

POTENTIAL - PASSION - PROFIT

DESERVE

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This week we're investigating all of the limiting beliefs that hold you back, that rear their ugly heads when you start to take steps in a new direction. You'll learn to recognise when they occur, where they came from historically, and understand the choice you can make in the power they have over you.

Many instances of a lack of self-belief originate from our childhood. Times when we showed our true nature and talents to the world, and were knocked back or criticised in some way, which we catalogued in our subconscious mind in a particular way, often deleting, distorting or generalising the context. This belief then affected our ability to show our full selves to the world.

We're going to be examining some beliefs you hold about your talents and creativity, in order to bring to light any strong negative association that may have influenced you.

When you hear the words 'Creativity' & 'Talented' what associations does it bring to mind?

Write all of the thoughts, images, associations that cross your mind below:

In what ways are you creative?

What do you believe about your talents and abilities?

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Were there any blockages or negative thoughts that came up for you that surprised you?

Often as children, and later as adults, our creative endeavours and natural capabilities were criticised or under appreciated by those around us.

When we take time to be creative (whether through drawing, painting, playing music, singing or even speaking up in class) and we feel as though we are attacked when our work isn't received well, we can feel vulnerable and exposed.

Creativity is a an act of sharing yourself with the world, and in an education system that celebrates perfection and being top of the class, together with parents who may have placed more emphasis on getting 'good' grades in more formal areas, we can feel as though our early efforts at creativity are not good enough. At a young age we can decide that it is not worth the trouble and effort, and that doing something creative 'just for fun' is a waste of time. We place less value on our innate skills.

Likewise, a student with a strong personality and natural leadership tendencies can be found being warned to 'stop showing off' or be encouraged to be less 'attention-seeking'.

Uncovering these past wounds and hurts can be liberating. Psychologists have proven that we make many of our decisions about who we are and what we are capable of by the time we are seven years old. Do you believe now that you knew everything you could be by the time you were seven? Perhaps it's time to let go of some of those limiting decisions. First we have to unravel them.

The next exercise seeks to uncover some old forgotten monsters that are lurking in your subconscious, fuelling limiting beliefs.

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Historic Monster

Your creative self-worth and belief in your own abilities is important.

When we undertook creative activity as young children, we did so without fear of failure or criticism. We were open, free and honest.

We created for our own pleasure and for the expression we allowed ourselves. There was no thought of vulnerability, we just created. Then, along the way towards adulthood, someone (or many people!) were cruel or unkind about our abilities, and we may have decided to turn away from our artistic inner child since we felt we were 'not good enough'.

From an objective point of view as an adult, you know that such a decision was limiting, however since we rarely step back and examine our thoughts and beliefs, we keep ourselves stuck in old thought patterns. For every event we have ever experienced, we have retained certain information to do with the images around us, the words we heard, the feelings in our body, and we store them away. Opening that memory box can be freeing.

Time Travel:

List three people from your past who were critical of your abilities. These are your historic creative monsters, and whilst the event has long gone, the memory and associations have not!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3

We're going to look at each one in turn, and recall as much detail as you can about the event. Take each person on the list one at a time. Close your eyes, and think about that specific event or moment in your personal history.

What were you wearing? Where were you? What can you recall about them? What did they say? Or was it a look or a feeling you got? How did your body feel? Were there any significant thoughts in your head at that moment? Take a few moments to zoom in with your attention to notice all that you can about the event.

Now fill in one of the Historic Monster profile sheets with all that you recall.

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Historic Monster - Profile One

Name:

What they were wearing:

Where we were:

When this happened:

What I'd created:

How I felt about my work before I showed them:

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Historic Monster - Profile One - continued

What their reaction was:

How I felt:

What was said:

What I interpreted that as:

The decision I made there and then about my capabilities:

How that has effected my creative and professional life:

What I am now willing to believe might be true about my abilities:

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Historic Monster - Profile Two

Name:

What they were wearing:

Where we were:

When this happened:

What I'd created:

How I felt about my work before I showed them:

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Historic Monster - Profile Two - continued

What their reaction was:

How I felt:

What was said:

What I interpreted that as:

The decision I made there and then about my capabilities:

How that has effected my creative and professional life:

What I am now willing to believe might be true about my abilities:

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Historic Monster - Profile Three

Name:

What they were wearing:

Where we were:

When this happened:

What I'd created:

How I felt about my work before I showed them:

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Historic Monster - Profile Three - continued

What their reaction was:

How I felt:

What was said:

What I interpreted that as:

The decision I made there and then about my capabilities:

How that has effected my creative and professional life:

What I am now willing to believe might be true about my abilities:

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TASK ONE:

Write a letter to your historic monster. You can be as mean to them as you like. You are not going to send this letter, it is a way for you to give the response you wish you had given them there and then. It can be as petty and nasty as you like! It's a way to shed your emotional attachment to their criticism. Once you've done that, rip it up and put it in the bin, or burn it.

Let it go!

TASK TWO:

Draw a sketch of the person who said this to you. It can be a cartoon version of them and how you see their unkind response to you. Once you've done that, either scribble over it, or mark it with a big red X across it. There is a sense of catharsis in the process.

MY MONSTER:



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TASK THREE:

List three activities that you could easily do if you allowed yourself to be to not be perfect, and not worry about being rubbish or failing.

1.

2.

3.

The way not doing the above has impacted my life:

TASK FOUR:

Pick one of those, and make it your mission to do one of them this month. Commit to doing it, and let us know in the Facebook Group. Take a picture if you're brave enough!

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UNCOVERING YOUR THOUGHT HABITS

This week, we'll begin a process for noticing your habitual thought patterns. You'll begin to be more aware of the ideas, thoughts and feelings that cross your mind throughout the day, and realise how much of your reality, and your sense of identity, are influenced by them.

Knowing what the most common thoughts you are having on a regular basis are, leaves you in a position of strength. You are able to decide whether these thoughts are working for you, whether they leave you feeling good about yourself, or whether you have been sabotaging your self-esteem at every given opportunity. This is especially crucial as you start to go after your business venture in a new way.

Noticing your habits can prepare you for positive changes in your life, and leave you empowered to use your mind to benefit your wellbeing. The benefits for your sense of credibility and validity as you get more visible online will stand you in good stead.

I'll show you that how you think about yourself is entirely up to you, and give you more positive choices for how you view the world around you.

Do you know how many thoughts you have every day? Can you even hazard a guess?

You've probably not even considered it before. Yet these thoughts make up so much of the person you see yourself as, and how you interpret the world around you. You might be surprised to learn that it is believed by scientists that we each have approximately 60 000 individual thoughts per day.

The fascinating thing about that little nugget of information, is that a whopping 95% of those are considered by top researchers into neuroscience to be repetitive thoughts. In simple terms, you are having the same thoughts over and over again, without even being aware that you are. The reason that the brain allows us to fall into these habits is because it makes it easier to function, leaving brain power and energy available for more important decisions that may be required later on.

Take for example when you make a sandwich. There are most likely a handful of options that you make every single time, when in reality there are so many types of bread to choose from, so many fillings, toppings, choice of condiments and so many different plates you could have chosen to put the finished product on. But the staple favourite of cheese and pickle wins time and again (or whatever it is that takes your fancy).

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Or think about how you go about having a shower. You do not have to overly consider how to give yourself a good scrub, and then to wash your hair, you just switch off mentally and get on with the habitual process.

What blows me away though is that a staggering 80% of our thoughts are believed to be negative. These are often ingrained into us from childhood, and as we repeat these negative thoughts over and over, day in and day out for years, we don't even notice that they are there, forming the background of our existence.

What is interesting though, is that at any point, we can make a change to those habits, and interrupt the habitual patterns.

And that's exactly what we're going to start to do, over this week and the next. Notice the patterns, so that you can choose how to think. No longer will you be at the mercy of old, out-dated patterns of thinking. You can be in charge of your mind and your system, so that as you build your business, a growth mindset and a deep-rooted 'I can do this!' attitude is at the heart of all your actions.

Over the next week, I'm going to ask you to create a new routine for yourself on a daily basis. Now, if that sends you reeling into thoughts of, 'I don't have time for anything else!' or 'How on Earth will that fit in with my routine?!', then I'd like to suggest that those thoughts are habitual in themselves, and that you are accustomed to believing you don't have any time!

