



How many times have you heard someone say, 'Oh, that makes me crazy' or 'sorry, I just can't help the way I feel.'

You've probably said something like this yourself.

On the surface, it might seem like there's nothing wrong in statements like that. But if you dig a little deeper, you'll find that they're actually quite harmful.

Because when we say, 'I just have no control over the way I feel' you are giving up your power to external circumstances.

The truth is, we have every ability to control the way we feel by controlling the way we think.

That's how mindset works and that's what we're going to talk about today.

Before we dive in, I do want to give an important disclaimer. Sometimes due to mental illness, people's feelings and thoughts operate very differently where they require some additional support so this might not work in those cases.

Sometimes how we think thinking works is 'the way I see the world is the way that it is'.

But we can look at the same things and see something really different.

Here are a couple of visuals that have made their way around social media. Some may look familiar to you.

The two in the middle with the cartoons are interesting because they are looking at the same thing from different angles, which is a good metaphor for how we look at life.

And in the top one, one sees a 6 and one sees a 9 because they're looking at it from a different angle.

At the bottom, one sees 4 blocks of wood, and one sees 3.

How many do you see?

39

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The pictures on the left and right are a little bit different because we are looking at the same thing from the same angle, but with different eyes. We see them very differently.

If you remember the dress on the left and even if you don't- this went viral because people were looking at this dress and seeing it as a completely different color.

What color do you see?



I always see blue.

Many people see gold.

And people were blown away by this. Like, *how can you see gold? It's so obviously blue?* or *How can you see blue? It's so obviously gold.* They tried to convince the another. But how can you convince someone that they're not really seeing what they see?

Yet we do this in the real world all the time.

Similar with the sneaker on the left. Excuse me on the right. Some people see gray. Some people see pink.

What do you see?

I always see gray.

I love this quote by Wayne Dyer. He says 'loving people live in a loving world. Hostile people live in a hostile world. Same world.'

Again, our experiences are always different. This doesn't mean that we all experience the world the same.

We interpret the world differently.

This is another case where somebody's looking at one angle and the other person's looking at another angle and their experiences with that are very different.

How many times do we keep looking at something that doesn't make us feel better? That doesn't let us accomplish the results we want to accomplish? When all we have to do is turn our head and look out another window?

Another way we think about thinking is, 'because I didn't experience it, it's not a problem.'

This is very common and very problematic.

You can imagine situations in the workplace when somebody says that they've experienced racism, sexism, bullying or any other kind of mistreatment.

And the response they get is, 'well, it never happened to me, so it must not be true.'

This is a really dangerous one and this really requires that we open our minds to say, just because it didn't happen to us doesn't mean it's not happening to other people.

Everyone's experiences are their own and you really need to use your empathy to



understand what other people are experiencing.

This is a great visualization of it with the two guys standing in the puddles. One is deep and the other one is shallow. And the one who's in the deep puddle is explaining, 'it's deep' and the one in the shallow puddle says, 'no, it's not.'

I have a running joke with my father. I'm always cold. He's never cold. And anytime I say that I'm cold- which is a lot- he'll say, 'it's not cold' and I'll say, 'well it's not cool to you, but it's cold to me!'

So that's sort of a harmless example, but you can see where it can be harmful when we diminish other people's experiences because they aren't our own.

Now this is at the foundation of how we think and process information and how it affects the way we feel and how we can shift it.

It's not easy. It takes a lot of work, but I promise you it's worth it.

Because here's how we naturally operate. Something happens. We attribute that something to the feeling we feel.

'That just makes me crazy. That just makes me so ...fill in the blank.'

And then we think about it based on that feeling.

So I've attributed that feeling to the circumstance not to my own choosing and then I'm going to think based on that feeling.

But here's where the powerful shift can come in for you.

This blew my mind when I first heard it and I've been working through it ever since.

How it really works and how you can train your mind to work for your benefit much more effectively is this.

Something happens. You decide how you're going to process and think about it. And then that creates the feeling. Everything that happens around us, we interpret it in our own way.

We choose the way we interpret it. If we're interpreting it in a way that creates feelings we don't want, we get to think a different thing. We get to tell a different story. We get to interpret it differently to create the feeling we do want.

So let's take this example of your staff.

Let's say your staff didn't reach their goals this month.



And the old way of thinking you would immediately go to the feeling.

'I feel angry. I feel disappointed. I feel upset I feel undermined.' Whatever it is you might feel in that situation.

And then the thoughts you have around that are affected by that mood. 'I'm upset. So now I think I need to fire someone' or 'my staff is terrible' or 'I'm not such a great leader because my staff didn't reach their goals.'

This isn't a very productive way of thinking but it's often the way we default.

So here's an example where you can shift it. 'My staff didn't reach their goals this month. I'm going to think about that first. I'm going to create the story that serves me so that I can feel the way I want and get the results that I want.

It's important to reach our goals. We need to figure out what we're doing wrong.'

Then the feeling becomes 'yes, I'm disappointed, but I know we can figure this out and it will get better.'

How powerful is that?

In summary, the way that mindset works is that it's determined by what we experience, what we choose to focus on from that experience, and how we choose to process it.

This professor of psychology Sonya Lyubomirski wrote a book about happiness.

In her research, she found this 50/40/10 rule. Which is that 50% of happiness is genetic. 10% is related to circumstance and 40% is from our mindset.

The message being we can't control everything, but we sure can control a big part of it.

Now not everybody agrees with this breakdown or has adopted this research.

But I hope and think we can agree that we have a huge level of control over our mindset and the way that we think.

So before we get into doing something about it, I want you to stay in this moment and just think about the important question, which is how does your mindset impact your leadership?