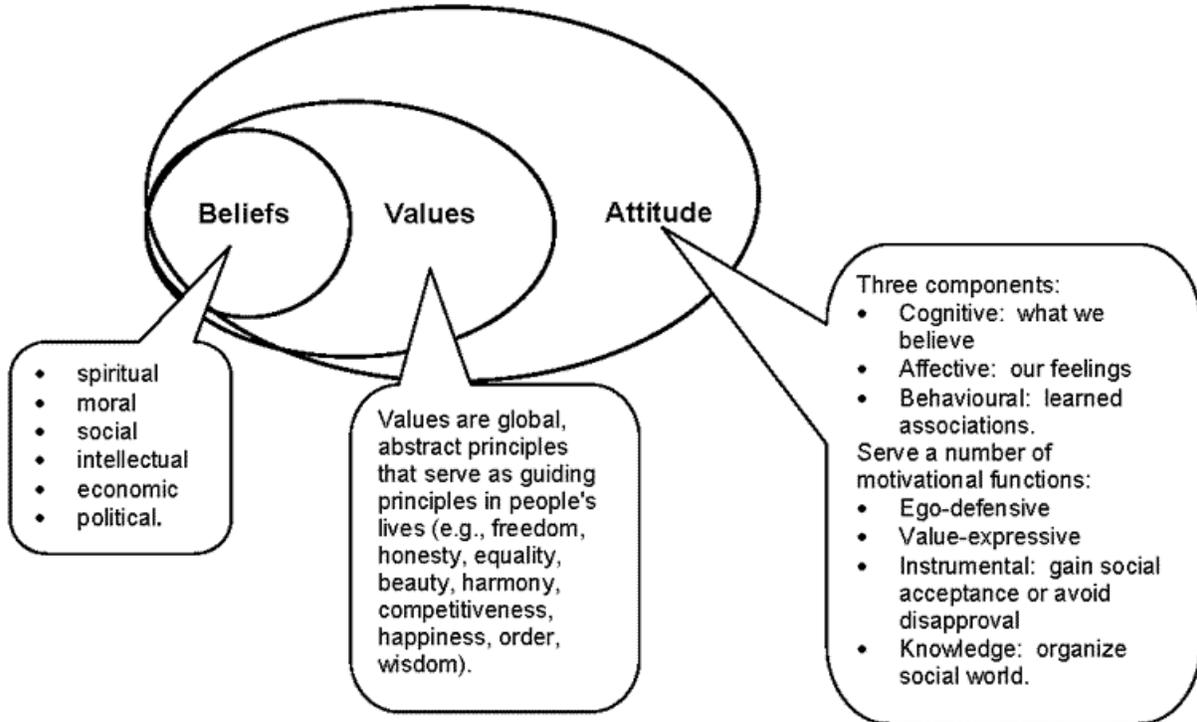
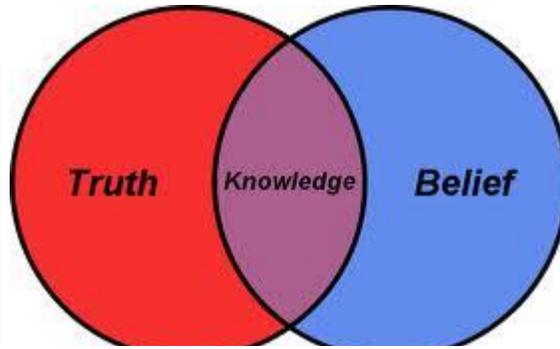


## **SESSION 6**

### **What Do You Really Believe? WHAT ARE YOUR BELIEFS**

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If you are reading this you are most likely someone who is interested in understanding the effects that beliefs have in your life and for changing any limiting beliefs.

Beliefs are like the central information highway that the quality and meaning of your experience flows through. Beliefs are the result of judgment and meaning that are consciously and unconsciously assigned to experiences. It has been claimed that deeply held beliefs, the important ones about who we are and what's possible for us in life, were mostly formed by age 5, an age too young to make accurate conclusions.

