

Beliefs Drive Behaviors

Every Action Means Something

Each choice we make is a clue into our belief systems. We noted that belief systems represent how we view ourselves and the world around us. Belief systems can be helpful or they can limit us due to the faulty information they are formed from.

If you were to sit down and write “My Belief Systems” you may find that you struggle to identify them. They were formed long before your logic brain was engaged enough to know they existed or even challenge them. But if you started paying close attention to your choices you would be able to connect them to belief systems.

For example, a person who engages with strangers effortlessly may be an extrovert by personality but he/she does so because they believe people are generally safe. They choose to hold onto this belief until proven otherwise.

Contrary to this is the person who fearfully engages worried that he/she will be rejected or not liked. That thought may not be at the surface in order to recognize it, but the behavior is a clue. If we follow the clue it can lead us to the experience(s) that shaped that belief. Every action means something.

Scientific Discovery

Scientists have found that our beliefs are stored within our cells. Each cell in our body conforms to our beliefs. If you believe you are strong your cells will act strong. If, on the other hand, you believe you are depressed, your cells will behave in a depressed manner.

Your beliefs direct everything you do and say yet we rarely pay attention to what they are.

Scientists have also discovered that love is the strongest indicator of healthy belief systems. Believing we are loved changes the course of our choices whereas the thought that I am unloved guides my choices in a different direction.

The good news is that we can choose to override beliefs that hold us back. The brain has an amazing ability to rewire itself. It is up to you.



“A belief is not merely an idea that the mind possesses. It is an idea that possesses the mind.”

- Robert Oxton Bolton



If you are feeling stuck in limiting beliefs, simply choose new emotions.

The belief will follow.

Inside this issue:

Brick by brick	2
Fighting fair with facts	2
Limiting thought cloud	2
Rewriting history	3
Replacing old beliefs	3
Go ahead—push my buttons	4
Victim mentality	4
Event + emotion = Belief	4
Clean your filters already!	5
Maybe it is an ANT invasion!	5
What’s this really about?	5
Asset-based thinking	6
What if it could be better?	6
Other-centered	6
Pre / Post Assessments	7
What I Got From This Section	7



Vulnerability

Beliefs are developed when an experience is associated with strong emotions. (Event + Emotions = Belief)

Once developed, beliefs drive our behaviors. This means that we make choices that align with those beliefs. Let's assume that someone cut me off in traffic. Most days I might let that go by because I believe it to be a part of driving.

However, this day I react by slamming on my horn and yelling at the other driver. What made the difference?

My vulnerability. In the past 24-hours I haven't slept well and have been overly stressed. Because I didn't have enough emotional energy in my joy tank, different emotions got the better of me.

Vulnerability plays a big role in our reactions which is why it is important to have good self-care strategies in place at all times.

Vulnerability



Thoughts & Emotions

The brain processes more than 50,000 thoughts a day. Of course I cannot manage every one of those thoughts. But most thoughts are repetitive in nature.

If our thinking tends to create the same types of problems, we might want to re-evaluate our beliefs. In my scenario, the other driver was so irresponsible that I **THOUGHT** they should be taught a lesson. Those thoughts led to some pretty strong emotions. Those emotions, in return, led to an unwise choice.

Even though this did not happen to me, unfortunately, we see this kind of behavior more often than we should because we are not taking ownership of our own thoughts and emotions.



Expectations

I generally expect that people are good. However, I am typically realistic and also understand that people sometimes act selfishly. When my energy levels are down, it is easy for me to have less patience and therefore be less flexible in my expectations.

The person's behavior irritated me because it violated how I expected people to treat each other when driving. When our expectations are violated, we become more vulnerable.

Assumptions

When the other driver cut me off, I quickly made several assumptions.

First, I assumed I should be treated better. I therefore made a judgment call, meaning that I judged the other person for not meeting my expectations.

Second, I assumed that their behavior had everything to do with what happened to me. When our energy levels are low, we do not have as much to offer anyone else. All energy gets expended on myself. I didn't give a moment's thought to what could be going on in the other person's world. Nor did I remember that I have cut others off in traffic before as well.

Assumptions rarely involve all of the facts.

