

Destructive Core Beliefs and How To Destroy Them (And Replace Them With Constructive Beliefs)!

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Coaching is a means to assist individuals in identifying their core values and using those values to set long-term goals. Each long-term goal is broken up into smaller, achievable tasks. In this manner, I can assure the eventual success of my clients by continuing to break down larger, more imposing challenges into smaller and smaller acts. Coaching is a major asset for reprogramming the mental tapes, or thoughts, that run through your head. Oftentimes, these thoughts are so quick you aren't even consciously aware of them. Most times, these thoughts are negative and cause a negative reaction in our body. Ninety-nine percent of the time thoughts are laced with emotion. Negative thoughts lead to negative emotions (i.e., sadness, anger, and fear primarily). Positive thoughts lead to positive emotions (i.e., happiness, contentment and relaxation). Coaching helps you to reprogram your old tapes and their accompanying feelings so you can feed your brain healthy messages and increase the amount of time you spend in positive emotions. Recent research has shown that the goal for a thriving life is 3 times as much positive emotion as negative emotion.

Change Your Negative Habits

Did you know that by changing your brain, you can change your life? You can. The brain relies on pathways between brain cells (neurons) to communicate messages from one area to another. You can create new pathways in your brain. You are capable of learning new ways of doing and being. To do so, you only need to do three things:

1. Become aware of your bad habit
2. Substitute a new and improved habit for the old one
3. Rehearse the new habit until it becomes automatic

When you learn new skills and attitudes, new pathways are created in your brain.

The most efficient way to create these new pathways is by practicing the new task.

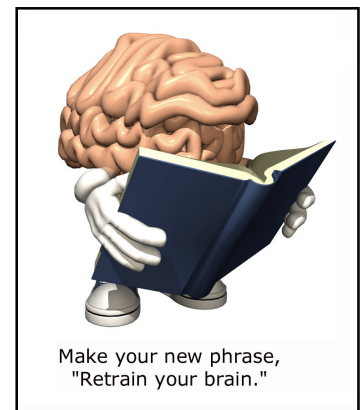
The more you practice, the deeper engrained the pathway becomes in your brain.

The downside is that the more you continue to do the same old negative thoughts and behaviors, the more deeply engrained they become as well. However, you can change this at any moment by merely being aware of those thoughts you want to change and then consciously and intentionally substituting in a more positive thought.

Research has shown that our brain has the capability to create new pathways for as long as you live. This is exciting news because we used to believe the brain was incapable of growth and change after early adulthood. We now know that the brain continues to grow and adapt every day of our lives. Your brain is just like a muscle that needs exercise if you want to keep it in shape. And, believe me; you definitely want to keep your brain in shape!

Blazing a New Trail in Your Brain

At first, it seems difficult to learn a new skill or attitude. When you begin learning a new skill, the baby pathway between brain cells is like a hiking path in your brain. It's made of dirt and has pebbles and rocks on it. It is not very well-traveled so messages have a more difficult time "walking" from one place to another. The more you try out the new skill, the stronger the pathway becomes. After some practice, the pathway



grows from a hiking trail into a two-lane highway. Now the messages move quickly and easily between the brain cells. Over time, the new skill becomes automatic and the two-lane highway solidifies into a super highway where the messengers of the brain rocket back and forth. The more you practice a new behavior, the more automatic and easier it becomes.

Just as physical skills such as running, jumping and playing sports become automatic through repetition, so too do thoughts, emotions and attitudes. As you repeat positive thoughts, your underlying pathways in the brain become stronger. Eventually, these paths become hardwired into your brain's circuitry.

Revisit Your Essential Core Beliefs

Your core beliefs, your stealthy, silent thoughts, matter tremendously. Take a close look at your core beliefs because they fuel your thinking. If your core beliefs are negative (e.g., "I always get the short end of the stick."), then your thinking will be negative. Negative thoughts lead to destructive emotions. So take a close look at your core beliefs, those things that you believe deep down in the core of your being.

