

7 Steps to Find What Will Make You Happy, NOW

By Susan Mayginnnes

Often times we find ourselves in difficult situations where it looks like there is no solution, or no good solution. In those times, we are in a mode of thinking that keeps us “stuck”. As a result, we are unable to see possibilities that may be right in front of us. For example, do the following test: Which one of these numbers is most different from the others? (Don’t read ahead for the answer.)

- 1) 13
- 2) 33
- 3) 31

If you look at these numbers you will see that all of them contain the numbers 1, 3, or a combination of those. That is except for the second line. In the second line is the number 2. Therefore the answer to the riddle is the number two. It is the only even number in the group. Did you consider that number as an option? If not, why not? The answer is probably that the number two was behind a parenthesis. So why didn’t you consider that an option? Because you *learned* that the number behind the parenthesis “doesn’t count.” Where did you learn this? Probably in school. The result is that although you learned that in school for tests and other things, that rule was not applicable in this situation. You just *assumed* it was. So because of your learned assumptions, half of your options were not available to you. So how many other things in the world are not available to you, not because they aren’t available, but because you *believe* they are not. How many possibilities are not available to you simply because you can’t see them because you are “blinded” by your own beliefs and assumptions?

When facing a challenge, ask yourself these questions:

1. How would I like it to be ideally, regarding this issue?
When you answer this question let go of all limits you place on it. Go for “ideal.” What would be an ideal outcome or situation? Allow yourself to really envision this and tell the truth to yourself about it. Notice that all ideas of what is or isn’t possible exist in the mental dialogue. You actually won’t know until you move toward it.
2. What thoughts, ideas, beliefs come up for me and get in my way when I consider this possibility?
Write down all of your negative thoughts. Capture them on paper. Most of the time these thoughts just float around in our minds and disguise themselves as “the truth”. In fact they are nothing more than thoughts. It is important to get them out of your head and onto paper where you can actually see them objectively.
3. Look at each one of the thoughts that you wrote down and ask yourself: Can I absolutely know that this thought is “the truth” about it? Is it empirically true?

Answer “yes” or “no” for each one. No “half” answers. Commit to a yes or no. I know it “feels true” but is it actually true?

4. Now look at these written thoughts again and ask yourself: From whom did I learn this?
Hint: Look at your family of origin first – did your parents or other people close to you have beliefs like this about themselves or the world? About you? Notice that these thoughts and ideas are not even “yours” – in other words, they are not your creation. You *learned* them, the same way you *learned* that the numbers behind the parenthesis “don’t count.” As children (and later as adults) we confuse what we learned with what is actually true.
5. Ask yourself: Are these thoughts still relevant or useful? Do I really want to keep any of them? How do these ideas make me feel? Do these thoughts bring me happiness or unhappiness?
Notice that the source of unhappiness and distress is located primarily in our thoughts about our situation, rather than the situation itself.
6. Imagine for a moment that nothing had changed about your situation except for one thing: you no longer believed these learned ideas. What action would you take if you no longer believed these old, outdated ideas? Make a list of actions that are available to people who don’t have these ideas.
7. Now choose which action step you will take toward resolving your situation. Commit to a date and time by when you will do that.
Take action!