



7 Self-limiting beliefs that stop you from achieving Success in Life

Of all shortcoming that an individual
may have, self-limiting beliefs can
prove the most detrimental towards
achieving success in life

The mind is undoubtedly the most powerful of all things that humans have ever known

Been thinking a lot lately, haven't you?

As per the National Scientific Foundation (US), an average person entertains anywhere between 12,000-50,000 thoughts per day. In some cases, the number goes even higher to 75,000. Now, that's a huge 2100 thoughts per hour on the higher side.

Mind-boggling isn't it?

Imagine the burden and the overload an average mind goes through. It's a heavy consumption of time and more importantly, your precious mental energy.

Thoughts lead to actions

Repeated thoughts become your beliefs, your beliefs, in turn, determine your mindset which in turn sets the stage for your actions. Now, do you see the connection as to how a single thought – positive or negative – can influence your actions?

Whoever said “success brings happiness” is probably right but it is interesting to note that it is also the other way around - Happiness brings success. A review published in the Psychological Bulletin that examined over 275,000 people across various studies, highlighted a very interesting insight - the happiest of people owe their success, in part, to their positive outlook.

Says Dr. Lyubomirsky, head researcher at UC Riverside “When people feel happy, they tend to feel confident, optimistic, and energetic and others find them likeable and sociable. Happy people are thus able to benefit from these perceptions.”

Positive thoughts or beliefs help you move forward and put you in a better space of mind and self. Negative beliefs can do the exact opposite and derail your developmental process. Negative thoughts present themselves as self-limiting beliefs.

The interesting thing about limiting beliefs is that they have a way with all of us. Yes, they do. They can pop up anytime and in different formats and yes, they often arrive unannounced. Usually, they arise out of one's past experiences or out of others' experiences and, over time, they tend to become a part of your personality.

Let's observe some of these very strong self-limiting beliefs that can hinder your growth process -

"I am not qualified enough to achieve what I really need to"

You will have to get rid of both these notions. It isn't qualification but experience in understanding things connected with your objectives that determine whether you can achieve these or not. Merely having an objective or goal is not enough. It is equally important to understand your goal, know what it entails to reach it and then put in place all elements and connect with all stakeholders who can help you achieve that goal and execute the plan. But before all this comes self-belief. Believe in yourself - this the best qualification you can have.



“I cannot make money”

The ‘I cannot’ limitation, whether with respect to money, growth or anything in life - is arguably the worst self-limiting belief you can have. It’s like killing the engine even before you hit the start button; there is no point in taking up any initiative with such a limiting belief. This happens for two major reasons –

- a) You have a deep sense of insecurity or fear of failure and
- b) You have a deep sense of inferiority complex

It is human to have these shortcomings, do not worry.

Making money isn’t as tough as people make it out to be.



Delve deep into yourself, understand the exact reason why you are not making enough money for yourself, and then accept it. The first step towards achieving anything in life is to accept the fact that you have a limiting belief, the second step is to overcome that belief by going ahead with the objective regardless of its potential success. It is only when you take those first few steps will you be able to gauge the road to your success, otherwise, you are just a standing spectator. Don't be a spectator.

"There is no Time'

'Nothing can be more delusional than this. One thing that is always there - is the time.

Everybody is gifted with 24 hours in a day and 7 days in a week. It's a level playing field and time is impartial.

"Time is money and lost time cannot be found"

Benjamin Franklin

"I don't have the time" is a social construct derived out of temporary beliefs and experiences. If you pause for a moment and think deep, you will realize that there is indeed time. It is about how you align yourself to what you wish to do and change some of your basic behaviour patterns. Wish to work out for 30 minutes? Sleep or wake up early. Want to groom someone for a leadership role? Stretch a little. Wish to learn a new language?

Prioritize that.

It is as simple as that.

Once you begin to understand yourself, your behaviour and the way you spend an entire day, you will realize the importance of prioritizing tasks and utilizing the given time.

"I am not as good as him/her"

The worst you can do to yourself is to compare yourself with others. Actually, the fault isn't completely with us. It is also to do with the kind of education system we have in place across the world – it is all about competing, comparing and pitting one against the other. This actually kills the originality and buries one's self-worth. But then again, the onus lies upon us to decide what we are and what we can do by simply focussing on ourselves and completely deleting "others" from the equation.