Robert Dilts, leading NLP researcher and author, has divided the core limiting beliefs into three categories, helplessness, hopelessness and worthlessness. While they are very broad categories you will find that they are very useful in bringing insight to unwanted patterns and to gain the awareness necessary to remove the strictures that seem to be holding you back in your life. So it is useful to ask "What have I

learned to believe... about myself and about the power within me to create the life that is fulfilling?"

It's easy to take beliefs for granted and simply assume that, "It's just the way I am" or "That's just the way life is." People act as if beliefs are facts. Someone who is struggling to find employment may think, "I'm overqualified or too old to be hired in today's job market. Companies are only hiring inexperienced people because they can get away with paying them less". While that person may be older and have more experience than what some companies are looking for, and those are facts, it is also a fact that many people are hired in spite of their age and experience. Beliefs play a deeper role than most people realize.

This is an era when personal accountability goes beyond behaviors and attitudes. You are exposed to both esoteric as well as modern, cognitive technology that instructs you in changing the very nature of your reality structure...your beliefs. Beliefs operate as thoughts, since you have to accept a thought for it to become a belief. Beliefs impact perception and influence feelings and feelings motivate actions or lack of actions and actions produce the results and consequences that follow. Self-limiting beliefs keep you in repetitive learning cycles, until you change the meaning of experience at the belief level.

### **The Test of Your Beliefs**

The true testing of your beliefs is found in the challenges you face in life. How resourceful are you when what you want to happen and what is happening are in conflict? Do you respond with strength and conviction and resourcefully adjust your thoughts, attitudes and behaviors? How quickly do you learn from the feedback life so generously gives

you? How do you use the messages from your emotional experience to guide you to greater and deeper insights and choice?

It is extremely beneficial to think of your problems as quality control tests of your beliefs... a necessary security check for strength and durability. That is in fact just what a challenge is. So, just how are you rising to the occasion and passing through the tests of your life? The quality of your life depends upon how deep and appropriate your beliefs in yourself and in the possibilities of life are. And we all can do with an upgrade now and then.

This “world classroom” of reality is full of instruction. Lesson plans come in all shapes and sizes. Tests come at the best of times and in the worst of times. Be glad you are being tested. It means you are alive and enrolled in the “Course of Life”. How you handle your lessons, and what you do with your learning, is a measure of your psychological and spiritual growth.

### **What's Your Truth?**

Remember also, that your beliefs are a reflection of what you perceive to be your mental and spiritual truths. When you take the time to examine your inner life you'll discover your beliefs. As you create new truths about yourself and your life, new, empowering beliefs await you. Think about people you know who buy every diet book that comes out, sign up for every new 'lifestyle' eating program, but talk constantly about how hard it is to loose weight and you will have an example of how self-limiting beliefs override information. When life is challenging old habits re-emerge because of unconscious self-limiting beliefs. People who sustain a significant life change have changed at the deeper level of beliefs about their power, the possibilities

that exist for them and their self worth or value. You may have heard it said that whatever you believe becomes your reality. Which translates to mean that, you don't believe what you see — you see what you believe. Or as Henry Ford once said, "If you think you can or if you think you can't, you're right!"

Beliefs are reinforced by the repetition of experiences you attract, let happen, set up, or blindly walk into. A set of conditions that are similar to previous experience and voila—"There it is again." "I told you so." "I should have known better." "When am I going to learn?"—these thoughts come rushing from the background of your consciousness. Consider also that the same patterns are in play whenever you succeed at something and life is flowing. Reinforcing your beliefs at these times can strengthen the neural belief pathway of possibilities. This is what is behind the age old proverb "What you think about you bring about." Mastering the habit of 'thinking in the positive by knowing that your words have power' is meant to be a learning tool to gently increase your awareness. A friend of mine says, "You don't know what you don't know, and that is both a blessing and a curse, so life is simpler when you are aware".

