

## Removing what holds you back

Ask yourself whether you **believe** you can change. You have to believe in the possibility. I want you to consider that a human's default setting is to be confident (happy, peaceful and most other positive feeling too). Now imagine that a veil of limiting beliefs, doubts, unhelpful memories and emotions shrouds us – this is not how we really are, we're that person who is under the veil. It's not that we need to plaster over cracks or shore ourselves up, but rather, we need to remove the veil. How would that be, if that were true?!

Think about how young children and babies behave. Do they worry about how they look in their clothes? Do they care if their pram is the number one best seller, the most in vogue colour? Does it get them down that they can't do something like read or write? That's because they operate on their factory settings, infinitely curious and quite happy to just be. As we grow, however, we pick up beliefs of two types, those that stand us in good stead and those that limit us and make us feel bad about ourselves.

I often tell the inspiring story of Roger Bannister at my Equestrian Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) Practitioner trainings. Take yourself back to the 1950s, when a sub-4 minute mile was nothing short of fantasy in most experts' minds. Even the athletes agreed that this was beyond the body's capabilities. However, one athlete knew better, he was of course Roger Bannister. In 1954 he ran the mile in 3:59.4 minutes. Although this was a heroic achievement beyond reckoning, it was much more than that. He was able to bring about a colossal shift in belief on a global scale. In fact, the celebrations lasted only 6 weeks, when John Landy ran the mile in 3:57.9 minutes. Then Bannister broke that record too. And so it has prevailed through the decades. In psychological terms, it's known as the Bannister Effect. That one small change brings about leaps in progress.

Removing one limiting belief often works to remove several others, like a tumbling house of cards.

What will be your Bannister effect moment?

Many coaches and therapists talk about removing limiting beliefs – that's a fantastically liberating thing to do! So let's see what they really are and think about how to root out even the deepest ones lurking in the background of our everyday lives and our riding lives.

Some of your limiting beliefs will be well known to you, that feeling of not being good enough, worthy enough or yearning for more (more talent, more stuff, more confidence, anything you crave more of). Maybe you already know that your horse is a very special lad or lass and can achieve so much – but not necessarily with you. Do you feel in awe of that horse, do you feel undeserving or unworthy of their skills? Do you doubt that you can change your riding, that you can be the rider you want to be?

Limiting beliefs are all about doubts, yearnings, feeling unworthy, not enough or undeserving. Many, many of these beliefs are not actually known to you, they're under the radar and deep within your unconscious mind. You have no knowledge of them or that they're running like spyware in the background. Think about these:

- Did you ever have trouble getting beyond a certain level in your career, relationships or sport?
- Do you ever feel like you're in a vicious circle and history repeats itself?
- Do you ever feel unhappy and uninspired about your riding?
- Do you ever feel stuck with no options?
- Are you fed up at home or work or with a certain person?
- Does your confidence sometimes falter in certain situations and not in others?
- Is your anxiety only triggered in certain situations?

Which ones struck a chord with you?

Let's take a look at how these limiting beliefs grow and are maintained, then we can stop these self-sabotaging behaviours. Limiting beliefs do not have to be logical, they are mostly illogical. They are often unvalidated. One thing these beliefs all have in common is that they prevent you being, doing and having what you consciously want. Carl Jung said that we all project out, very unconsciously, what we believe about ourselves. Interestingly, that projection is reflected back to us in the behaviour of others. This is so true of animals, they are adept at reflecting back what we project onto them. Had a bad day? Did your dog or cat or horse act up too? What we need to do is to dissolve the negative projections and along with that, dissolve the limiting beliefs.

Make a list of your limiting beliefs (this is usually very illuminating!). Now can you find a deeper root or cause for believing that? Ask yourself, "How is it possible that I believe that?" Find the most abstract and broad belief that might be like an umbrella from which your other beliefs hang. For example, I can't seem to get on in my career field *may come from* I can't do what other people do *may come from* My life is so devoted to others, I have no space for myself *may come from* I can't be myself anymore. Can you see how we can extrapolate to the highest limiting belief, something which is often unconnected to the symptom?

Once you have the highest limiting belief(s), do you have a mind's eye picture. Limiting beliefs can only be sustained by our own thoughts. Think differently and you'll see a change in your behaviour.

In the recording 'Removing what holds you back', I'll take you through a simple method to remove your limiting beliefs, to uncover the real you and allow you to set forth to get your goals.