more resources.

Sources:

Daniel Amen, *Change Your Brain, Change Your Life*.

Brooke Castillo, *Self-Coaching 101*.

Kyle Cease, *The Illusion of Money*.

Joe Dispenza, *Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself*.

Tony Robbins, *Awaken the Giants Within*.

Adam Sicinski, *The Complete Guide to Overcoming Limiting Beliefs*.



Dr. Kira Swanson is a coach who specializes in liberating people from the lives they've created based on compromise. She helps her clients recognize where they have made choices from scarcity thinking: playing it safe, playing small, meeting other peoples' expectations. Kira's clients learn to be true to themselves — a process that begins with truly knowing themselves. They take back their lives, discovering that when they pursue their passions they have more energy, enthusiasm, and success — for themselves and to share with others.

Dr. Kira has been coaching since 2015. She is a Life Coach School certified coach, archetypal consultant certified by Caroline Myss, and has completed Byron Katie's School for the Work. She

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studied consciousness and meaning-making at Saybrook University where she received her PhD. Kira also earned an MBA from Duke and a BA from Carleton College. Kira is an exile from Corporate America. She loves to hang with her dog, Malcolm, and writes fiction. Her fictionalized origin story for Bob Marley's *Three Little Birds* will be appearing soon in an anthology.