

harmony



SAY GOODBYE TO LIMITING BELIEFS

Turn your trapped feelings
into the energy of personal freedom!

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One of the best experiences of my life - flying a plane in 2019

HARMONY THIESSEN

MINDSET LIFE COACH

Overcommitted. Overextended. Overloaded.

STUCK. BORED. SUFFOCATING

I understand these words and feelings all too well. My need to live them was tied to my beliefs about my responsibilities, happiness, success, and purpose.

It started with limiting beliefs.

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1

INTRODUCTION

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I CAN'T BREATHE

Lena had always been the dependable one. From a young age, she was taught that a woman's worth was measured by her ability to give to her family, work, and community. She was a daughter who never asked for more, a wife who catered to every whim, and a mother who never missed a recital or a school meeting. Her job in marketing, once a source of pride, had become just another obligation. She climbed the career ladder out of necessity, not passion, driven by the unspoken expectation that success meant being more.

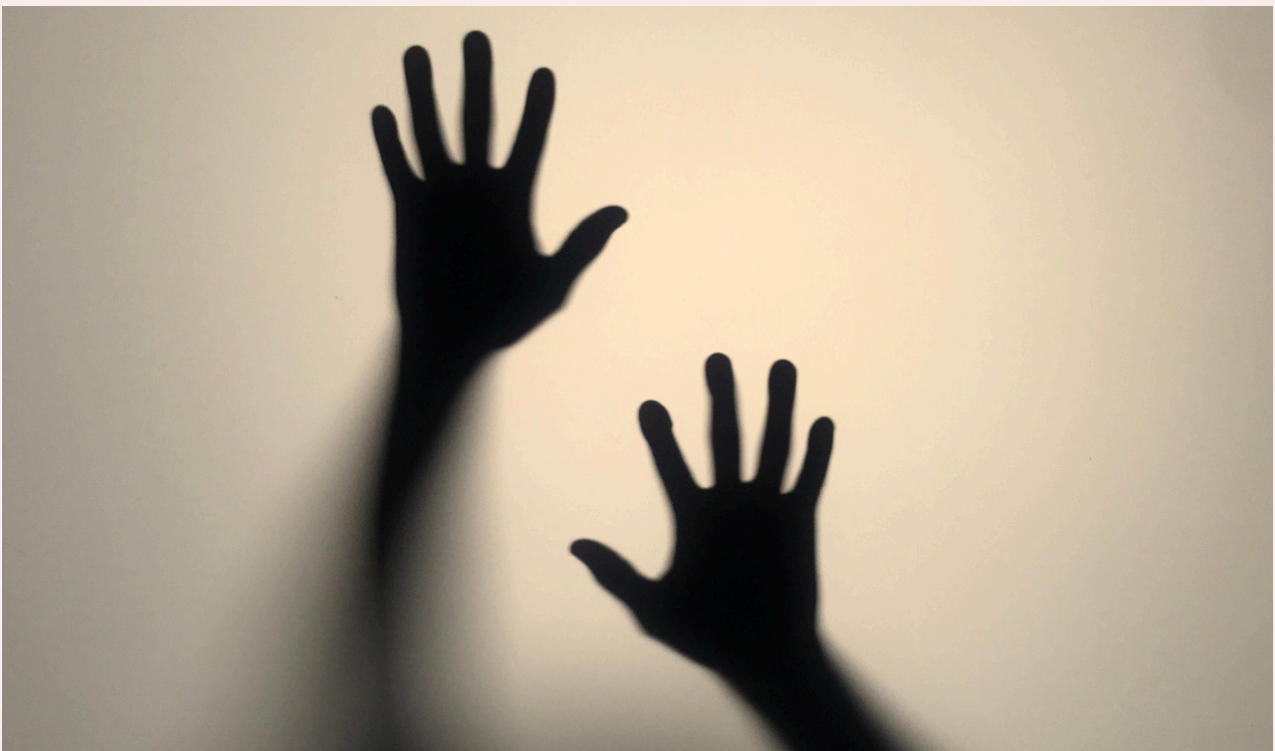
Lena accepted this was the life she was meant to live. She accepted that personal freedom was a luxury for others, not for someone like her, who had duties to fulfill and expectations to meet.

Each day blended into the next—a blur of tasks, responsibilities, and unending lists of things to do.

One night, after another exhausting day filled with commitments, Lena sat alone in the dark, a heavy weight pressing her chest.

She tried to remember the last time she had done something just for herself but came up empty. Her world had shrunk to a point where she felt trapped; the walls were closing in on her, suffocating any sense of who she once was. She gasped for breath, but the air seemed too thin.

As hot tears glided down her face, she realized with painful clarity that she had lost herself in the life she thought she was supposed to live.



CHAPTER 2

THE LIES WE BELIEVE

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UNMASKING LIMITING BELIEFS

Limiting beliefs are those sneaky, self-imposed barriers that whisper in your ear, "You can't do that," or "There is no time for that!"

They're the thoughts that pop up when you're about to take a risk or step out of your comfort zone, convincing you to stay put, play it safe, and avoid failure.

