

Beliefs Drive BEHAVIORS



Every behavior has something pulling it. Like a train traveling along a track, our choices are driven by beliefs about ourselves, others, God, and the world around us. Some are rooted in truth; others mix truth with assumptions, experiences, and conclusions that shape how we see and respond to life.



The Belief Train helps us trace behavior back to what is driving it. Each car represents an element that shapes what we believe and influences what follows. Examining the cars helps us uncover the beliefs beneath our choices.

**If you want to change the BEHAVIOR,
follow the train back to the BELIEF.**



Beliefs Drive Behaviors

One person hears an insult while the person standing next to them hears a challenge. The difference is not the situation. It is what each person believes.

Beliefs are formed over a lifetime through experiences, family, culture, and relationships. Some are grounded in truth. Others develop as protection during painful or threatening experiences. While those beliefs may have helped you survive in the past, they may now be limiting your ability to experience the abundant life God desires for you.

Think about times when you felt hurt, rejected, criticized, or afraid. Your brain adapted by finding ways to stay safe. Perhaps becoming aggressive protected you from being hurt. Perhaps withdrawing, people-pleasing, or avoiding conflict felt safer. Over time, those responses became automatic patterns that your brain stored for future situations.



Today, you may continue drawing from those same patterns without realizing it. What once served as protection may now be harming your relationships, limiting your growth, and keeping you stuck. The good news is that learned behaviors can be relearned.

The first principle of the Next Wise Choice framework is that our beliefs drive our behaviors. The train above illustrates the process your brain moves through during every experience, often in less than a split second.

Many people assume emotions come first. They don't. Emotions are the result of what we believe to be true about a situation. Those beliefs determine what makes us vulnerable, which shapes our thoughts. Our thoughts become assumptions, assumptions create expectations, expectations influence our attitude, and our attitude gives rise to our emotions. Those emotions then signal the body, preparing us to respond with a behavior.

When you face disappointment, conflict, or uncertainty, what story are you telling yourself? Is it based on truth, or on old experiences that taught you how to survive? If the story is built on outdated beliefs, your reactions will often repeat old patterns.

This ability to form new ways of thinking is called neuroplasticity. God designed the brain with the remarkable capacity to learn, change, and grow. As you become aware of the beliefs operating beneath the surface, you gain the opportunity to replace them with truth and begin responding in healthier ways.

Take a few moments to identify three to five limiting beliefs that regularly influence your thoughts and choices. The next page includes common examples to help you get started. As you listen to your mind, body, and heart, you'll begin uncovering the hidden beliefs that have quietly shaped your behaviors for years. Those discoveries become the starting point for lasting transformation.

As you move through this month, use the train to trace your reactions back to their source. Identifying the beliefs beneath your behaviors allows you to replace limiting patterns with truth and cultivate a life that bears good fruit.

BELIEFS

COMMON *Limiting Beliefs*



Beliefs develop over time to help us survive.
But some beliefs keep us stuck from living life abundantly.



How to Use This List

Read the beliefs below and notice which ones sound familiar.
Mark the ones that resonate with you. Add others you discover.



I MUST PROTECT MYSELF

- The world is unsafe.
- I can't trust easily.
- If I let my guard down, I will get hurt.
- It's safer to expect the worst.



I AM NOT ENOUGH

- I am not good enough.
- I don't measure up to the standards of others.
- I'm not as valuable as others.
- I need to prove my worth.



IT'S MY FAULT

- I always mess things up.
- I easily feel guilty for everything not being okay.
- I should have known or done better.
- I am responsible when others are not okay.



I NEED APPROVAL

- I am nervous if others don't like me.
- I avoid disapproval.
- I put others before myself.
- I feel better when others like me.



IT'S NOT SAFE TO FEEL

- My feelings are too much.
- I should keep my emotions to myself.
- Showing emotions is a weakness.
- I must stay in control.



I MUST BE IN CONTROL

- I must plan for everything.
- I can't let others take the lead.
- I should be able to handle it all.
- It's not safe to depend.



THE WORLD OWES ME

- I deserve more than I have.
- If I'm good, things will go my way.
- Life's not fair.
- People should treat me differently.