More Than Bread Alone

Like the train illustration, a sandwich also reflects all of the "ingredients" that it takes to make one choice. It is not simply that an event occurs and we make a wise choice.

In order to make a wise choice, we must be careful of the expectations we place on ourselves and others, manage our assumptions more accurately and handle thoughts and emotions in a way that is pro-social. Keeping everyone safe should be our primary focus.



[illegible]

Learning how to identify safe people might be a skill you work on to overcome this partial truth. Learning when to disclose information about yourself or setting boundaries may be other skills. Soon you will find that you are rewriting your story. History no longer has control over your thoughts and emotions.



◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆



Go ahead - Push My Buttons!

When we say something like, "He or she made me angry," we should be taking responsibility by identifying the button that got pushed.

Someone may have pushed it...but it is our button.

The button represents a **trigger** to an underlying belief. But it is much easier to place the blame on someone else rather than take the responsibility to recognize our buttons and why they get pushed.

The word picture to the right reminds us to take full responsibility for the things that trigger us. We may have very real reasons to be triggered. The button that got pushed is very real. But, that does not mean that we need to continue allowing that thing to control us.

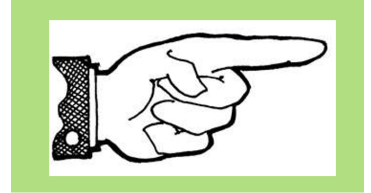
In what ways do you blame others for YOUR buttons?

Ex: "He made me mad!"



List your buttons that get pushed.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



No More Blaming

When beliefs control us to the point of limiting our quality of life we become a victim. We have given up control of our lives and given the power to someone else. Two brothers who were verbally abused by their step-father are both alcoholics who have been in trouble with the law and even lost custody of their children because of the abuse they endured. They have given up control of their lives to a step-father who is no longer in their lives but still controls them in a very real way. They are victims. They can change this if they choose to work on the pain caused and replace faulty belief systems.

The victim mentality is a constant and global mindset which says: *I am what I am because of unfair treatment by an individual, group or system, and, I cannot rise above it. Therefore, I am not RESPONSIBLE for my actions I am a victim.*

Event + Emotion = Belief

Belief + Event = Emotion

Emotion + Belief = Event

Let us review a bit how these beliefs get started and rooted in your subconscious.

When we experience an event that impacts us negatively we become distressed. The reaction can happen so quickly (often in a second) and several steps have taken place by the time our behavior is noticed. Below is an example of those steps. We can learn much by slowing these steps down and recognize our patterns.

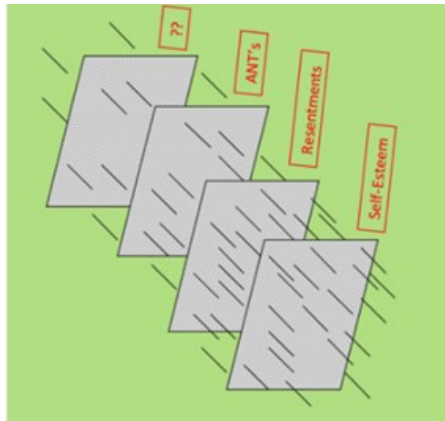
- ⇒ An event happens.
- ⇒ Vulnerability factors determine responses based upon details immediately before the event (why you react different than someone else.)
- ⇒ The brain interprets the situation based upon beliefs and assumptions from past experiences.
- ⇒ The brain sends messages to the body internally in order to respond (heartbeat, blood flow, etc.).
- ⇒ The brain send instructions to the body to react externally (tense jaw, clenched fists, fight, flight, freeze, etc.).
- ⇒ An emotion is tagged to the event creating a memory.
- ⇒ A belief system is made regarding the event. This may strengthen or weaken other beliefs.
- ⇒ An expectation is formed for future events, setting up vulnerability factors and the cycle forms a loop.

As you begin to address these areas that have such influence over your life, you will see the world in a much more positive light. People who do not slow down and process these beliefs tend to blame others for their circumstances.

Clean Your Filters Already!

Filters are usually meant to keep the bad stuff out and only filter in the good stuff. However, people can struggle with emotional filters that will not let the truth get through. They see things through these cloudy filters that were created from limiting beliefs.

