

Day 4 – Our Mind and Core Beliefs

We hope you found Day 3 useful? Remember, this is all new and it may need a day or two to make sense so please be patient with yourself and keep going. It is also important that you ask for help if you need it; we are here to support you every step of the way.

Today we are going to look at our mind and our core beliefs.

Our Minds:

Do you wonder why you think about what you should not be eating and what exercise you should be doing then when sit on the sofa at night (or during the day) and go for the crisps, or biscuits and think no more about the exercise you should have done today?

Our minds are constantly trying to make sense of our world, forming judgements and opinions about every situation, event, and interaction. Those judgements and opinions will be affected by our core beliefs. It is as though we are looking at the world through distorted or coloured lenses – and everyone has their own personal prescription or colour for their glasses i.e. everybody's view of the world is different.

There are three areas to our mind; the conscious, the subconscious and the unconscious.

Your conscious mind is what most people associate with who you are, because that is where most people live day to day. The conscious mind communicates to the outside world and the inner self through speech, pictures, writing, physical movement, and thought. It is responsible for logic and reasoning. For example, a person who overeats may rationalise his or her actions by saying 'eating lots of chocolate keeps me happy'. The truth is that eating too much chocolate raises the heart rate, causes quick spikes and dips in emotion plus other negative results. All automatic thinking comes from the conscious mind, like moving your hand to pick up a cup or moving your leg to walk. Your conscious mind is powerless to make permanent change in your behaviour, feelings and responses. Willpower is part of our conscious mind; it is temporary. How many times have you tried to change an old habit by using willpower?

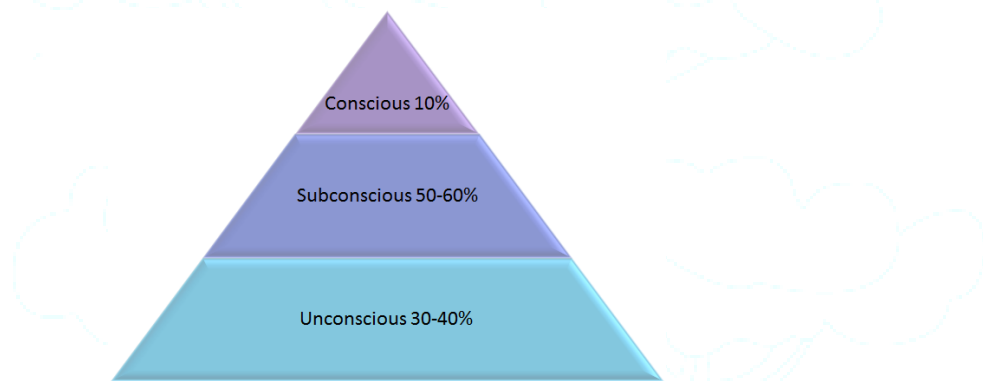
The subconscious mind, on the other hand, stores beliefs, memories and life experiences. The function of the subconscious mind is to store and retrieve data (memories). It does not think or reason independently, it obeys commands received from your conscious mind. You can picture the conscious mind as the

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gardener, planting seeds and the subconscious mind as the garden – in which the seeds grow. Here is another example that will help you understand how the subconscious mind works. If you lack confidence because of certain beliefs that you have about yourself (that are stored in your subconscious mind) then you might start to have negative thoughts about a goal you want to achieve.

The unconscious mind is the storehouse of all memories and past experiences, both those that have been repressed through trauma and those that have simply been consciously forgotten and no longer important to us. It's from these memories and experiences that our beliefs, habits, and behaviours are formed.

Our mind is approximately divided as follows:

