



HOW TO COACH YOURSELF

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EXERCISE 1: SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

1. Why did you sign up to attend this workshop?

2. How do you want to define success for yourself today?

3. What will you do today to make sure you show up to create that success?

4. What is an area of your life where you'd like to focus your work today?

This can be a specific relationship (like your boss or your mom), an overall area (like improving your body image or making more money), or a thought pattern you're aware of already (like negative thoughts about your ability to find a partner or about the partner you have).

THE SELF-COACHING MODEL

THOUGHTS create FEELINGS create ACTIONS create RETURNS (our self-outcomes).

Your thoughts are your interpretations of circumstances and your beliefs about the world.

Thoughts are generally phrases or sentences, but can also be images.

They are the way that your brain makes meaning and constructs an understanding of the world around it.

Estimates are that we have up to 60,000 thoughts a day.

Luckily we only need to change a fraction of those thoughts to dramatically improve our lives.

Self-coaching is the practice of becoming aware of our thoughts, feelings, actions and outcomes — and changing those things on purpose.

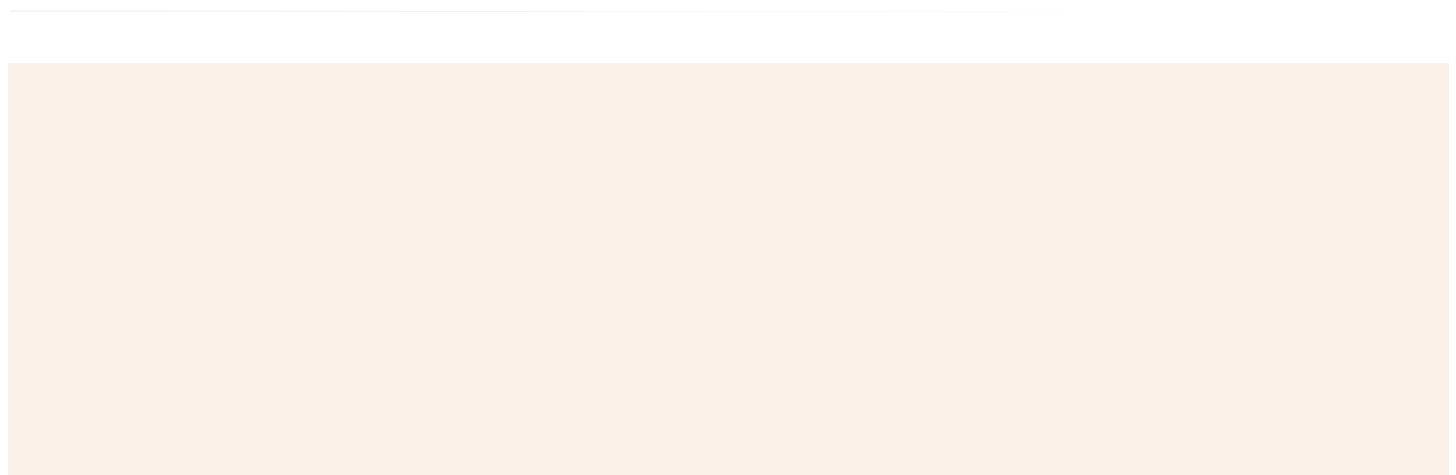
EXERCISE 2: THOUGHT DOWNLOAD

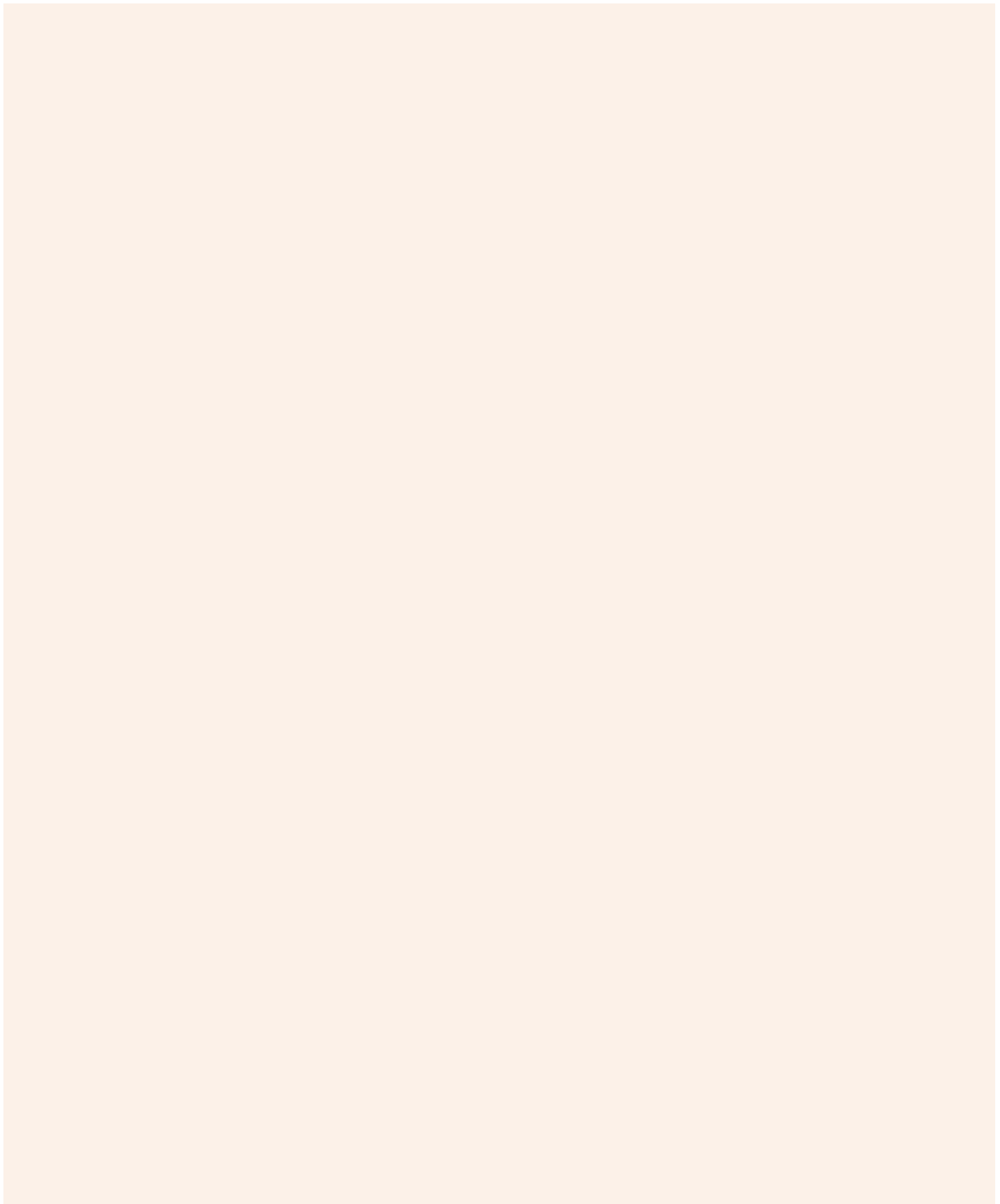
Most of us are not aware of most of our thinking.

