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Short Article

Designing our Experience: We have a Lot More Control than we "Think"

Does what you believe have a direct effect upon your life? And do your beliefs support your goals and intentions for your life? Or, is deciding what to believe a dilemma? Is it easier to skirt that dilemma and accept the patchwork of indoctrination, conformity-pressure and "should-be's" that growing up dishes out?

The tendency of our brains to focus upon the stimuli that seems to make sense of our world (and to ignore evidence to the contrary) advances and ingrains our beliefs.

Our experience of "reality" is built upon the concepts and constructs that we believe to be real. What is real may or may not be the same for everyone. Hint: it isn't.

Even witnesses to the same event relate their experiences of that event differently. And descriptions of the same event or the same item vary when speakers of different languages try to explain them. A Random, Un-Planned Process? Beliefs seem to be randomly created and randomly reinforced by events and environmental stimuli. Belief development seems to be left to chance, unless you view beliefs as a byproduct of social indoctrination that is fostered (foisted upon?) in a noble attempt to socialize our young people.

Such beliefs seem idiosyncratic and out of reach of normal change methods, or are they?

So, what role do teachers play in ensuring that the indoctrination and belief-creation process at work in our schools is effective.

And, what control can teachers exert upon the belief structure of their students, and upon their own belief structures? Are teachers ensuring that their personal and instructional reality supports positive, worthwhile, self-affirming goals and intentions?

Sidebar Fantasies are experiences that we believe are not real. We relegate these experiences to the realm of the imaginative, to dreams and to daydreams.

The question is, "What is our personal reality" since events and occurrence are filtered by our beliefs.

One concern develops when one of our beliefs conflicts with another of our beliefs. Sometimes one belief cancels out another, similar to the way that one ripple on a pond's surface cancels another ripple. At other times, our beliefs can coincide, and increase the strength of one or both. Other possibilities … beliefs in conflict that: Eliminate one belief
Eliminates both beliefs

Transforms one belief

Transforms both beliefs

Subsume one belief within another

Merge with yet another belief or set of beliefs

Beliefs are more fluid and malleable than we have been conditioned to assume.

Why Beliefs are Important to Teachers? Beliefs are important to teachers because teachers are in the business of changing thoughts, ideas, behaviors, skills and beliefs.

Of course, it may be "politically incorrect" for a teacher to admit that the primary job of a teacher is to influence change, and teachers have to step gingerly whenever the subject of religion rears its "censoring, ugly head."

Education must rely on the open-ended ability to ask questions, tough questions, hard to answer questions, questions that don't have a pat, politically correct, or status-quo stake in our educational bureaucracies.

A fair and inclusive dialog must examine our educational (and our personal) realities. Real questions must be answered. For example: How do we change, fix, repair or adjust beliefs that server to limit our success (a disservice to ourselves and our students)?

How do we change beliefs that we don't even realize the we have?

How do we separate beliefs from religion, ethics, morals and values?

How do we change the beliefs of students in an ethical and moral way, especially if students and parents state that they don't want the religion and values of these students tampered with?

Can verbal communication (the main tool that teachers have to work with in changing the behavior and beliefs of students) really change the beliefs of ourselves and others? Making the Unseen and Hidden Known A body of knowledge and skills for changing beliefs, often at an almost instant pace is available using a technology known as Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).

This technology relies upon the fact that beliefs are moderated by sensory-mental processes, and that tampering with these processes can produce change and transformation … rather quickly.

Some of the NLP magic can be worked upon ourselves, but many of the belief-transforming processes require the help of others. We often need the help of others because we experience difficulty peering through our beliefs. Otherwise, pulling off the change and transformation process is easy.

Dissecting your Sensory/ Mental Processing Framework

The skills and steps of NLP Belief change are beyond the scope of this short article, however, Classroom Toolkit will investigate this topic in upcoming articles.

In the meantime, pay attention to the mental pictures, self-talk, and internal sensations that seem to be connected in some way to your beliefs. And, focus upon your self-limiting beliefs because you have need to tamper with beliefs that are delivering success and prosperity to you and your students.

Just remember that your internal processing power was designed for success. You can make changes that transform your beliefs, and these changes can appear to be magic.

Pay attention to your limits, and you quickly encounter what "limits you."

More likely than not, that which limits you is within yourself. Don't put up with believing that your barriers to self-actualization come from outside.

Do you have the courage to take charge and design your experience?

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