Focus on yourself, your strengths, and utilize them. Reflect on your short-comings, work on them – no human is devoid of shortcomings. A dangerous thing that can happen if you keep comparing and rating yourself against others is that you will have travelled far enough in life without realizing that you have lived for someone else or for the society than for yourself. That is something you do not want to be doing.

“Can I actually do it?”

Nothing can be more detrimental than self-doubt.

Doubting yourself and your capabilities are akin to sitting in the car and not turning the ignition key on – you have everything ready for the drive but yourself. This applies to life too. Oftentimes, we have what is required to achieve our objectives but fail only because we doubt ourselves and our innate strengths.

Self-doubt may arise out of past experiences but the primary or foundational cause is a deep-rooted inferiority complex. Believe in yourself wholeheartedly and you will see life in a very different way and success will only follow.

"I think, I am not ready right now"

'Keep "thinking" and you will remain the same or get even worse because excessive thinking does not help in the slightest of ways. Sometimes we end up telling ourselves that we need to "do this" or "be this" in order to "achieve that". Yes, this thought process is indeed essential but not when we use this as a reason to avoid taking that first step towards our goal. Sometimes, and unconsciously so, we continue to give ourselves "reasons" to not take that first jump, that first flight or that first step - realize that you are blocking yourself from opening up to your inner potential.

Fear of failure and uncertainty exists for anyone, it is natural to have fear and feel uncertain. But the secret? It is only when you break this barrier and take that first step that you will realize that it isn't as difficult as it seems to be.

Take one step at a time, and make small objectives of the larger goal and believe in your complete self – you are ready all the time.

"What will the world say?"

'Well, the world will say whatever it wants to and it will also change its opinion often. The focus must be on yourself rather than on what the world will "think" and "say". We often judge ourselves from the perspectives of the world – our colleagues, our network, the society and anyone else, but ourselves. This will only stop you from doing what you want to do and from taking up newer things and exploring.

Let me share the experience of a client of mine.

The lady had worked her way up in the IT sector for over 12 years and was doing considerably well in her career but wanted a shift to enhance her skills and her earning capacity. During our coaching discussions, it was suggested that she let her superiors know of her clean intent and see if her company can provide the opportunity.

But her response was - *"What will my boss think?"*

Later and with some courage, when she could finally let herself open up to greater possibilities, she was pleasantly surprised when her boss quipped "Why didn't you say so?" Turns out, the boss himself was looking to give her additional responsibilities but wasn't sure because she did not, in her 5-year stint under him, once talk about anything out of her role and responsibilities. Funny world isn't it?

Do not make the mistake of tuning your mind to "what will they think of me" every time you wish to do something. It does not matter what "they think", what matters is what you believe in. So, go ahead and do it regardless of how the world may perceive you for it, more often than not, you might be pleasantly surprised - the world might resonate with you. And just in case, the world does not, go ahead anyway. Who cares.

Conclusion

Self-limiting beliefs have been in existence since mankind took birth. They have intensified as humans began to look to the external and rely more on the external to get an “approval”. It is true that a lot can be achieved through external circumstances and inspirations – that’s the positive outlook. The negative outlook prompts us to look for reasons to fail, knowingly or unknowingly.

Want to express your feelings for someone, go ahead there is no better time than now.

Wish to take that first ride to your favourite destination, just do it.

Need to take up a new course to hone your skills, do not think much.

Want to let your boss know she needs improvements, go ahead and let her know in the most polite way.

The only way to break your limitations is by taking action, and quickly so. Our mind is a very powerful weapon and we need to have enough control over it. We can go back to our past experiences to reaffirm our beliefs – both positive and negative. We have the choice on what we choose to replay in our minds – it's important to replay the positive ones and break these self-limiting beliefs.

Believe first, and act!

The Covid-19 situation is unprecedented in the modern history of mankind and it is unlike any other critical situation faced by the entire world. It is indeed a time to reflect, re-organize and revitalise yourself. So, pause, take a break and reflect and break through those self-limiting beliefs that have been stopping you from unleashing the best inside of you.

It is time you show yourself the best side of you.



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