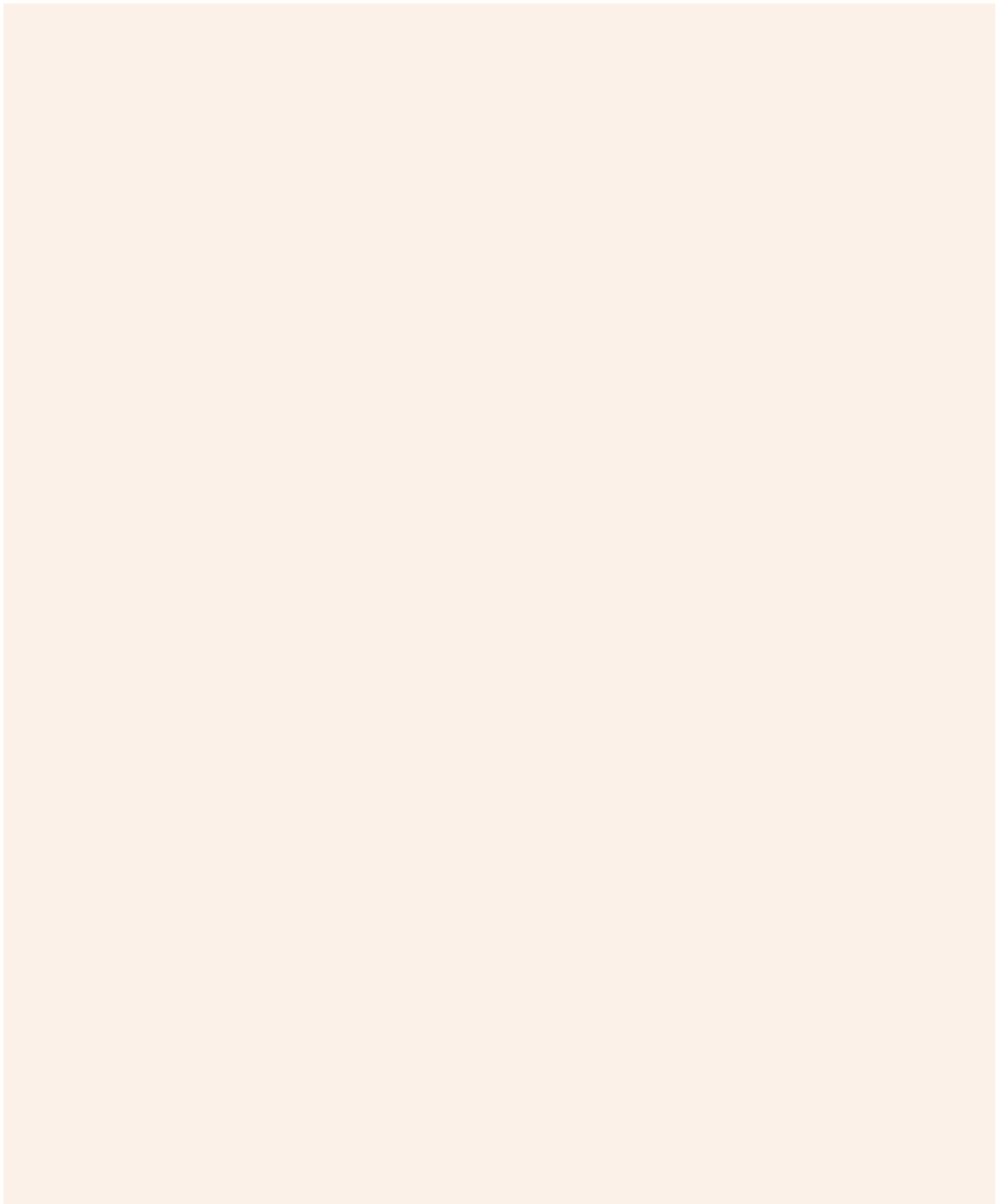
So the first step to coaching ourselves is to become aware of what we are thinking.

Write down all the thoughts that come to mind about the area you chose to work on today. Try not to edit or judge yourself. No one will see this. This is a chance to tell yourself the truth about what goes through your brain. If your brain says “I don’t know” then just write “I don’t know” until something else comes out. You’ll be surprised what will surface.

If you start judging what you are writing, you can tell yourself “My thoughts are just electrical signals in my brain. They do not mean anything about me.”