As a first step, you can bring more awareness into play in your life. You can begin to reinforce the possibilities that you have the power within you to create a life that is an evolving and of life's greatness expressing through you. You can surround yourself with people you believe in and who believe in themselves. You can support others and even try out their beliefs, the ones that will help you to be a healthier, happier person. You can find a friend who shares your desire for personal growth, or better yet, introduce someone

you know to some of the wonderful trainings that have empowered you and share the tools for deeper support. You can find a guide or coach to help in changing any deeply entrenched limiting belief. And while changing your beliefs is not always smooth and easy, it is worth the energy and effort involved. You can begin right now to choose awareness and train your mind... your inner life is ultimately your own design.

In recent years, organizations have increasingly viewed coaching as a way to improve performance, often as a remedial activity. Yet, most of them have failed to grasp that a much bigger prize is waiting for them if they adopt a different approach from simply getting managers to do coaching.

First, let's clear up one thing: Coaching is not solely a management activity!

To be sure, coaching skills are an important part of the modern manager's toolkit, and these skills are often under-exercised among the management community. You only have to listen in to any work-based conversation to recognize that questions are not well-formed and listening is superficial. Almost everyone hates the silences, but sadly, these same behaviors often occur even after coach training.

On the other hand, a true coaching culture has everyone adopting coach-like behaviors as a means to lead, influence, and communicate with each other quite naturally. In this type of organization, people fearlessly engage in candid, respectful conversations about how they can improve their individual and collective work performance—unrestricted by reporting relationships

Indeed, everyone from the CEO to frontline staff are equally at ease with feedback and consider it a powerful way to build on personal and professional development. So, what is the difference that makes the difference?

Well, we know that human behavior stems from our sense of identity, what we believe to be true, and what we hold as important. So perhaps it starts with this thought: To build a coaching culture, people need to BE a coach, not DO coaching

### **Believe in someone's potential**

First, imagine what you will see, hear, and feel if you really believe that everyone can bring something to the party.

What would you DO differently if you were to BE like that?

In his book *The Inner Game of Tennis*, Timothy Gallwey suggests that performance is equal to potential minus interference. So it makes sense to believe in someone's potential—to help them work out how to deal with the interference for themselves in order to improve performance. Yet, most managers focus purely on the individual's performance, demanding greater, faster, or better, rather than recognizing the potential and seeking to understand what gets in the way.

Now, if you were to simply hold this one belief, you would almost certainly begin to ask questions that help the other person come to their own conclusions. This, of course, would in turn demand deeper listening and giving the other person time to think by remaining silent.

### **Believe someone may have a better solution**

The belief that others may hold a better answer than you can be equally liberating. If you know the answer you want to hear, your questions will come from the belief and will be unconsciously formed to get it.

Compare that to those times when you haven't known the answer. I bet your questions came more from a place of curiosity, with no judgment on whether the answers were “right” at that stage.

### **Believe everyone is responsible for their own choices**

Of course, great coaches also believe that everyone is responsible for their own choices. So as a manager, stop taking responsibility for someone's performance. Encourage them to take responsibility for themselves, because you believe in them.

Many leaders in organizations consider coaching as a soft leadership style, so let me tell you what I say to them: When you let go and have someone take responsibility for his or her self, it is a very scary place—for both of you. So, be conscious of offering the right balance of support and challenge to help them take the first few steps and liberate them from a sense of dependence.

Actively embrace and use these core beliefs as a compass to guide your coaching practice and forget about simply DOING coaching. Instead, work at BEING a coach.



**I TAKE FOR GRANTED...**  
**I RECKON...** MY VIEWS ARE...  
ACCORDING TO ME... I ATTACH WEIGHT TO...  
**I THINK...** I SUPPOSE...  
**I ASSUME...**  
**I ACCEPT...** IT IS... IT ISN'T...  
**I PRESUME...** I TAKE AS GOSPEL...  
**I BELIEVE...**

Most folks probably couldn't locate their parietal lobe with a map and a compass. For the record, it's at the top of your head — aft of the frontal lobe, fore of the occipital lobe, north of the temporal lobe. What makes the parietal lobe special is not where it lives but what it does — particularly concerning matters of faith.

