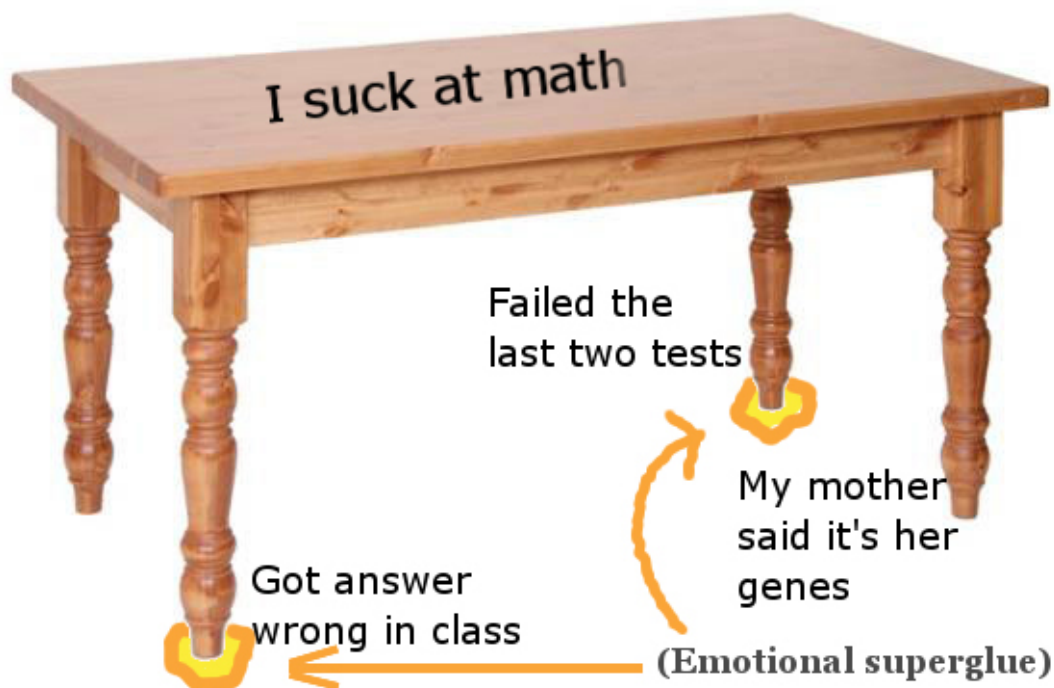


Changing Limiting Beliefs

The Table Leg Method

Imagine your belief is like a table top and the evidence that supports your belief is like the table legs. You look at the evidence and make a conclusion—a belief about it. Just like with a table, if you knock enough legs out from under it the belief will collapse. You do this by creating doubt about your evidence or looking at it in a different way. Then, after you collapse the old, unwanted belief that makes you doubt yourself or your dream, you can use the same method to build up a new one. That's right, it works in reverse! If you determine a belief that is more empowering that you'd prefer, you can find evidence that SUPPORTS your new belief. Add at least 3 legs and the table will stand.



For example, if you believe that you are bad at math, you may have several reasons for this belief. First, it seems to run in your family. In fact, your mother said it's in her genes. This plants the first seed. Then, in 5th grade you got a math answer wrong when you were asked to do the math problem on the board in front of the class. It was embarrassing and reinforced your belief, making you think "geeze, I guess mom was right!". Then, you failed the last two tests you took in your high school algebra class. You felt bad about it. Now the belief is stuck.

But, believing that you are innately bad at math will hold you back. First, because you expect to do poorly you'll be more nervous when you take math tests, you'll be less likely to try harder or practice since you believe you're simply unable to do math. You will unintentionally prove yourself correct. This is called a self-fulfilling prophecy. In the end, you'll avoid things that you might have enjoyed simply because you expect they'll involve math and you don't want to do it because you think you're bad at it. Maybe you love science but you never pursued a career in science because you didn't think you could do the math. Maybe you wanted to start a business but didn't think you could handle the finances because of your math deficiency.

When we hold limiting beliefs, they hold us back from our potential.

The good news is even the more strongly held beliefs that hold up the overall belief can be undone. The key is to question the evidence we use to support it, remove the superglue, and find a new, more empowering belief to replace it with.

Before we begin, it's important to understand that when we're talking about limiting beliefs, we are not saying that the belief is FALSE. It may be true or based on things that really happened. But, whether it's true or false isn't the point. We're looking at beliefs that are either empowering or disempowering. They're either useful or harmful.

5 Step Process for Changing Limiting Beliefs

STEP 1: Identify a limiting belief you would like to change:

Make a list of all of the things you can think of that provide evidence (table legs) that support your belief (at least 3 pieces of evidence).

STEP 2: Identify an alternative belief that is more empowering:

If you're having a hard time identifying a more empowering belief, ask yourself "what if I believed the opposite"? You want to choose a new belief that is believable. So, instead look for an IMPROVED belief. So, that could be "there is always opportunity in the market if you provide an exceptional product or service."

STEP 3: Unstick the emotional superglue:

Sometimes we become emotionally attached to our limiting beliefs. We experience benefits or emotional payoffs for keeping our limitations around, which makes them sticky. It is like supergluing the table legs to the floor. So, ask yourself: what is the emotional payoff for holding onto this belief?

Be honest with yourself. Write down everything you can think of that may be an emotional or practical benefit.

Next, ask yourself: do these benefits outweigh the costs of keeping this limitation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- If your answer is YES—that the emotional payoff is worth it—then you will most likely NOT be able to change this belief because you are too attached to it.
- If your answer is NO—the payoff is NOT worth continuing to be limited by this belief—well, then it's time to celebrate because you've just dissolved the superglue! You actually WANT to change, and that means it's time to start dismantling that table.

STEP 4: Create doubt by reframing your evidence:

Like we said, you believe what you believe because you look at the evidence and come to a conclusion. But what if the evidence was wrong, incomplete, or you just weren't seeing it clearly? That would make you question your conclusion, and that's exactly the point of this step. For **each piece of evidence** you identified for your limiting belief, ask yourself the following questions:

Could this be untrue?

Is there more to the story?

What is an alternative explanation?

The point is to question the evidence enough to create doubt. Some evidence will be harder to refute than others, but that's okay as long as you can knock out enough to leave less than 3 legs standing!

STEP 5: Find evidence to support your new belief:

Now we're going to flip this around and build up the supporting evidence to solidify your new belief. Looking back at your desired belief, make a list of everything you can think of that supports this new belief. You only need a minimum of 3 but you want to create as many legs as possible so that this belief is way stronger than the old, limiting one.

With enough supporting legs, your new belief will stand. It might not be as strong as your old belief at first, but that is okay.

In many cases, the table legs that held up your old belief may have been really thick or really superglued because of the emotions tied to them. When thinking about evidence for your new belief, it may be harder to find emotionally-charged evidence, so you want to think of as many things as you can. The number of supporting legs will make up for the less powerful examples.



You've done it! You changed your limiting belief and replaced it with a new empowering belief! But that doesn't mean that the old limiting thoughts won't pop back up sometimes. You may need to remind yourself of this new belief multiple times, or even read it to yourself regularly, but through repetition you will be able to banish that limiting belief for good!