EXERCISE 3: THOUGHTS CREATE FEELINGS

For the purposes of this self-coaching model, I define a feeling (aka an emotion) as a set of sensations in the body.

There are different models of how thoughts and feelings interact in the brain.

The model I use to help me coach myself is derived from cognitive behavioral theory. It posits that our thoughts create our feelings.

So our brain has a thought, and then that thought triggers a release of neurochemicals and creates the sensations in our body that we call a “feeling” (or an emotion).

It may often seem experientially as if the feeling comes first. That is because we are more aware of our feelings than of our thoughts, since the feelings manifest as physical sensations in our bodies.

(Even when we truly cannot find a thought that seems to have caused a feeling, we almost always then have a thought about the feeling we are having. For instance, we may feel sad and then think that we should not be sad, or we need to get rid of the feeling, or we don’t want to be sad. Those are all thoughts about the emotion in our bodies.)

For this exercise, we are going to practice connecting a feeling to a thought so we can teach our brains to start making these connections.

Take up to 10 thoughts from your thought download you did in Exercise 2 — make sure that each thought is just a phrase. Most whole sentences have multiple thoughts in them. For instance let’s say you wrote this in your thought download: “I feel like I’m never going to find a partner because I’m getting too old and the people I want to date prefer someone younger.”

That is three thoughts.

Thought 1: I feel like I’m never going to find a partner.

Thought 2: I’m getting too old.

Thought 3: The people I want to date prefer someone younger.

So each one should be listed separately.

Read each thought on its own to yourself and then write down anything you can notice in your body when you recite that thought to yourself. You might be able to name an emotion (anger, sadness, happiness etc.) or you may just write down notes on physical sensations (pit in stomach, tightness in chest, etc.).

	THOUGHT	FEELING
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

EXERCISE 4: FEELINGS DRIVE ACTIONS

If you've ever wondered why you act a certain way — or have a hard time acting the way you want — today's the day you'll understand yourself better.

Because what drives your actions and your inactions are your emotions.

Your feelings motivate what you do and what you don't do. Those feelings are often caused by your unconscious thoughts. That's why it can seem so confusing that you don't do something you believe you want to — because you're not aware of the subconscious thoughts creating unconscious emotions blocking the action. Or similarly, why it's so hard to stop taking certain actions you want to stop taking — because your subconscious thoughts and feelings are what is driving them.

The first step in self-coaching is becoming aware of what you're thinking.

The second step is connecting those specific thoughts to specific emotions.

The third step is connecting those specific emotions to actions or inactions.

While we want every thought line to be just one phrase or idea and every emotion line to be just one emotion or set of sensations, your actions and inactions for a given thought-feeling pair can include multiple things you do or don't do. In fact, the "meatier" you can make the action/inaction section, the more insight you'll get into your behavior and how it's impacting your life.

Take 3 of your thought-feeling pairs from Exercise 3. For each one, write down as much as you can think of for what you do and what you don't do when you have that thought and feeling. Some of the actions/inactions may be directly related to the thought and feeling. But some of them may be things you do or don't do when you are trying to avoid an uncomfortable emotion generally.

For instance, if your thought is "I'm bad at posting about my business on social media" and your feeling when you think that thought is shame, there might be some obvious actions/inactions that are directly related — like you scroll and compare yourself to people who do post, and you don't post on your own feed. But there may also be actions/inactions you do to generally avoid negative emotion, like numb yourself out with food, or booze, or Netflix. And there are "opportunity cost" inactions, like you don't study how to be better at social media, or you don't actually investigate what your brain means and choose your beliefs on purpose. Let your imagination really brainstorm on what you do/don't do when you think and feel a certain way, it's not a right or wrong answer binary.

