



Even if You're Wrong, You're Right

So choose your beliefs carefully!

by Elizabeth J. Agnew, MS

Everyone lives from their own perspective. Everyone likes to be right. These are both facts about human nature.

Your belief system is the backbone to how you experience the world. Your paradigm, or the lens through which you see the world, is driven by this belief system. It's just what you know.

When you live from your perspective, you experience the world with your own slant, and how you experience and respond to the world drives your future actions. Your actions reflect what you believe, and so in the end, your beliefs will ultimately become your reality. If you believe something that hinders you, well, what can I say – you'll be hindered. If you believe you will be successful and flourish, well, what can I say – you'll flourish.

Your beliefs are the ultimate gatekeeper to your success. If you say "I could never run faster than a 7-minute mile", it is highly unlikely that you will ever run faster than a 7-minute mile, even if you have the physical talent.

Beliefs that prevent you from taking action that could result in your growth and success are called limiting beliefs. They cap your potential. Because you limit yourself, you won't see positive results. A lack of good results will reinforce the negative belief that limited you in the first place, and there you go down the negative spiral. Even though you were probably wrong about your limiting belief in the first place, you made yourself right because your actions reflected, and thus reinforced, your beliefs.

Take Jake, for instance, who is afraid he isn't good in social situations. He fears being the one to speak when there are more than two people in the room because he doesn't think he has anything worthwhile to say. This belief causes him to stay at home more often, and to stammer and cut short his opinion when asked of it by others. Staying home means he is exposed less and less to the situation he fears, and getting nervous when he has the floor means he does end up having awkward social experiences. Even though Jake is wrong about his potential, he ends up verifying the belief that he is socially awkward. Jake was wrong, but in the end, he made himself right.

This cycle is how your beliefs can easily become self-fulfilling prophecies. "I could never do that." Even if you're wrong about the fact that you "could never do that", you will in the end, be right, because your belief will stop you from ever trying. You make up a story in your head, and the act of choosing to believe that story is what helps it become a fact.

Since this is the case, why not choose beliefs that align with qualities you admire, and the lifestyle that you dream of? Find a way to believe the positive things that you want to be true in your life. If your new beliefs are too much of a stretch from what you're used to telling yourself,

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then you won't really believe them, and then they won't ever be true for you. Find a way, through delicate phrasing or evidence from the past, to believe the things you want for yourself.

What if Jake said: "You know, I'm okay in social situations, I really am." This is a modest statement that he can honestly believe in, and a first step to reshaping his belief system. Because he believes this, he will be less likely to turn down an invitation due to nervousness, and less likely to squirm and judge himself on the way he acted in a social group. In the end, again, he will be right.

No matter what, your actions are a product of your thoughts. So even if you're wrong about your human potential or about your relationship with the world, you'll be right, because you will live out that belief.

Even if you're wrong, you're right, so remember that when you decide what you want to be true for yourself. The thing always happens that you really believe in; and the belief in a thing makes it happen. What do you want to make happen for yourself?

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