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# Unconscious Self-Sabotage

## Realigning the Mind to Change Behavior

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**I**t is common for people to set doable goals for themselves and then find, to their surprise, that their behavior is inconsistent with their goals. People on weight-loss diets often eat what they know is bad for them. People who want to create healthy relationships often ignore red flags and find themselves in painful and unsatisfying relationships. Nobody really does this intentionally. This peculiar phenomenon is caused by a misalignment between the conscious mind and the unconscious mind resulting in unconscious self-sabotage.

The conscious mind is the land of rational, concrete, linear and logic. It is very literal. For example, the chair is blue. That is a \$100 bill. The unconscious mind is the land of emotion (which is not rational), imagination, memory, creativity, poetry and metaphor. It thinks in images, sounds, feelings, tastes, smells and sensations. It is not literal like the conscious mind. It makes associations and broadens meaning and understanding. For example, a blue chair might remind someone of a living room chair that the cat used to sleep on (causing a feeling of happy nostalgia). Looking at a \$100 bill might trigger happy imaginings about what it could buy.

### **How does the unconscious mind generate self-sabotaging behaviors?**

Growing up, people have negative, sometimes even traumatic, experiences that get stored in the unconscious mind. These experiences trigger negative emotions causing people to imprint damage patterns in the form of negative conclusions about themselves, the world, and even life itself. Emotions are energetic sensations felt in the body. (That is why they are called feelings.) The more strongly a person feels something, the more he believes it, even if it is not true. Because emotions have more energy than thoughts, they influence/run behavior. This explains why people do what they know isn't right for them even though they know better. The conscious mind is not in charge. Damage patterns adversely influence our perceptions, reactions and behavior in such a way as to make it difficult to achieve our goals.

### **The 4 D's: Delete, Distort, Deny, Dismiss**

How do people manage to hold on to beliefs that are not true? A belief forms a lens through which all external information is filtered. Information that agrees with the belief gets through the filter, and the person sees it as validation, proof, or support for that belief. In other words one sees what one believes. Information that disagrees with the belief gets deleted, distorted, denied or dismissed.

For example: Jane, a woman who believes that she is "unattractive," goes to a singles activity with a friend. Her friend observes

that an attractive man is smiling at her. Jane may respond by 1) claiming that she doesn't see anyone smiling at her (delete), 2) denying that the man is looking at her (deny), 3) stating that if the lights were any brighter or if he got any closer he'd run the other way (distort), 4) imagining the man asking for her phone number and never calling, or taking her out on one date and deciding he doesn't like her, so never mind (dismiss). In any case, Jane's behavior toward the man will be lukewarm and uninviting. At the end of the evening Jane will have met no one and concluded that her belief was right all along (a self-fulfilling prophecy.)

### **How does one identify and clear non-useful lenses?**

Sometimes a tremendous amount of evidence contradicting a limiting belief can break the lens and allow a new belief to form. This is called "live and learn." But live and learn can take a long time, and may never happen. So it is important for people to begin to align their conscious mind and intentions with their unconscious minds by noticing when something is not working properly. Then they can evaluate behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, emotional reactions and end results by focusing on whether something is useful to them or not, rather than whether or not something is true. It may also help to look at the positive results others are getting and try to determine what their beliefs are that seem to be working. It may even help to get honest feedback from others.

One way to communicate with the unconscious mind is to use the technique from Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) of going inside one's head, asking an open-ended question about what the part that is running the problem behavior believes, feels, or is trying to accomplish. Sending the question echoing throughout the whole body will bring a quick response as follows: visual (a picture, a memory, a dream that you can see); auditory (a thought in words, a piece of music, a tone of voice); and kinesthetic (a physical or emotional sensation felt in the body.) Sometimes there is a taste or smell response. It's easy to interpret an auditory response in words. Pictures or feelings may require more questioning.

Once people realize that the problem lies within their unconscious minds, there are many healing and therapeutic methods and techniques (some of which can be self-applied) that work to identify and then rapidly and completely release these patterns. These methods include energy psychology, NLP, EMDR, hypnotherapy, applied kinesiology, Body-Talk, Yuen Method, The Emotion Code, Jaffe-Mellor technique, and Healing from the Body Level Up, to name a few. (Note: Talk therapy does not work because it only treats the conscious mind.) Alignment of the conscious mind with the unconscious mind results in greater levels of inner peace, self-acceptance and positive results in all areas of life.

*The originator of Healing from the Body Level Up methodology, Judith A. Swack, Ph.D., is a biochemist/immunologist, master NLP practitioner, certified hypnotherapist, mind-body healer, visionary and leader in the field of energy psychology. She is a recipient of the 2015 ACEP award for major contribution to the field of energy psychology, and offers trainings both nationally and abroad. Swack teaches local community education classes at Newton Community Education and Boston Center for Adult Education, and has a private practice in Needham. Swack and her associates offer individual client sessions in person, by Skype or by telephone. Visit [hblu.org](http://hblu.org).*