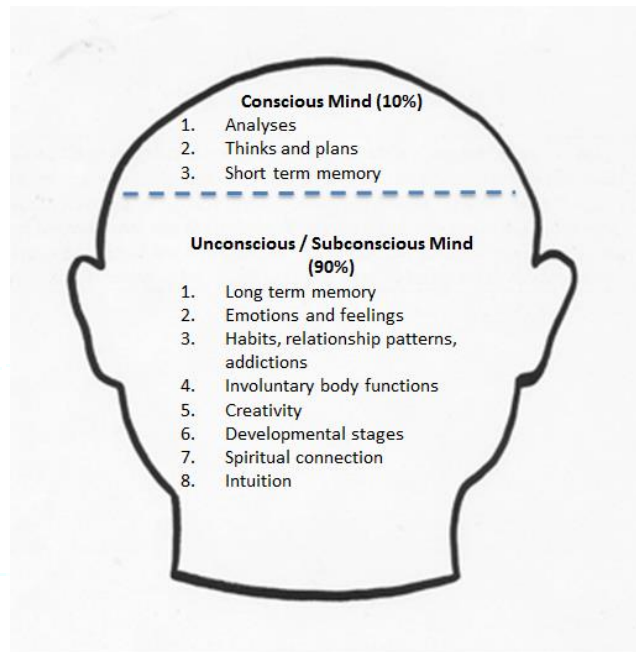


The important fact we wanted to impart today was that ALL LEARNINGS, BEHAVIOURS AND CHANGES ARE DONE AT THE UNCONSCIOUS LEVEL. So, to make any change in your life it needs to be made at the unconscious level.

If you want to affect change in your life at a core level then you will have to work on your programs that are held in the unconscious mind. That is how our habit, behaviours and beliefs are created in the first place. All the tools and techniques we are teaching you on Think Yourself Slim are all about making changes at the unconscious level so they become conscious activities / good habits.

Another thing to learn about the unconscious mind is that it does not process negatives. For example, if you were to have a goal 'I won't eat chocolate anymore' your unconscious mind will ignore the negative. It will take the instruction as 'eat chocolate' because it does not process negatives. More on this over the course of the 10 days.

The following diagram will enable you to reflect more on the functions of our mind:



Our Core Beliefs:

By completing the ABC Log you were able to understand a little about your beliefs. Our core beliefs serve as a basis for screening, categorising and interpreting our experiences. For example 'I'm not good' or 'I'll never do it' or 'effort does not pay off'. These beliefs normally sit outside of our awareness and are often not verbalised.

Our core belief system comprises:

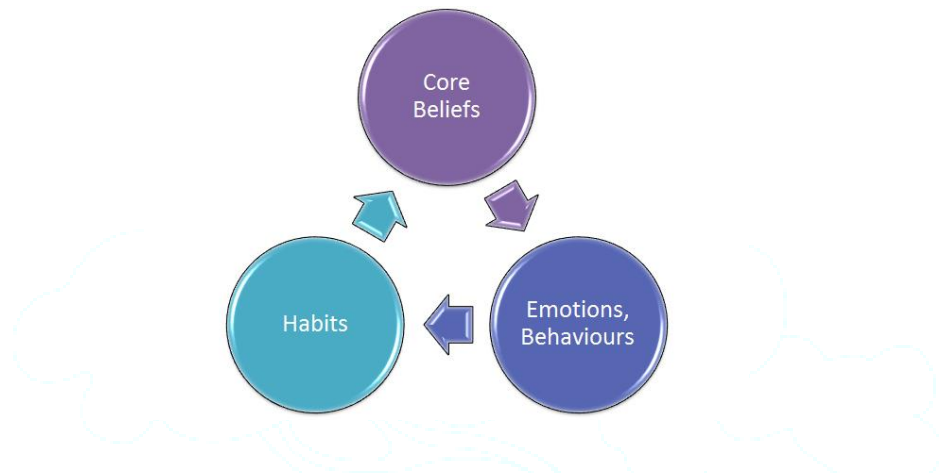
- How I think about myself
- How I think about others
- How I think about the world

Our core belief system is formed and influenced by:

- Past experiences
- Childhood upbringing
- Culture
- Faith
- Values
- Current circumstances
- Character traits, including genetic influences