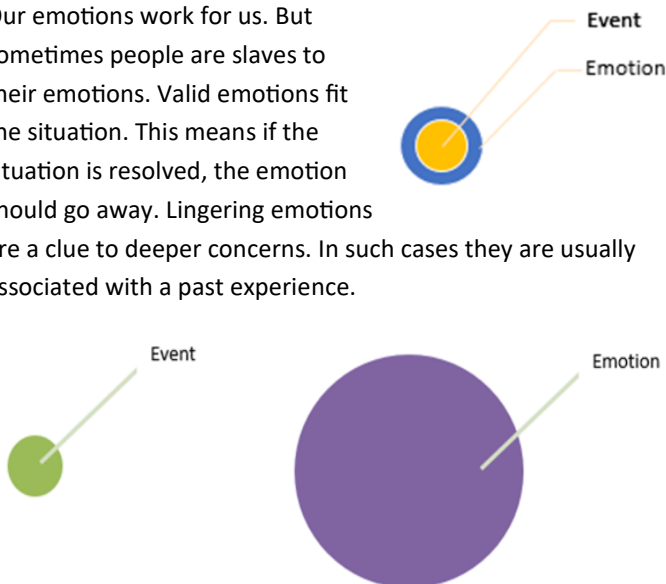
A low self-esteem is an example of this. One person gives a compliment but the receiver rejects it because of their low self-esteem. The good stuff is then rejected. How many dirty filters do you have that keeps the good out and the bad in?



Can Truth Get
Through Your
Filters?

What's This Really About?

Our emotions work for us. But sometimes people are slaves to their emotions. Valid emotions fit the situation. This means if the situation is resolved, the emotion should go away. Lingering emotions are a clue to deeper concerns. In such cases they are usually associated with a past experience.



It is not fair to others when we allow the extreme emotion to stay in the current situation. They end up paying for our past resentments, judgments, anger, disappointments and so-on.

Learn to separate the event from the emotion. Fix the event (problem you are facing) by using critical thinking and problem solving skills. If you find you are still highly emotional, find the oldest even you can remember to challenge the thinking behind it. Once corrected, you will see new experiences through a whole new lens.



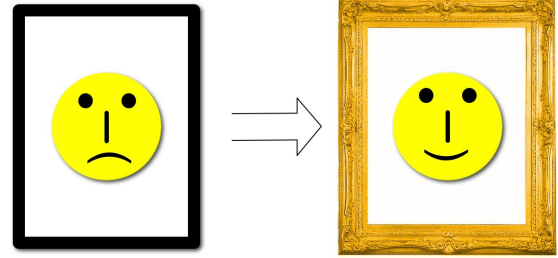
ANT's are automatic negative thoughts. These pesky things creep up without you even recognizing them because your brain has automated them. Here are a few examples of ANT's. Check the ones that you are guilty of. Think about how these ANT's get in the way of your relationships. Find a way to exterminate them!

- ◇ "Black or White" thinking: thoughts that are all good or all bad; thinking in words like always, never, no one, everyone, every time, everything.
- ◇ Negative thinking: only seeing the bad in a situation.
- ◇ Fortune telling: predicting the worst possible outcome to a situation with little or no evidence for it.
- ◇ Mind reading: believing that you know what another person is thinking even though they have not told you.
- ◇ Thinking with your feelings: believing negative feelings without ever questioning them. Ex: "I feel suspicious" – the emphasis on the word "feel".
- ◇ Guilt beatings: thinking in words like should, must, ought, or have to.
- ◇ Labeling: attaching a negative label to yourself or to someone else. Ex: "They're stupid."
- ◇ Personalization: believing that conversations are about you. Ex: "They were laughing. They must be laughing at me."
- ◇ Catastrophizing: build up a nightmare scenario of how everything could go totally wrong in some situation and imagine a big catastrophe in your mind.
- ◇ Blame: blaming someone else for the problems you have and not taking ownership.
- ◇ Conditional: requiring conditions to be met in order to change beliefs / lack of ability to operate in faith. Ex: "I will believe it when I see it" rather than trusting someone's word.