How does that thought serve you?

It probably doesn't, so why not give this a go anyway, and find out what you can learn about yourself.

UNCOVERING YOUR THOUGHT HABITS

The new routine involves daily writing in a journal, for three pages without stopping. Before we go any further, write down your initial thoughts to the concept of writing a journal.

The last time I wrote in a journal or a diary was.....

I found this process to be.....

When I was younger, I found writing a diary to be.....

People who write in journals or diaries are.....

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So from answering those simple questions about diaries and journals, you've probably noticed a whole host of associations and beliefs that you hold about them. Those thoughts are themselves habitual, formed a long time ago. How about we change any negative thought habits for this month, and try thinking a new thought instead? Like this one -

'Daily writing in a journal massively helps me in all areas of my life.'

Just try it, you have nothing to lose (except some limiting beliefs that hold you back...)!

What this week's homework entails is finding a slot to write every single day. Invest in a notebook with a design you love, or if you're feeling thrifty, use any scrap paper you have lying around and just get on with it. The important part is in the actual scribing, the physical activity of putting pen or pencil to paper.

I strongly suggest that you actually write, and don't type for this exercise. Firstly, it is far easier to become distracted once you open up a laptop or PC, and secondly, there is a form of artistry and mind-brain connection in putting ink on the page, a kind of freedom and release as you create the letters and words before you.

This daily writing will be an easy way to begin to recognise your thoughts. You're not aiming for anything remotely poetical, or indeed for a blow-by-blow account of everything you have done that day, or plan to do. Instead we are going for a stream-of-consciousness process.

This writing is not for anyone's reading pleasure, so it does not have to have any artistic measure or ambitions. It is not a record of who you are and where you have been, and it is not intended as a biographical account to be handed down for generations!

What it is, is a chance for you to record your moment by moment thoughts as they happen. Literally anything and everything that comes into your mind is worthy of being, and should be, recorded, the instant you think of it. For example:

"This morning I have a headache, I'm sick of headaches, they suck, it's always me isn't it. Life is so unfair. I think I've got some cereal left, but what about milk. I'm so rubbish I forgot to get some last night....Oh my head.....Poor me..."

What we are looking for is total abandonment and freedom in what you write. This is your uncensored self that you are allowing onto the page. At this stage you are not even going to be reading the pages back to yourself, all you are going to do is KEEP WRITING ON THE PAGE, until you have completed three whole pages of diatribe in one go. Even filling the page with, 'I don't want to write today, I don't want to write today', is OK.

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"Three pages? Why so many?", I hear you ask.

Well, you'll find when you do the writing pages as part of a daily practice, that something interesting starts to unfold.

When you write with a goal of three pages in mind, after about a page and a half some more significant thoughts start to appear. It is often (but not always) the serious issues affecting your unconscious mind that come out to play, once the daily gripes and groans are on the page and acknowledged & once the habitual thought patterns have been uncovered.

The simple process of keeping writing, no matter what your thoughts are, ensures that you do not run away from what matters to you, and that you are allowed to express your thoughts, feelings and ideas without fear of repercussions or recriminations.

Remember, these words are for you alone, and you know you will keep them safe and away from prying eyes. In fact, you aren't even going to re-read your musings AT ALL for seven days.

If you find that the words do not flow in the page, then try these topics for discussing:

'How I feel about running a successful business', 'My frustrations with money', 'The reasons I am scared of being judged as I get more visible'.

Now ask yourself these questions:

What are your fears about writing daily without censoring yourself?

What are your thoughts about writing for three pages without stopping?

What other resistance do you have to doing this exercise?

How can you overcome these barriers of resistance?

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So what is the purpose of this daily writing exercise?

There are several benefits.

