

Formation of values & beliefs

Notes to accompany diagram

Within my own life and working with my clients; I have found that change is often helped along when there is more understanding how we develop problems in the first place.

Periods of development

Sociologist Morris Massey has described three major periods during which values are developed.

The Imprint Period (0 – 7 years)

Up to the age of seven, we are like sponges, absorbing everything around us and accepting much of it as true, especially when it comes from our parents.

During this time we absorb information without any analysis. We need to make sense of the world and without any analysis it can be easy for a parent to comment on a child's drawing and joke that it is bad and for the child to take the meaning out of context and believe they are bad.

The Modelling Period (8 – 13 years)

Between the ages of eight and thirteen, we copy people, often our parents, but also other people. Rather than blind acceptance, we are trying on things like suit of clothes, to see how they feel.

We may be much impressed with religion or our teachers.

The Socialization Period (14 – 21 years)

Occurs from the during the ages of 14 to 21. This is where we develop relationship and social values.

After the age of 21 core values do not change unless a significant emotional event occurs or effective coaching / therapy.

Normal values change and grow over time

Formation of Beliefs

Beliefs develop around our values. Beliefs and values have a very powerful affect on your life, because we filter all our information through them. Thus if you develop a belief such as "I am boring", then your mind begins to only see things that confirm this belief.

As children who are we to contest or dispute that if someone says, "you'll never succeed in life", that they are not telling the absolute truth. Children can internalize these ideas and treat them as if they are reality. Each time they try to succeed the little internal programme, "you'll never succeed in life" reminding them that they will never succeed and subtly affecting their behaviour in such a way that success eludes them. So as we go through these developmental stages we begin to form many beliefs around who we are, what life is like, etc. These internal programmes are constantly running affecting every moment of our life.

If you look at the diagram you can see that this leads to a cycle:

What we believe about ourselves forms our THOUGHTS, this creates FEELINGS and leads to BEHAVIOURS which become HABITS – and hey presto confirms the beliefs we had in the first place!

The function of beliefs

The unconscious mind is the part of our mind which controls things such as growth/ repair of the skin, the dilation of the eyes etc. It holds within it our memories and communicates to us with feelings.

It is a very powerful part of our mind. It has been calculated that the unconscious mind deals with up to 2,000,000 bits of information per second. The conscious mind on the other hand can deal with 134 bits per second which translates to 7+ or – 2 chunks.

Your unconscious mind runs your body and your life

Your conscious mind is about 10% of what you are aware of day to day.

Your unconscious mind is the remaining 90% that you are most often not aware of.

Your unconscious mind believes your negative mind chatter

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Taking these figures, it is obvious that the unconscious part of your mind is a very powerful part.

In order not to overload the capacity of the conscious mind, the unconscious mind filters incoming information. The filters that it uses are beliefs, values, memories etc.

The Effects of Beliefs

Beliefs filter the incoming information available to the conscious mind. They act like blinkers that restrict information, blocking out any that is contradictory. They are the mind/ bodies underlying programmes and have a powerful effect on your life. They influence your behaviour often without you realizing it.

But beliefs are not set in stone, they are changeable. When you think about whether you believe something you are merely checking whether you have a feeling of certainty that it is true. Changing a belief that limits a person in their life can have a very powerful effect right across the board. So if a person has a very powerful limiting belief such as, "I'm not worthy". The potential impact of no longer believing this is great.

How can you change beliefs?

There are many techniques that can change beliefs very quickly, these include, NLP-submodality belief change; NLP- Timeline Therapy; EFT™; NLP- reframing; hypnotherapy.

Do you sabotage yourself with criticisms and negative mind chatter?

- Do you catch yourself thinking you are not smart or good enough?
- Do you think you don't deserve good things or it's too hard?
- Are you over-sensitive about what others say or do?

You can start this change now by examining the beliefs you hold about yourself. Simply knowing what holds you back can make a massive difference.

Identify what rules you apply to your life and how well they serve you –these are the beliefs you hold about yourself and this is the area of your life where you may be limiting yourself for no good reason other than you hold a belief 'you cant do that ... because ...'. [Examine beliefs you hold about yourself](#)