While not scientifically proven, there seems to be a triad of negative beliefs which are at the root of all other destructive beliefs. These three beliefs stem from a confusion that arises when you mistake who you *are* with what you *do*. You are not what you do. You are not merely what you believe. You are not only what you feel. Those are aspects, facets, of you, but they are not the essence of you. You are far more than mere actions, beliefs, or feelings.

Many people make the serious error of rating how well they achieve followed by rating themselves as a good or bad person. Most folks judge their worth based on

their achievements, their successes, and their failures. It's a ubiquitous error in judgment; everyone makes it unless taught otherwise. Logically, it seems to make sense. I, the individual, kick the ball well or poorly. The ball doesn't kick itself. So I 'logically' judge my kicking ability as good or bad. Then, I 'illogically' rate myself as a bad kicker, a bad athlete, or even a bad person. It's a mistake of overgeneralization. Most people overgeneralize from doing a bad act to being a bad person. That's a fallacy. It's wrong. Learn to separate your worth as an individual from your individual actions.

For example, I'm working with my nine year old son on the concept that he is far more than his ability on the baseball diamond. Whether he hits the ball well or not, he is still a great person. A bad day at the ballpark does not make him a bad individual. A bad act does not a bad person make. In the same vein, a good act does not *make* you a good person.

In order to be a bad person, you would have to consistently and frequently perform bad acts such as breaking the rules, not cooperating, and hurting others. This is hard to do and highly improbable. So even if you are responsible for a bad act, say kicking the ball poorly, you cannot judge yourself as a bad person. It's impossible to *be* what you *do*. A bad person would *only* and *always* behave in a negative manner. And a good person would act in a positive manner towards everyone at all times. Neither of these two extremes is possible.

The Three Most Damaging Core Beliefs

The three most damaging core beliefs that you can hold are as follows:

- 1) Other people **MUST** treat me fairly or they are bad people.

- 2) I MUST do well or else I am a bad person.
- 3) My life conditions MUST be the way I WANT them to be or I can't deal with it and will NOT be happy.

There are many other irrational beliefs that you might hold, but these three seem to be at the bottom of nearly every one of them. Integral to each and every one of your irrational, negative beliefs are the words “must”, “should”, or “ought.”

The goal is to become aware of your negative core beliefs. Once you are aware of them, you can consciously substitute positive core beliefs for old, ineffective, untrue beliefs. Certain core beliefs have been proven to lead to greater well-being. The core beliefs that have been proven to work well are as follows:

Core Beliefs That Work Towards Well-being

1. You are incredibly important and matter tremendously to the rest of us.
2. You are not alone. You are surrounded by others who care.
3. There is no failure, only delayed success.
4. Lessons are repeated until learned.
5. Learning never ends.
6. The present is a better place to live than the past or the future.
7. You can handle it.
8. What you do with your life is entirely up to you.
9. All the answers lie within you. You have but to listen.
10. Always look for the good in people and



events. You find what you look for.

11. Life is a roller coaster ride. Enjoy the ride.

12. Energy is limitless. You can tap into it at anytime.

One of the best ways to begin adopting more positive core beliefs is to cultivate a realistically optimistic attitude. Research clearly shows that optimistic individuals stay healthier, are more satisfied with life, live 7 - 10 years longer, are more resilient to difficult situations, and are better at loving their spouse.

Cultivating an optimistic outlook will set a pattern of expectancy of positive results. Expecting positive results, the power of your thinking brain, helps to create those expected results.

How you respond to challenges, the dirt that life throws on top of you, is a tremendous indicator of how well you will succeed in school, in sports and at work. People with an optimistic attitude see setbacks as *temporary* challenges, challenges that can be overcome with effort.

That one belief provides the foundation for perseverance

and resilience that fuel high achievers. Optimism is the one trait which distinguishes superior performers from mediocre ones across nearly all areas of life – business, sports, education and relationships.

Discover more about realistic optimism at www.GuideToSelf.com. Or contact Dr. John for speaking engagements at DrJohn@GuideToSelf.com.