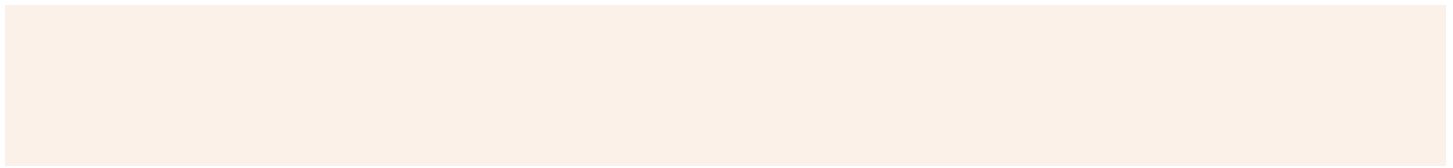
Thought/Feeling Pair 1:

Actions/inactions that result from that thought/feeling pair:

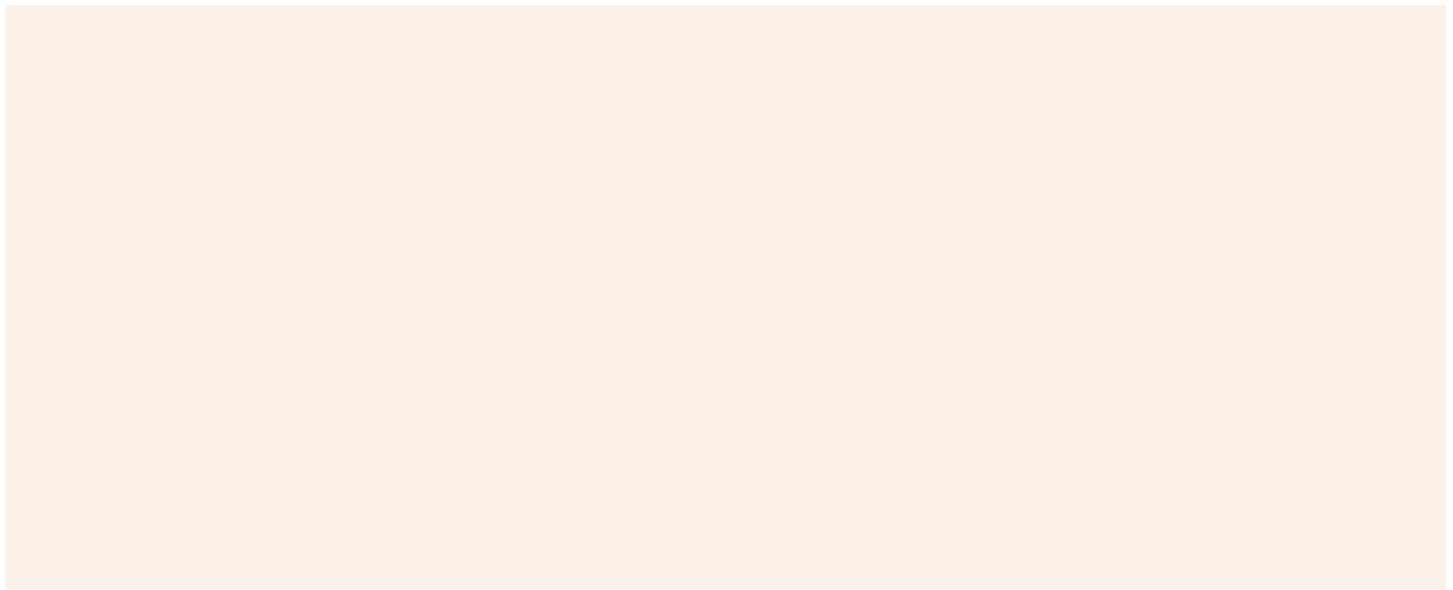
Thought/Feeling Pair 2:

Actions/inactions that result from that thought/feeling pair:

Thought/Feeling Pair 3:



Actions/inactions that result from that thought/feeling pair:



EXERCISE 5: ACTIONS CREATE RETURNS (AKA HOW WE IMPACT OUTCOMES)

Our actions/inactions do not take place in a vacuum. They interact with our circumstances and impact the outcomes that we can create for ourselves and in the larger world.