IT'S NOT SAFE TO DREAM

- I will just get discouraged.
- I'll probably fail.
- Big dreams are for other people.
- It's safer not to try in case I fail.



CHANGE CAN'T HAPPEN

- People should know this is just how I am.
- I've tried before and failed.
- It's just too hard to really change.
- People don't really change.

Your Turn



List 3 - 5 limiting beliefs you find yourself regularly operating from:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



UNDERSTANDING MY *Limiting Beliefs*

Limiting Beliefs I am Discovering Inner Dialogues That Drain Me	Strength 1 = Barely influences me 5 = Strongly influences me	Age of Belief Earliest age I recall hearing this message
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	
	○○○○○	

DIGGING INTO MY LIMITING BELIEFS

When does this voice show up?

What tends to trigger it?

- ☐ When I make a mistake
- ☐ When someone criticizes me
- ☐ When I fail
- ☐ When someone doesn't respond
- ☐ When I compare myself
- ☐ When I have to ask for help
- ☐ When conflict happens
- ☐ When I try something new
- ☐ When I receive a compliment
- ☐ When I make a difficult decision
- ☐ When I feel left out
- ☐ When I disappoint someone
- ☐ When someone sets a boundary
- ☐ When I have to say "no"
- ☐ When I feel out of control
- ☐ When things don't go as planned
- ☐ When I feel overwhelmed
- ☐ When I need to trust God
- ☐ When I feel lonely
- ☐ When I have a chance to grow
- ☐ When I think about the past
- ☐ When I worry about the future
- ☐ When I see others succeed
- ☐ When I face rejection
- ☐ When I feel physically tired
- ☐ When I'm in a season of change
- ☐ Other: _____

This belief shows up in...

Where do I see its influence?

- ☐ Receiving love or encouragement
- ☐ Trying new things or taking risks
- ☐ My relationship with God
- ☐ Marriage or dating
- ☐ Parenting
- ☐ Friendships
- ☐ Work or career
- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Physical health
- ☐ Emotional well-being
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Setting boundaries
- ☐ Handling conflict
- ☐ Trusting others
- ☐ My view of myself
- ☐ Asking for help
- ☐ My prayer life
- ☐ My ability to rest
- ☐ My confidence
- ☐ My self-worth
- ☐ My view of myself
- ☐ My future
- ☐ My communication with others
- ☐ Managing stress
- ☐ Following through on goals
- ☐ Responding to failure
- ☐ Responding to success
- ☐ Other: _____

My behavior with this belief:

How do I typically respond?

- ☐ Withdraw or isolate
- ☐ Avoid difficult conversations
- ☐ Become defensive
- ☐ People please
- ☐ Apologize excessively
- ☐ Overthink or overanalyze
- ☐ Assume the worst
- ☐ Seek reassurance from others
- ☐ Work harder to prove myself
- ☐ Become a perfectionist
- ☐ Try to control the situation
- ☐ Become critical of myself
- ☐ Become critical of others
- ☐ Shut down emotionally
- ☐ Become anxious or fearful
- ☐ Numb with TV, social media, food, shopping, etc.
- ☐ Stay busy to avoid thinking about it
- ☐ Give up too quickly
- ☐ Compare myself to others
- ☐ Push people away
- ☐ Hide my thoughts or feelings
- ☐ Don't set healthy boundaries
- ☐ Overreact emotionally
- ☐ Keep everything inside
- ☐ Other: _____

CHALLENGING MY LIMITING BELIEFS

Every belief began as a seed.

Before you can replace it, you must
recognize what has been growing.



Identify the top three beliefs
that are associated with your
efforts to accomplish your
Deep Root Goal.

What would happen if this
belief lost its influence over
you and was replaced by a
new belief?

1

2

3

***Use the “Belief Check” worksheet
to address each belief.***



BELIEF CHECK

IS THIS BELIEF HELPING ME GROW?

Every belief produces fruit. Some beliefs draw us closer to abundant living while others keep us stuck. These questions help examine one belief honestly and invite God to renew your thinking.