1. It sets you up for the day, especially if you are able to do the writing early in the morning. You can get your complaints and 'poor me' thinking out in the open, without having to share it with anyone else. You've had the thought, given it space, and then you can leave it behind.
2. You'll begin after few days to see how many of your thoughts are repeated again and again. Once you notice them, they have less power over you. Next month, we'll be visiting these repetitions in more detail and working out how to tackle them head on.
3. The very act of finding time and quiet space to do the daily writing is an act of compassion and kindness towards yourself. It is a way of acknowledging that your own needs, feelings and personal space are important, amidst all of your other duties and responsibilities.
4. Daily writing allows the creative, artistic side of you a place to rear its head in a safe and private environment. It may be that you want to use the blank page to express some of the beauty you see in the world around you, or for you to discuss how the music you heard on the radio made you feel.
5. Writing free-flow can offer a release from issues that have become blocked and can help you free up how you feel about issues in the past and the present. It can give you insight into changes you have long wished to make, and give you the impetus you need to finally take action in making your life happier.

What do you need to do in order to make this daily writing happen this week?

What would be the best time of day?

Where would be the ideal place for you to do this writing?

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Sometimes, even when we know something is good for us, and will improve our lives and set us on the path to establishing a successful business, it is a challenge to actually make ourselves take the actions we want to take.

Making a firm commitment to yourself can make a tremendous difference to your mental fortitude. Below I have compiled a formal commitment for you to fill in before forging ahead with this daily writing (by the way, if you do miss a day, don't waste time, effort and energy berating yourself for it, just make time to start again at the soonest possible moment).

My Commitment to Myself

This week, I shall make time and space every day to write my daily pages.

I shall write for three full pages, without censoring myself, and allow whatever thoughts spring into my mind to be written on the page.

I will be open with myself.

I am committed to daily writing, as I know that I am ready to make some changes in my life, and I acknowledge that by doing this daily exercise I am allowing myself to grow.

Signed:

Date:

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FACING YOUR INNER CRITIC

This next section of the workbook is designed to help you take note of the kinds of comments, remarks and repetitive limitations that your Inner Critic sends your way.

By becoming aware of what these sabotaging comments are, and when they are likely to occur, you can begin to diminish their intensity and the power behind the Inner Critic's intentions to sabotage your dreams, hopes and wishes. This is particularly crucial as you up-level your business, as past conditioning can make it easy for self-sabotage to occur.

Once you can clearly recognise the power of the Inner Critic, and the specific negative thoughts which do not serve in any way to improve your life and your mental and emotional well-being, then you can choose to have better, more empowering thoughts instead, leaving you free to be more confident, capable and to achieve the success you want for your business. Oh, and a lot happier and less stressed too.

Have you ever noticed that just when you want to feel your most confident, a little voice in your head is ready to remind you, in an unkind way that you're not confident and that you're not capable?

How many times have you felt like there was something holding you back from what you wanted to have?

Have you seen other people go on to achieve things that you desire for yourself, but can't see yourself doing, because you get caught up in a vision of dreams not working out for you, running visual scenarios of disaster through your mind?

You are not alone. Most of us have some kind of internal dialogue with ourselves, between the part of us that wants to achieve, create and be free and the part of us that is scared, fearful and wants us to stay small, safe and protected (even if our current life is not satisfying us or making us happy).

This voice is your Inner Critic. It is the first to warn you that you are not capable, that you are foolish, that you are stupid, that your plans for your business are ridiculous. The cruel way in which this part of ourselves speaks about our abilities can be severely limiting, if you choose to give it your full attention.

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As I said earlier, every day you have around 60 000 thoughts, with the vast majority are literally you repeating to yourself almost identical things today as you did yesterday.

Now, in terms of day to day life this can be extremely useful. Imagine if you had to relearn and be conscious of how to drive the car every time you sat behind the wheel. It would be exhausting.

What if you had to think through every procedure involved in getting up, dressed and out of the house every single time? You just wouldn't go anywhere fast. You would be depleted of energy, and have used up precious brain power. Instead the mind cleverly creates habitual patterns of behaviour. What is important for us in this exercise though, is that the mind also creates habitual patterns of thought.

We have become so used to the sound of the Inner Critic, spewing on repeat negative, damaging comments about our abilities and capabilities, about our failures and limitations, reminding us of all the times we have messed up, that we don't always notice it is even there.

Today, you're going to acknowledge your Inner Critic and the things it tries to tell you. In doing so, you can make new choices about what you listen to, and how much influence that voice has over your life.

