

The Mind-Body Link: Working With Beliefs and Body

A guide to using your thoughts and beliefs to manage stress

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Using the

The Mind-Body Link: Working With Beliefs and Body

Workbook

Every role comes with its own pressures.
We don't experience stress as long as we feel we can cope.

How you feel at any given moment is shaped by three things working together:

- what you believe,
- what you say to yourself,
- what your body is doing.

You can act at any point in that loop to create change.

If you change what you believe - about you or the situation, what you say to yourself, or change what you're doing - a slow deep breath can shift so much - any one of them moves the others too.

This lesson explains the levers and how to use them.

These are my reflections

.....

on ___ /___ /_____

Beliefs, Words, Body, Feelings

What you believe about yourself or a situation shapes the words you use with yourself — the self-talk running in the background whether we feel it's a prod from our inner critic or simply a reflection on life.
Often those thought patterns are habitual and unquestioned.

That self-talk drives your behaviour. Your behaviour, and your physical state, feed back into how you feel.

For example, spilling coffee from a cup:

Does that spark thoughts of "That was stupid, why did you do that?",
Would it feel different if your first thoughts were:
"Let me get a cloth and catch that quickly".

The difference here isn't trivial.
That first pattern likely sets you up for a day where things feel hard "because you're stupid and you do stuff like that".

The alternative here is seeing yourself calmly solving problems without fuss.



None of this is fixed.
You can enter the beliefs-words-body loop at any stage.
The simplest place to start is usually the one that feels least like "work":

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Making changes...

Imagine you've arrived at the office mildly stressed. You made the journey through heavy traffic, arrived barely in time for an important meeting and, before you enter the room you catch your reflection...

You look tense, rushed, unprepared.



You pause for a second,
stand up straight,
take a breath,
shake your shoulders.

A smile comes to your lips.

That's better.

You're ready now.

Notice how that shifts how you feel.

This isn't about faking positivity, pretending. It's a physical re-setting.

If you notice that you're starting to feel the stress, break that cycle. Reset.

Recognise that our physiology is one of the fastest, reliable levers we have — available in a corridor, before a meeting, before sitting down to work or opening your inbox.

Changing habitual thoughts and words:

- I hate this → I can do hard stuff
- This will take forever → I'll work for 30 minutes
- I'm not good enough for this → I'm learning what I need
- I don't know where to start → I'll start with three bullet points
- This has to be perfect → This needs to be good enough to move forward.

What changes if you choose realistic though more constructive ways of thinking?

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Changing your beliefs

Beliefs are the often hidden assumptions underneath the words we use.
“If I'm finding this hard, I'm not cut out for it”.

This belief sets us up for failure.

If we work hard, try hard, invest effort in learning and developing the skill needed to do the job well... it proves we don’t deserve to be doing it.

Really? Is that true?

What if

- you were given this task because it was hard,
- working hard at this is what doing it well looks like,
- it would have been given to someone more junior/with less experience if it was easy!

Anxious, stressed people often believe that the situation is dangerous, difficult and painful and they lack the resources to cope.

What evidence can you find to challenge these unhelpful beliefs?

- Is this really a life-threatening/career-changing situation?
- Have you coped with something similarly challenging before?
- What resources do you have?
- What resources do you need - where could you get them?



Remind yourself:

- learning is a process,
- other people had to learn too,
- taking a break is a wise use of resources

The words you need, the shifts that will help you
all need to be shaped by the situation you find yourself in.

Explore your options, what could you think that might help?

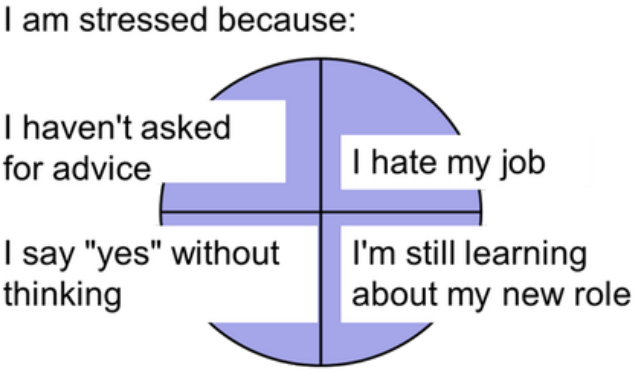
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Re-Writing Your Scripts

Our internal biology and behaviour can change when we give different meanings to the feelings that we have.

If you're feeling stressed at work, what might be true about your situation? Can you consider alternative perspectives?



Which alternative helps you move forward?

Other possibilities can open more constructive options for making changes.

How can you manage your situations more effectively?

- See the positive meaning behind your choices.
- Choose a perspective that helps you make more helpful choices.
- Negotiate, or set a boundary.

Choose a situation where you are struggling or feeling stressed...

- What do you currently believe about this?
- What do you actually say to yourself about it, in your own words?
- What alternative perspectives might help you?
- Would a physical reset help you here?

Note: These tools help you adapt to genuine pressure and recover from it. They aren't designed to help you accept conditions that shouldn't be tolerated.

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Reflections

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WANT MORE?



Beliefs, words and body all feed each other.
You don't need to master all three at once — one small, deliberate change in any of them is enough to shift the loop.

Start by catching some of your habitual negative thoughts and craft more positive alternatives.

Notice the signals your body and posture are sending, to you and to others...
Choose the way you want to feel.

I hope this content has been useful.
If you know you need more, do reach out to me.
I'd love to hear from you.

You can always explore the other resources on my website.

MargaretCollins.com/

Resources

Let me know how you get on!

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