1 WHERE DID THIS BELIEF COME FROM?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Family | ☐ Past relationship |
| ☐ Childhood experience | ☐ Church |
| ☐ Trauma or loss | ☐ Personal failure |
| ☐ Culture or society | ☐ Other: |

3 FREEDOM TEST

Does this belief move me toward freedom or keep me stuck?

How?

- | | |
|--|-------|
| ☐ It moves me toward freedom. | _____ |
| ☐ It keeps me stuck. | _____ |

5 WISDOM TEST

What would a trusted, godly person say about this belief?

7 EVIDENCE TEST

What evidence supports this belief?

What evidence challenges this belief?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

8 MY NEW BELIEF *Based on truth, I choose to believe:*

THE BELIEF I WANT TO EXAMINE

2 TRUTH TEST

Does God's Word support this belief?

Scripture

God's rewording:

4 FRUIT TEST

What has this belief produced in my life?

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ☐ Emotion(s): | _____ |
| ☐ Behaviors: | _____ |
| ☐ Relationships: | _____ |
| ☐ Long-term results: | _____ |

6 CHARACTER TEST

If I continue believing this, who am I becoming? More....

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Loving | ☐ Controlling |
| ☐ Peaceful | ☐ Anxious |
| ☐ Patient | ☐ Withdrawn |
| ☐ Joyful | ☐ Cynical |
| ☐ Courageous | ☐ Fearful |
| ☐ Self-controlled | ☐ Other |

“Do not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

ROMANS 12:2

REFLECTION

How would my choice change if I believe the truth?

"I WILL" LIVE DIFFERENTLY



Limiting beliefs lose their influence when they are exposed, challenged, and replaced with intentional choices. For each train car below, identify what keeps the belief alive, then write one "I will" statement that moves you toward truth during the year.



Identifying elements of the Belief Train



What experiences in my life made this belief true for me?

Reduce the grip this belief has on you.



What thoughts keep reinforcing this belief when I am vulnerable?

Begin training your brain with new thoughts.



What am I assuming without enough evidence?

Begin fact finding.



What do I anticipate will happen based on my conclusions?

Become curious about other outcomes.



How do my expectations setup my mindset in the situation?

Enter situations with the attitude of "I can handle this".



What emotions arise that make me aware the belief has resurfaced?

Create space between strong emotions and choices to see options.

"I will" commitments for change

I will

I will

I will

I will

I will

I will

Becoming the CEO OF MY EMOTIONS

EMOTIONS ARE VALUABLE EMPLOYEES. WISDOM IS THE CEO.

When emotions feel big, slow down and lead well.

Follow the process. Take back the seat.



NAME IT

What happened?

What emotion am I experiencing?

- ☐ Anger
- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Sadness
- ☐ Shame
- ☐ Guilt
- ☐ Anxiety
- ☐ Frustration
- ☐ Hurt
- ☐ Joy
- ☐ Other: _____

NAME IT TO
RATE IT

RATE IT

How intense is this emotion?

- 1 2 3 4 5
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Where is it in my body?

- ☐ Tight muscles
- ☐ Racing heart
- ☐ Tears
- ☐ Shallow breaths
- ☐ Stomach ache
- ☐ Restlessness
- ☐ Other: _____

I CAN'T THINK
WHEN FLOODED

DISCOVER ITS MEANING

What is the emotion trying to tell me?

What need, value, expectation, or fear was affected?

What story am I telling myself?

What belief may be fueling the emotion?

WHAT IS
BENEATH?

VALIDATE IT

My emotion makes sense because...

The facts that support my emotions are...

The facts that challenge my emotions are...

IS IT
ACCURATE?

MY NEXT WISE CHOICE

What response aligns with my values?

Words I tell myself to strengthen a new belief:

One sentence I want to remember next time:

I WILL
CHOOSE WELL

TODAY'S REFLECTION

What am I learning about my emotions?

What can I celebrate?

What will I do differently next time?

GROWTH INSIGHT

Every emotion deserves to be heard.

Every belief deserves to be examined.

Every choice deserves wisdom.

I don't have to react. I can respond.

I am becoming the CEO of my emotions.

