

January's Tip: You achieve what you believe.

Last week, "write email newsletter" popped up in my outlook calendar." I can't think of anything to write about" was my immediate response! Which then got me thinking ...

"I can't" is one of those statements that signal a limiting belief. Whether you want to call an "I can't" statement a limiting belief, a negative expectation, an unhelpful idea or just an excuse, it's really up to you. However, the chances are it's sabotaging your success and stopping you achieving.

Limiting beliefs come in all shapes and sizes and appear in all kinds of situations:

- I can't do A because I would be devastated if I failed
- I can't B because I don't have the time
- I can't C because I'm too unfit
- I can't D because I can't afford it
- I can't E because I don't know how

Your mind can be thought of as having two parts – a thinker and a prover. The thinker is incredibly creative and can think pretty much anything. The prover is much more specialised – whatever the thinker thinks, the prover proves.

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A good example of this is when we lose something. Most people have had the experience of misplacing their keys (or some other small item) then frantically searching saying, "I can't find my keys, I can't find my keys". Our brain likes us to remain consistent with the statements we make so, when we say, "I can't find my keys", the brain filters our perception to make the statement true. The keys get deleted from our experience. A simple change to the statement and the emotion, eg relaxing and saying "I can find my keys" is usually enough to locate them in a few moments. (If you don't believe me, try this next time you misplace something).



Exactly the same principle applies with bigger and/or important matters. In the 1940s running a four-minute mile was considered to be beyond the physical limitations of the human body. Roger Bannister achieved it in 1954 (pictured left) and within a few weeks several other runners had broken the so-called "impossible" barrier too – once the limiting belief had been crushed. Now four minutes is the standard for professional middle-distance runners.

Similarly until 1971 women were banned from taking part in marathons as they were not deemed physically strong enough to last the distance. The women's marathon was finally recognised as an Olympic event in 1984. Today Paula Radcliffe holds the world record with an incredible time of 2.15.25!

Try it for yourself now

1. Think of something that you would like to do/achieve/have but that has some kind of "I can't" attached to it.

2. Ask yourself, "What would happen if I could?" and "What would happen if I did?"
3. Feel how you'll feel when you've got what you want. What will you see? What will you hear? Fully experience what "success" will be like. This can start to shift your beliefs about what is possible for you.
4. Take some action to move forward with your goal. (Taking action has the powerful benefit of being able to create a positive "reference experience" for your new, empowering belief.)

Of course you may say, "Ah, but that's possible for other people – wealthy/clever/talented people, but I can't do x, y or z!"

I understand. When other people say they can't do something it's a limiting belief, but the things we believe, they're really true. Aren't they?

Maybe you would like some help in shifting your limiting beliefs – ask us about one to one coaching.

Anyway, back to this newsletter. What would happen if I could write it? What would happen if I did? On reflection I think I've done it!

Who do you know who would like this tip? Help them and us by forwarding the tip on. Thank-you.

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