I call these outcomes our “returns” — because we are always investing our mental and emotional time and energy in one thought pattern or another. Some thought patterns produce negative returns on investment, and some produce positive returns on investment.

Self-coaching is how we learn to better control the outcomes in our life by understanding the mechanism behind our returns. When we know how to trace thoughts to feelings to actions to returns, we become better able to see what we can and cannot control — and we become better able to create what we want.

Understanding and articulating our “returns” is an art, not a science. This is an advanced skill, and many coaches simply don’t even teach it. But I believe it’s crucial to see how your actions interact with the world around you because that is the sum of your impact on your own life and the world. So I teach it, even though it’s a more complicated skill to learn.

You will get better and better at this the more you practice. It is not like getting a question right on a test. It is more similar to writing an English paper than doing a math problem. It is an interpretive exercise.

Your return almost always mirrors your thought in some profound way. The brain is a pattern-making machine, that is its highest aspiration, always — to make sense out of chaos, to create a pattern out of whatever data it finds lying around. And the brain loves to be right. So when we believe something, we unconsciously take actions to prove ourselves true.

Take each of your three thought-feeling-action/inaction sets from the previous exercise. For each one, try to come up with anywhere from 1-3 ways of articulating the returns that you are getting from that investment of mental and emotional time and energy. In other words, how are those thought-feeling-action/inaction chains impacting the outcomes you're able to create or contribute to?

Important note: Your returns should always focus on you and your own life. We don't control other people's thoughts, feelings, or behavior — free will is pesky like that!

When we put together the thought-feeling-action and return, we call this the self-coaching "model." You can re-write the thought, feeling, and actions/inactions here, or just refer back to the previous exercise.

Model 1:

Thought:

Feeling:

Actions/Inactions:

Return:

Model 2:

Thought:

Feeling:

Actions/Inactions:

Return:

Model 3:

Thought:

Feeling:

Actions/Inactions:

Return:

EXERCISE 6: CREATING A NEW MODEL

Part of the genius of self-coaching is that it is like an x-ray of your life. It shows you how your brain is thinking thoughts that drive you to take actions/inactions that create more evidence for your thoughts. Usually all of that is invisible to us.

Self-coaching makes it visible and once we see it, we can change it.

We do that by reverse-engineering the self-coaching model. We start with the feeling, action, or return that we want, and then we work backwards to figure out what we would need to believe to produce those feelings, actions, or outcomes.

Take one of your models from the previous exercise. When you think about this problem or area of your life, what do you wish your current reality looked like? What do you wish you felt, or did, or had as an outcome?

Put whatever came to mind in the appropriate line — whether an emotion, an action/inaction, or a return.

Now work backwards to fill in the rest of the model.

Thought:

Feeling:

Actions/Inactions:

Return:

How do you come up with new thoughts to believe?

I'm so glad you asked.

That is exactly the next skill you need to learn in order to change your life.

And it's what we teach exclusively inside my members-only coaching experience, The Feminist Self-Help Society.

How to Coach Yourself participants currently have exclusive access to a huge time-limited bonus offer:

Join The Feminist Self-Help Society today and unlock two of our life and brain-changing courses for the price of one.

When you join right now you'll unlock our Feminist Mindset Fix, which teaches you how to come up with new thoughts and how to build your belief in them step-by-step so you actually rewire your brain to believe new things naturally.

And only right now, if you join us while on this training, you'll also get to unlock a specific course of your choosing on topics like money mindset, time management and productivity, sex, romantic relationships, family, social anxiety, dating, body image, building habits, and more.

Plus you'll get instant access to The Encyclopedia of New Thoughts, a huge searchable list of brand new thoughts you can borrow for any area of your life.

But hurry — you'll need to use this special link, and you'll need to sign up within an hour after the training ends today to get all of these bonuses!

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