



My Healing Program

Perceptions vs Reality

Perceptions

Perceptions can also be referred to as conditioning of the mind.

This is widely understood in psychology as the way our mind is conditioned, either by ourselves or those around us, setting beliefs in our minds, whether true or not. You may have heard of the term 'limiting beliefs'?

1. Limiting beliefs

We tend to take everything said to us by others, or told to ourselves in our minds, as literal and therefore true. The articles we read in magazines, books, social media, the news – we take it all in, believing everything without question (most of the time, for most people).

When we are children, our parents or caregivers tell us things, which we assume to be true. We are taught information by our teachers or sports coaches at school, but is it all true? We leave school and go to university or start working and are told information from lecturers, peers, colleagues, friends..... is everything they say true?

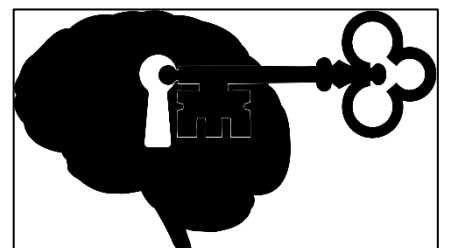
If a teacher tells you that you are useless because you failed an exam, is that true? If a friend tells you they don't want to be friends anymore because you are not cool to hang out with anymore – is that true?

The facts they gave you on the topics being discussed (for example, a teacher), we trust is accurate, as they have been employed on the basis they are experts in their field.

Any comment or statement, however, that they make about you, ***is simply their perception or opinion of you.***

This does not make it true. So, why do we listen to them and believe everything they say?

We believe it because they have meaning in our lives. We trust their opinions. Our belief is, therefore, that everything they say must be correct. Especially with teachers, Doctors, people in positions of authority, they are immediately seen as credible **in all areas** because they are credible in **one or a couple of specific areas** of life. A teacher may be a brilliant teacher and know everything there is to know about the subject they are teaching. This does not, however, mean they are suitably qualified in other areas to make some of the statements they make.



How many instances are you aware of where pupils were told by their teachers that **they would never amount to anything**, but went on to be world-renowned speakers, scientists, doctors and other highly esteemed individuals?

This all seems like bad news. It is not.

Before we proceed with the good news, here is an activity for you to complete.

1.1 Activity

- a) Write two letters – starting with the people who have hurt you or negatively affected you in any way during your life. All those things you have been keeping inside. Now is our opportunity to tell them how they impacted your life. Once completed, read them, let the feelings flow. Then, either tear them up or bury them, (or both), making a conscious choice to let go of everything they meant in your life – the hurt, the disappointment, the sadness, the anger, the resentment.....
- b) Then write two letters to people who have impacted your life positively, who made a difference in how you see them and the world. Once completed, read them, relish in how good they make you feel. You can frame them or keep them somewhere safe to remind yourself every now and then of the good feelings they evoke.

2. Now for the good news!

These are all moments in your life that have made you who you are at this moment. Difficult times have made you stronger; being able to continue despite hardships have made you stronger. Happy times have made you see the bright side of life, encouraging you to keep going through the tough times. All these experiences have made you who you are today.

3. Even better news! Time for a reality check!

The only person who can tell whether any of the negative things done to you or said to you, were right in any sense, is **you**.

YOU have the power to look back and ask yourself whether what you did, said or felt was correct, and if not, to move forward knowing how to deal with the emotions these issues evoked, or how these issues affected your life. Once you have accepted these, you can choose to move forward, seeing your life differently.

You will be empowered to choose what you do with the knowledge these issues brought you and how you can use them positively for your future, helping you make a better life for yourself.