Take a moment of two to think, with your eyes closed about the critical voice inside your head. Notice if they look like anyone you know, if they appear on one side of your body (in your mind's eye), and what they are doing.

Are they dressed in a particular way? Is there anything you can observe about their posture? Are there any features that are exaggerated? Are they human, animal, cartoon or something other?

Really focus on the information that you have stored internally about this critical, negative part of you.

Our unconscious minds store all sorts of experiences and concepts in terms of pictures, images, sounds, feelings, both as emotions and as actual physical sensations in the body, associations and metaphors. You will probably have a strong image or sensation about your Inner Critic, even if you have never considered them before.

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Jot down answers to the following:

My Inner Critic looks like...

They remind me of...

In my mind, they are located...

I notice that they are doing the following...

Close your eyes again, and this time notice if the Inner Critic has a voice that reminds you of someone you recognise, or a particular tone that feels familiar. What kind of language does your Inner Critic use?

Notice if it starts to tell you that this exercise is ridiculous, or a waste of time. You Inner Critic isn't keen on change or moving in a positive direction! Keep on going regardless.

My Inner Critic sounds like...

Its tone is.....

It's favourite sayings are.....

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Now repeat the exercise with your eyes closed, focusing this time on the feelings within your body that the Inner Critic, and your associations with listening to it, create in you.

Where in your body is your Inner Critic located?

What is the shape and intensity of that feeling?

Now, as you focus on you Inner Critic, take a moment to ask it what its purpose is, what is its highest intention for you?

What is it trying to do? And why?

My Inner Critic's purpose is.....

What it wants for me is.....

What I have learned from this exercise that I can take with me now.....

Acknowledging the voice and purpose of your Inner Critic can be a powerful realisation, that often it is seeking to protect or help us in some way. It has done so to date in a way that is full of fear, procrastination and self-sabotaging. Now that you recognise its purpose and aims, is it helpful to you in anyway? Perhaps its voice can now be quieter, and you don't have to feel you are battling with it internally. What would it be like to be thankful for the role it has played in your life so far? Wouldn't it be great to reassure it that it has done a good job so far, but that you no longer need that protection?

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Having an understanding of where this voice of negativity and criticism comes from, and what it is trying to achieve, can go a long way towards unravelling how much it influences your actions and decisions from now on.

Take the journal writing that you've done this week, and with a highlighter, mark up every single occasion, comment or inference that you are lacking in some way. For example if you have written, 'I'm so stupid', or 'I always mess up', or 'I'm rubbish at...', or 'Why do I always....?'.

Some days you may have none of these types of self-criticism, other days your writing will be full of them. It doesn't matter - just highlight all of them. You may be surprised at how many there are, and the regularity with which they appear.

On the next page of this workbook, write out each of these negative statements.

If you have duplicates there is no need to write them out again. Just identify what these limiting thoughts that the Inner Critic has been reminding you of over and over again.

It is probably not a pleasant list to read, and if you were to believe your Inner Critic, then you would probably feel unable to make anything good happen in your life.

However, you have the ability to choose which thoughts you give attention to, and this is your opportunity to change how you feel about yourself.

For every sentence on your list, write out the opposite of it, as a positive statement about yourself and your abilities. These are your positive self-beliefs.

For example:

I'm stupid
becomes

I AM CAPABLE AND I AM INTELLIGENT

I'm rubbish at remembering to do everything
becomes

I HAVE A FANTASTIC MEMORY AND I AM DOING A GREAT JOB

I always mess up
becomes

**I OFTEN DO THINGS RIGHT AND I AM OPEN TO LEARNING AND GROWING
WHEN THINGS DO NOT GO THE WAY I HOPED.**

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The negative comments my Inner Critic wants me to believe and that have revealed themselves to me in my writing and my thoughts:

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The positive self-belief statements I choose to focus on instead:

Keep this list, and add to it whenever a new positive thought about yourself that you can choose to have (which would be of more benefit to you than the critical, limiting remarks of your Inner Critic) occurs to you. This set of statements can become your mantras, and your quick, easy way to build your confidence and self-esteem every time you notice the Inner Critic rear its ugly head! Look at this list often, and make it a part of your daily routine to give you maximum advantage in changing your business.

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