If you've ever prayed so hard that you've lost all sense of a larger world outside yourself, that's your parietal lobe at work. If you've ever meditated so deeply that you'd swear the very boundaries of your body had dissolved, that's your parietal too. There are other regions responsible for making your brain the spiritual amusement park it can be: your thalamus plays a role, as do your frontal lobes.

But it's your parietal lobe — a central mass of tissue that processes [sensory input](#) — that may have the most transporting effect. (Read "Top 10 Medical Breakthroughs".)

Needy creatures that we are, we put the brain's spiritual centers to use all the time. We [pray for peace](#); we meditate for serenity; we chant for wealth. We travel to Lourdes in search of a miracle; we go to Mecca to show our devotion; we eat hallucinogenic mushrooms to attain transcendent vision and gather in church basements to achieve its sober opposite. But there is nothing we pray — or chant or meditate — for more than health.

Health, by definition, is the sine qua non of everything else. If you're dead, serenity is academic. So we convince ourselves that while our medicine is strong and our doctors are wise, our [prayers](#) may heal us too.

Here's what's surprising: a growing body of scientific evidence suggests that faith may indeed bring us health. People who attend religious services do have a lower risk of dying in any one year than people who don't attend. People who believe in a loving God fare better after a diagnosis of illness than people who believe in a punitive God. No less a killer than AIDS will back off at least a bit when it's hit with a double-barreled blast of belief. "Even accounting [for medications](#)," says Dr. Gail Ironson, a professor of psychiatry and psychology at the [University of Miami](#) who studies HIV and religious belief, "spirituality predicts for better disease control." (Read "Finding God on YouTube.")

It's hard not to be impressed by findings like that, but a skeptic will say there's nothing remarkable — much less spiritual — about them. You live longer if you go to church because you're there for the cholesterol-screening drive and the visiting-nurse service. Your viral load goes down when you include spirituality in your fight against HIV because your levels of cortisol — a stress hormone — go down first. "Science doesn't deal in supernatural explanations," says Richard Sloan, professor of behavioral medicine at Columbia University Medical Center and author of *Blind Faith: The Unholy Alliance of Religion and Medicine*. "Religion and science address different concerns."

That's undeniably true — up to a point. But it's also true that our brains and bodies contain an awful lot of spiritual wiring. Even if there's a scientific explanation for every strand of it, that doesn't mean we can't put it to powerful use. And if one of those uses can make us well, shouldn't we take advantage of it? "A large body of science shows a positive impact of religion on health," says Dr. Andrew Newberg, a professor of radiology, psychology and religious studies at the University of Pennsylvania and co-founder of Penn's Center for Spirituality and the Mind. "The way the brain works is so compatible with religion and spirituality that we're going to be enmeshed in both for a long time."

### **It's All in Your Head**

"enmeshed in the brain" is as good a way as any to describe Newberg's work of the past 15 years. The author of four books, including the soon-to-be-released *How God Changes Your Brain*, he has looked more closely than most at how our spiritual data-processing center works, conducting various types of brain scans on more than 100 people, all of them in different kinds of worshipful or contemplative states. Over time, Newberg and his team have come to recognize just which parts of the brain light up during just which experiences.

When people engage in prayer, it's the frontal lobes that take the lead, since they govern focus and concentration. During very deep prayer, the parietal lobe powers down, which is what allows us to experience that sense of having loosed our earthly moorings. The frontal lobes go quieter when worshippers are involved in the singular activity of speaking in tongues — which jibes nicely with the speakers' subjective experience that they are not in control of what they're saying.

You can have  
anything you  
want if you are  
willing to give  
up the belief that  
you can't have it.