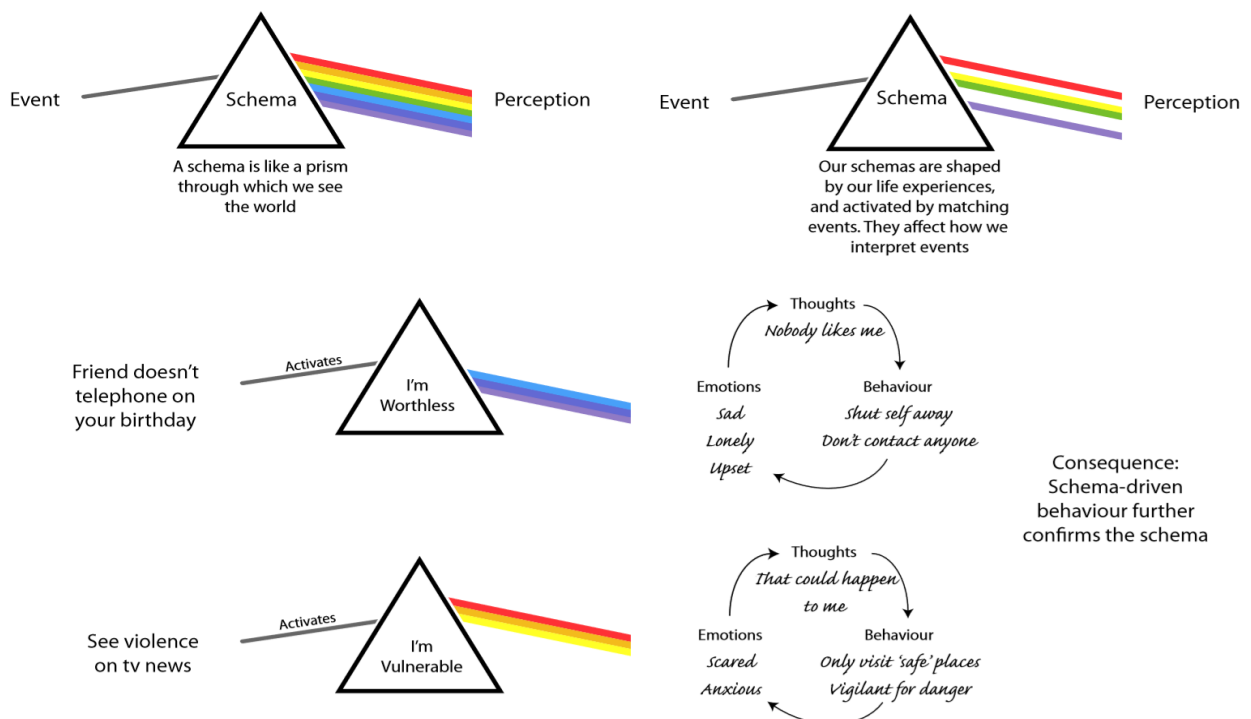
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Our core beliefs impact our emotions / feelings and our behaviours and form habits. Sometimes our habits can be negative and unhelpful.



We all store many core beliefs. This system of core beliefs is termed our schema. Schemas are the mental structures that organise or make sense of our experiences. Schemas are shaped by our life events. Schema focus on early childhood experiences which may have caused lifelong difficulties.

The following diagram further describes our schema (our core beliefs) and how they affect how we interpret events (courtesy of Phycology Tools):



Schema driven behaviour further confirms the schema meaning repetitive thinking creates habits; if we continue to think in this way it becomes a vicious

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cycle and firms up our beliefs even though they could be wrong. If we continue to believe that we are a total failure, then that is what we will get; a belief that we will never achieve what we want. Does that make sense?

We can further demonstrate the connection between our beliefs and thoughts by applying the responses set out in yesterday's example ABC Log as follows:



In the above example the core belief is 'I am a total failure, just like people think I am'.

Our beliefs can be dysfunctional (not helpful) and have a negative consequence on our life. Think Yourself Slim will help you change your erroneous core beliefs and reframe your thoughts so that your emotions and behaviours are more productive.

http://media.wix.com/ugd/fec33e_19a23b4e8af54afb8664894521f01b54.pdf

We would like you to continue with your breathing meditation today and also complete the attached 'Thoughts, Emotions, Behaviours' sheet for all your

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unhelpful thinking. Make sure that you review this sheet with the ABC log issued yesterday. They should be the same, or similar, they are just shown differently to help the information become part of your conscious thinking.

Today we would like you to:

- Continue the breathing meditation
- We suggest you read the information provided today a few times – please let us know if there is anything you don't understand
- Take a look at the attached 'Thoughts, Emotions, Behaviours' document. Is this easier for you to use than the 'ABC Log'? We will provide you with a number of tools that are similar; that way you get to try a number of techniques and use the one you feel helps most

Tomorrow we are going to work on reframing your unhelpful thoughts.

With Love xxxx