

# Learn to be Luckier!

## Lesson 3: Lucky People Choose their Beliefs Wisely.

**W**e all have beliefs but it is the fortunate amongst us that realise we have a choice about what to believe.



Our survival depends on the beliefs we use to interpret our existence and interaction with our environment. Most of us learn to adopt beliefs that will protect us from harm physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Based on the survival mechanism which warns us to avoid pain and attract pleasure, we tend to refrain from harbouring beliefs that cause us pain and we embrace beliefs that give us pleasure.

Can you remember the first belief that you articulated in your life? It was probably soon after you started to formulate ideas about the world in which you found yourself as a small child. Beliefs are ideas supported by evidence that gives them validity. This evidence may be your own personal experience or the experience of people that you trust (either because you love them or because they are credible authorities).

Thus, our childhood beliefs are shaped by our family, friends, teachers and information that we absorb from our environment. In adulthood, our beliefs are shaped by our complex interpretation of the information we absorb through interaction and communication with our environment.

We determine our own rules about whether to believe something or not. For example, lawyers need much more factual evidence to support a belief than psychics who rely on intuition.

If you consider your most important beliefs; beliefs that support your existence and survival, what evidence do you have to uphold these beliefs? Is your evidence based on personal experiences; the influence of education you have received; your intuition; your faith? Are there beliefs that you hold dearly that have no evidence whatsoever to support them?

Lucky people often express beliefs that have no evidence to support them. There are countless stories of people that have miraculously survived circumstances, beyond belief. They experienced an extraordinary reality; a reality without logical or rational evidence to support it. For example, a child may dream of going to university even though there is not a single member of their family that can read or write.

Although the available evidence suggests that their goal is impossible, they hold on to their belief, supported only by their own intangible faith. The cherished belief gives them tremendous pleasure and enables them to overcome painful obstacles until they accomplish the goal they believed in despite the odds.

Whatever we choose to believe, we will always find evidence to prove that we or those that we love and respect, are right. Psychologists call this phenomenon a “self-fulfilling prophecy”. If we believe we are lucky, we will create supporting situations; on the other hand, if we believe we are unlucky, we will interpret events to highlight all that is unfavourable, hence confirming the accuracy of our judgment.

Our beliefs have an impact on our behaviour, our emotions and our well-being in general. If we believe that life is dangerous, we will behave pessimistically, our actions being driven by fear. If we believe that we are lucky and fortunate, smiles will appear on our face effortlessly and there will be a bounce in our heels that stimulates our vitality and love of life. The response we receive to our manner of interaction provides lots of evidence that we are indeed very lucky. And the cycle continues.

Using the knowledge that beliefs are merely representations of the truth, not the absolute truth, lucky people are not attached rigidly to protecting their own beliefs. They are more committed to nurturing their values instead of beliefs. If the belief does not guide them to develop what they value in life, they discard it, like an inaccurate set of directions that fails to take them to the desired destination.

For example, a traditional person with very strong family values will keep their family together by modifying or letting go of various beliefs in order to adapt to the new lifestyle of their younger generation. Moreover, wise, lucky people create new beliefs to strengthen their family relationships, filling their lives with priceless values. In contrast, unlucky people lose the closeness of their family members, hanging on miserably to their heartless, unrewarding beliefs, constantly expecting life to present evidence that supports their self-righteousness.

### **Exercise 3:**

What kind of beliefs are steering your life?

Which of your beliefs supports your purpose in life?

Which of your beliefs are false, outdated or disempowering for you?

How often do you live life with an extraordinary expectancy of good fortune that is beyond belief?