Asset-Based Thinking

Asset-based thinking (ABT) is a term coined by the Cramer Institute. They challenge us to see the world through different lenses of possibilities. In contrast is deficit-based thinking focuses on what we lack rather than what we have. Look at a few examples of changing our thinking from deficit to asset-based.

- If you believe "It is hopeless," ask "How is it possible?"
- If you believe "I am helpless," ask "What do I already know about it?"
- If you believe "It is useless," ask "How is it desirable?"
- If you believe "I am blameless," ask "How am I responsible?"
- If you believe "I am worthless," ask "How do I deserve it?"



To adopt ABT into your life, it requires that you learn how to “Re-frame”

thoughts. Reframing is taking a belief from one frame of thinking that is deficit-based and putting it into another frame of thought that is asset-based. The examples above are reframed beliefs. Try reframing your thoughts. Compare your reframed beliefs to see if they are ABT and be sure they do not include any of the ANT’s.

What if Life Could Be Better?

Your **Life**
does not get
better by
chance.
It gets better
by change.
—Jim Rohn
QUOTEDIARY.NET

Think about “what if...”. If there is one thing that could change to make your life better, what would it be? Write it below:

There is no way you will wake up one day and it is all better. Life only changes or improves when you engage in that change. So make a commitment today to take action to improve yourself.

Other-Centered

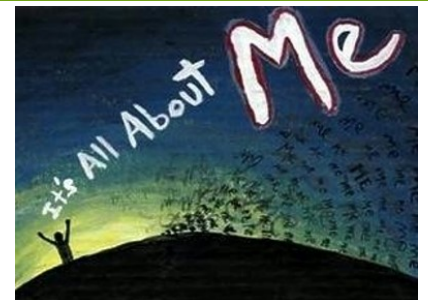
We live in a very “me-centered” world. Think about selfies. We are all in need of healthy connection. Unfortunately, we often think that happens when I look out for #1—me. But that is not true.

Becoming other-centered requires us to put our needs, wants and expectations on the sidelines and choose the relationship instead. This does not mean that we do not meet our needs or go after our wants or express our expectations. But it does mean that those do not become our priority over relationships.

Imagine having everything you want but you are alone. You might say you would be okay with that. But studies show that is simply not true. Take time to think about what someone else is going through the next time you become angry at something they say or do. Really consider what must be going on with them rather than taking things personally.

Think about the story of a man who was angry at someone who cut him off in traffic. In his rage, he followed the car ahead until the car pulled into the emergency room parking lot. When he confronted the thoughtless driver, the driver apologized and stated, “I am so sorry, I just got a call that my wife was in a terrible accident and may not make it through surgery.” The actions we all make are for a reason. Maybe it is not always about you. Maybe it is their own pain and concerns they are facing. We all need help up. No one needs help being driven down.

Sometimes others are simply selfish and they do impact our world. But what is the benefit of always expressing yourself? Is there a benefit to helping them instead? Explain your answer in the space below.



Set your eyes on what is ahead.

Directions:

- All questions are “behavior” based, meaning that you are rating yourself on what you “do” rather than what you “know”.
- Answer the questions below by rating yourself as follows:

0 - Does not apply to me at all.

1 - Applies sometimes, but not often.

2 - Applies to me often.

3 - I have this one down on a regular basis.

Check the boxes of the behavior you would like to work on during this section.

Pre		Post
	My actions mean something. I tell others what I need based on wise choices.	
	I realize that being loved changes how I see the world. I am trusting others so they can love me.	
	I can identify life experiences that have shaped my beliefs. I fact find to challenge limiting beliefs.	
	I regularly check my “thought cloud” and am working to replace limiting beliefs.	
	I know my buttons (triggers). I have a plan and use it to reduce or eliminate their power over me.	
	I will not give my certificate away. I will not remain a victim and allow others to dictate my life.	
	I know how beliefs are created and that they can be changed. I work to change faulty ones.	
	I actively clean my “filters” and kill the “ANT’s” so that I can hear and accept the truth.	
	I use “asset-based” thinking because I love myself.	
	I make choices that meet my needs but are also “other-centered”.	

“I Will” Statements

To get closer to my Big Hairy Goal, “I Will” do the following:

◇

◇

◇

◇

What I Got Out of This Section
