

Is Your Reality Working for You?

“Two marketing experts were sent to a remote area in Africa to test the market for shoes. One expert returned stating – ‘there is no market for shoes, as everybody walks around in bare feet’. The second expert returned stating - ‘unlimited market for shoes, as everyone is walking around in bare feet’.”

This year’s message will explore and challenge you in the exciting area of personal growth. As much as we hear about how technology is advancing and changing our lives, the same rate of understanding and change is happening in the field of neuroscience¹. The primary focus from most of the research relates to our mindset and how this affects our life outcomes. There are two foundational areas that we are going to explore: happiness and our realities.

Let’s begin with the mindset of happiness. Shawn Achor² points out that for most of us we have the mindset that “happiness is the reward we get” upon achieving a specific milestone. In fact, happiness should be the central mindset and our success revolves around it. We now know that our brains perform at their best when we have a positive outlook and thus ‘being happy’ is a solid place to begin our journey. A valuable way of looking at a positive mindset is that the ‘mindset’ is the fulcrum (ie – that with which we have the power to change) and a ‘positive outlook’ is the length of the lever (ie – how much potential power we believe we have). Being happy or positive is not about being blind to the challenges in our lives; rather it is about believing we have the power to do something about them. Another way of looking at this is the circle of influence, which is our internal focus of control, whereby we have the belief that our actions have a direct effect on our outcomes.

This is a good lead to examine how we create ‘our realities’. The following perspectives were critical new outlooks for me to absorb from the research and to work on: first, **there is no one reality, it is a choice we make** and second, that **if you want to create positive change in your life, you must change your reality.**

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The Rules of Reality Making

1. You create everything about how the world looks and feels
2. Perception isn't passive
3. Self awareness changes perception
4. The more aware you are, the more power you have over reality
5. Awareness contains the power to transform your world
6. Whatever you resist persists
7. Mind has will and intention (not the brain)

Once we realize how much our reality depends on how we view it, it comes as less of a surprise that our external circumstances predict only about 10% of our total happiness. At the same time, we have to be careful not to have unrealistic expectations about our potential.

The key question for 2015 - Have you chosen a reality that works for you - one that harnesses your full potential?

"The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven."

— JOHN MILTON

¹ *Super Brain*, Deepak Chopra & Rudolph Tanzi, *Mindset*, Carol S. Dweck, *How Successful People Think*, John C. Maxwell, *Learned Optimism*, Martin Seligman, *Flourish*, Martin Seligman

² *The Happiness Advantage*, and *Before Happiness*, Shawn Achor

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