

Published in the Lakeville Journal, Millerton News and Winsted Journal Jan. 22, 2009

### **Feeling Stuck- Part 3: Limiting Beliefs**

*By Brooke Loening*

In the previous two articles about feeling stuck, we talked about identifying a doable next step, getting clear on a time frame, and making yourself accountable. This is a great start and may be enough to get you motivated to make changes. However, there will be many occasions when you have subconscious beliefs that are holding you back from moving forward and are, in fact, the reasons you have been stuck. These are called limiting beliefs because they are essentially limiting you, without you knowing it, from making the right choices and doing things in a better way. Not only that, they are mostly untrue and totally subconscious. Unless you bring these limiting beliefs to a conscious level, they may hold you hostage, keeping you from positive change for the rest of your life.

The first step that must be taken to resolve limiting beliefs is *moving the belief from the subconscious mind to a level of conscience awareness*. This may sound like you will need to go to a hypnotist but it is actually quite simple and you can do it yourself without outside assistance. Simply close your eyes, breathe, and think about the area where you feel stuck. Then ask yourself, “What are my inner beliefs-or that “voice in my head,” that is telling me why I can’t do this. It is important to continue breathing, as we tend to stop breathing when we are confronted by something uncomfortable. *Now write down your limiting beliefs*, which may add up to anywhere from one to twelve or so. Most of my clients have at least two or three and you should as well.

*Use a journal when you do this kind of work*, because referring to your work will save you from repeating the same process the next week and the week after. It will also lock in this new awareness on a higher conscience level, which will help you let go of the old belief. I do not recommend doing this work in your head as, in my experience, it is not effective, and you cannot refer back to it easily. The next step is to look at your list and pick two or three limiting beliefs that stand out the most. Then, identify and write down the truths about these beliefs. The truth will be what you *know* to be true about the situation. It will be truer than your limiting belief, and many times will actually be the opposite of the limiting belief.

Examples:

Limiting Belief: I can’t ask my sister to borrow money as a bridge loan to get me through the next six months.

Truth: I can ask her, she has the money and would be more than happy to lend it to me. And- I can pay it back.

Truth: I can ask her, and if she doesn’t want to lend to it to me or cannot, she will tell me. She is always honest with me.

Limiting Belief: Cleaning out the attic may take weeks or even months, it is overwhelming and I can't face even the prospect of starting the project. I may never get out of that attic if I start the job.

Truth: I can commit to two hours cleaning out the attic and I will not die from it.

Truth: The project will not take months to complete.

Limiting Belief: If I buy the expensive entree that I really want on the menu I may run out of money in the future and not be able to buy any food at all.

(This LB may sound overblown, but this is a reality for many people regarding their beliefs about money- that "there will never be enough.")

Truth: I deserve to treat myself to a special meal, and it is not foolish to do so.

Truth: I am not a frivolous spender, I have never run out of money in the past and I will not run out in the future.

The last step is to list your truths on one sheet of paper and review them every day until they become your new beliefs. These can be called "affirmations," which I will discuss in detail in the next article.

I have never had a client without a whole closet full of limiting beliefs and corresponding truths, including myself. Without the process of flushing out our many limiting beliefs, we are almost like automatons reacting to daily events, people and situations in the same predictable way- over and over. In this way, we are simply products of our past. Remember, what you know to be true is much more powerful and productive than your old beliefs which are based on past history. By shifting our belief structures to what is really true for us, we can start living in a more fulfilling and genuine way.

*Brooke Loening is a life coach in Sharon who works with individuals, and runs weekly coaching groups on achieving growth in career, health and relationships. For more information and previous columns visit [theloeningplan.com](http://theloeningplan.com). Columns can also be found at [tceextra.com](http://tceextra.com)*