These beliefs are often rooted in past experiences, cultural messages, or fear, and they can seriously hold you back from living the life you truly want.

Limiting beliefs are cruel, underhanded, and, worst of all, self-inflicted. They creep into our conscious and unconscious thoughts and waste our best intentions.

Have you experienced an invisible net around your hopes and what you dream?

Every time you try to move forward, somehow, you are blocked.

The guilt and shame we often feel for failing once again in our attempt to create change add to the fuel that keeps limiting beliefs alive and doing just fine!

In this guide, I intend to help you:

- Identify what constitutes a limiting belief
- Discover how they might appear in your life
- Examine the stories of others who wrestled with their limiting beliefs.
- Learn some techniques you can apply to conquer limiting beliefs.
- Decide on an action plan using the ONE ACTION Method to begin setting yourself free once and for all!
- Utilize other resources that you find helpful in your transformation.

SELF-PERCEPTION

Our beliefs, both conscious and subconscious, have a profound influence on the trajectory of our lives.

These deeply ingrained perceptions about ourselves and the world around us act as invisible filters, shaping our thoughts, decisions, and actions.

At their core, limiting beliefs are distorted, irrational thoughts that we have internalized over time. These beliefs often manifest as absolute, categorical statements about ourselves, others, or the world, such as "I'm not intelligent enough," "The world is an unfair place," or "I never seem to fit in"

These beliefs can take various forms, including:

Self-Limiting Beliefs:

Negative perceptions about our abilities, worthiness, or potential.

Limiting Beliefs about Others:

Assumptions that certain people or groups are inferior, untrustworthy, or incapable.

Beliefs about Opportunities:

Convictions that specific goals, careers, or experiences are out of reach.

Beliefs about the Future:

Pessimistic forecasts are often based on past experiences.



ORIGINS

We Are Not Born With Limiting Beliefs

Limiting beliefs are not inherent; they are learned and shaped by life.

Often, they are not our conscious doing, but we absorb them through experience. Let's examine a few.

Childhood Experiences:

Our early formative years play a significant role in developing limiting beliefs. Negative experiences, such as criticism, neglect, or traumatic events, form deeply ingrained beliefs about our worthiness, capabilities, and world.

Social Conditioning:

The environments we grow up in, including our extended family, neighborhood, social circles, and world events, influence our internal beliefs. Excessive messages about societal expectations and the definition of success can contribute to developing limiting beliefs.

Traumatic Adult Experience:

Overwhelming or traumatic experiences, significant losses, failures, or abuse can trigger the emergence of coping mechanisms we would describe as limiting beliefs.

These beliefs often protect us but ultimately hold us back from personal growth.

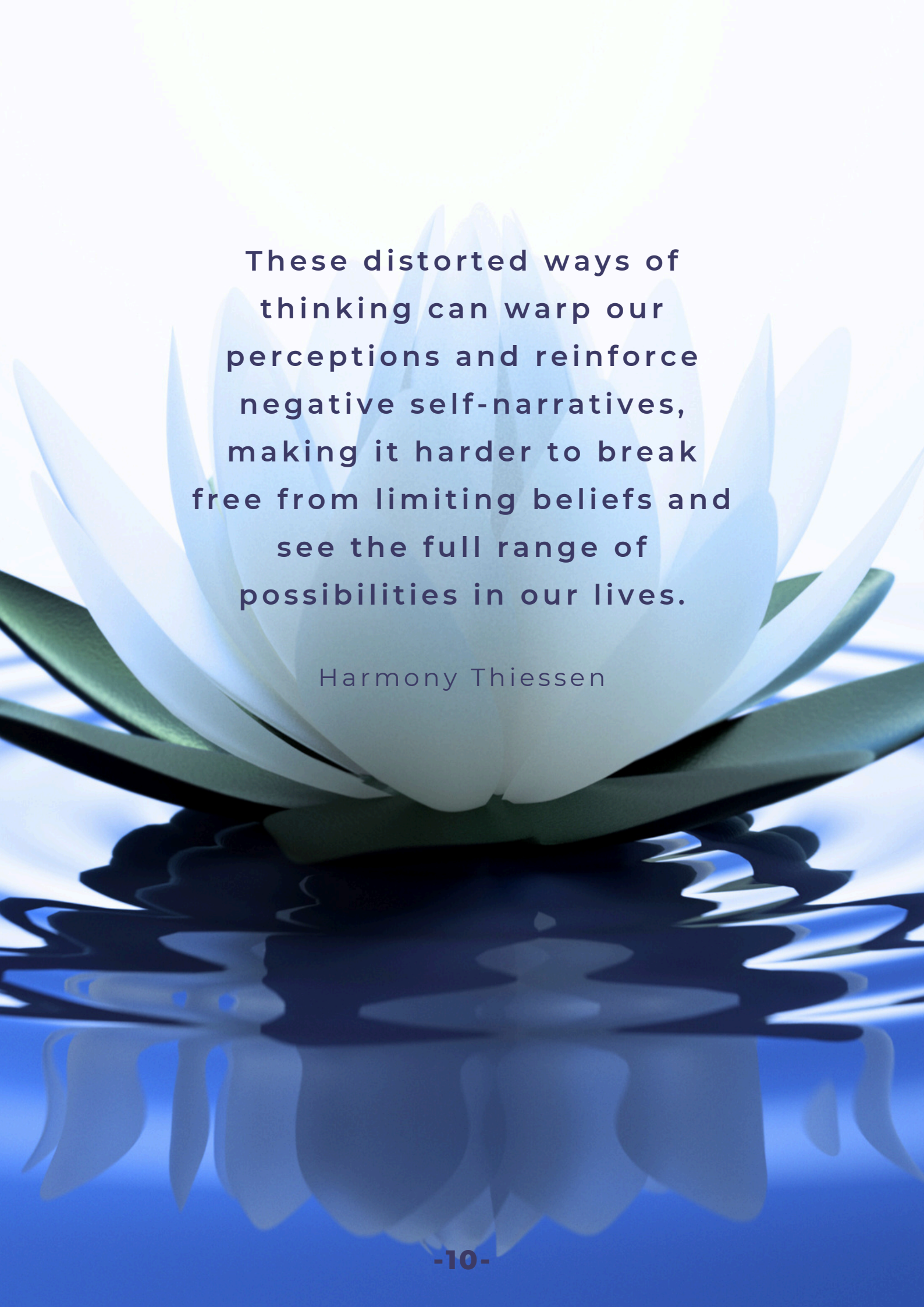
Cognitive Distortions:

Specific thinking patterns, called cognitive distortions, can create and maintain limiting beliefs.

For example, **all-or-nothing** thinking makes us see things in extremes. It is black or white, either/or - we are good or not good.

Overgeneralization leads us to draw broad, negative conclusions from a single event. We might assume that the one-time experience indicates all future results.

Catastrophizing involves expecting the worst-case scenario in every situation, blowing problems out of proportion.

A white lotus flower is in full bloom, floating on a surface of blue water. The flower's petals are layered and spread out, creating a symmetrical, star-like shape. The water is a deep, clear blue, and the flower's reflection is visible in the water below, creating a mirror image. The background is a soft, light blue gradient, suggesting a bright, sunny day. The overall mood is serene and peaceful.

These distorted ways of
thinking can warp our
perceptions and reinforce
negative self-narratives,
making it harder to break
free from limiting beliefs and
see the full range of
possibilities in our lives.

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3

CHAPTER

NAKED TRUTHS

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THE PERFECTIONIST'S STRUGGLE

Jane, a highly ambitious healthcare provider, struggled with an intense fear of failure and a belief that she needed to be perfect in every aspect of her work. This limiting belief led her to work long hours, constantly second-guess her decisions, and avoid taking on new projects that might expose her perceived flaws. As a result, Jane experienced chronic stress, burnout, and strained relationships with her colleagues. She lost her joy. Her boyfriend bailed. Jane wanted to quit and hide.

IMPACT

Limiting beliefs can permeate and influence various aspects of our lives, including our relationships, health, and financial well-being.

Limiting beliefs can **sabotage our interpersonal connections** by influencing our communication patterns, trust levels, and vulnerability.

For example, a belief that "I'm unlovable" may lead to self-sabotaging behaviors, avoidance of intimacy, or the selection of unhealthy partners.

Similarly, our beliefs can have a detrimental **impact on our physical and mental health**. The chronic stress and anxiety associated with self-doubt, coupled with a reluctance to seek help or prioritize self-care, can contribute to a range of health issues, from burnout to psychosomatic illnesses.

The thoughts that keep us stuck can **stymie our professional growth**. A belief that "I'm not good enough" may prevent us from pursuing promotions, negotiating higher salaries, or taking calculated career risks. We endure missed opportunities, promotions, and salary increases and lose a sense of fulfillment.



Most importantly - limiting beliefs can impair our ability to reach our full potential and live a life of purpose and meaning. Shackled by self-doubt, fear of failure, or unworthiness, we often avoid pursuing our passions, exploring new possibilities, and creating the life we desire.



RACHEL'S FUTURE

Rachel sat at her desk, staring blankly at her computer screen. It was another monotonous day at the office, with emails to answer and reports to review. She had been at this job for over twenty years, and though she was good at it, she couldn't remember the last time she felt truly excited about her work.

Over the past few years, her boss had encouraged her to apply for a higher position several times, but Rachel always found reasons not to. The extra responsibility, the time-consuming application process, the fear of failing—all these thoughts swirled in her mind until she convinced herself it wasn't worth the effort.

At home, things weren't much better. Her marriage felt stale, like a book she had read too many times. Her husband, Mark, was kind but distant, lost in his routines and hobbies. She felt listless, bored, and trapped. (Which only increased the guilt!)

Their two children had recently moved out, leaving the house eerily quiet. Friends suggested she celebrate her newfound freedom by joining them on a 30-day cruise around the Mediterranean. Rachel wanted to go, but guilt gnawed at her.

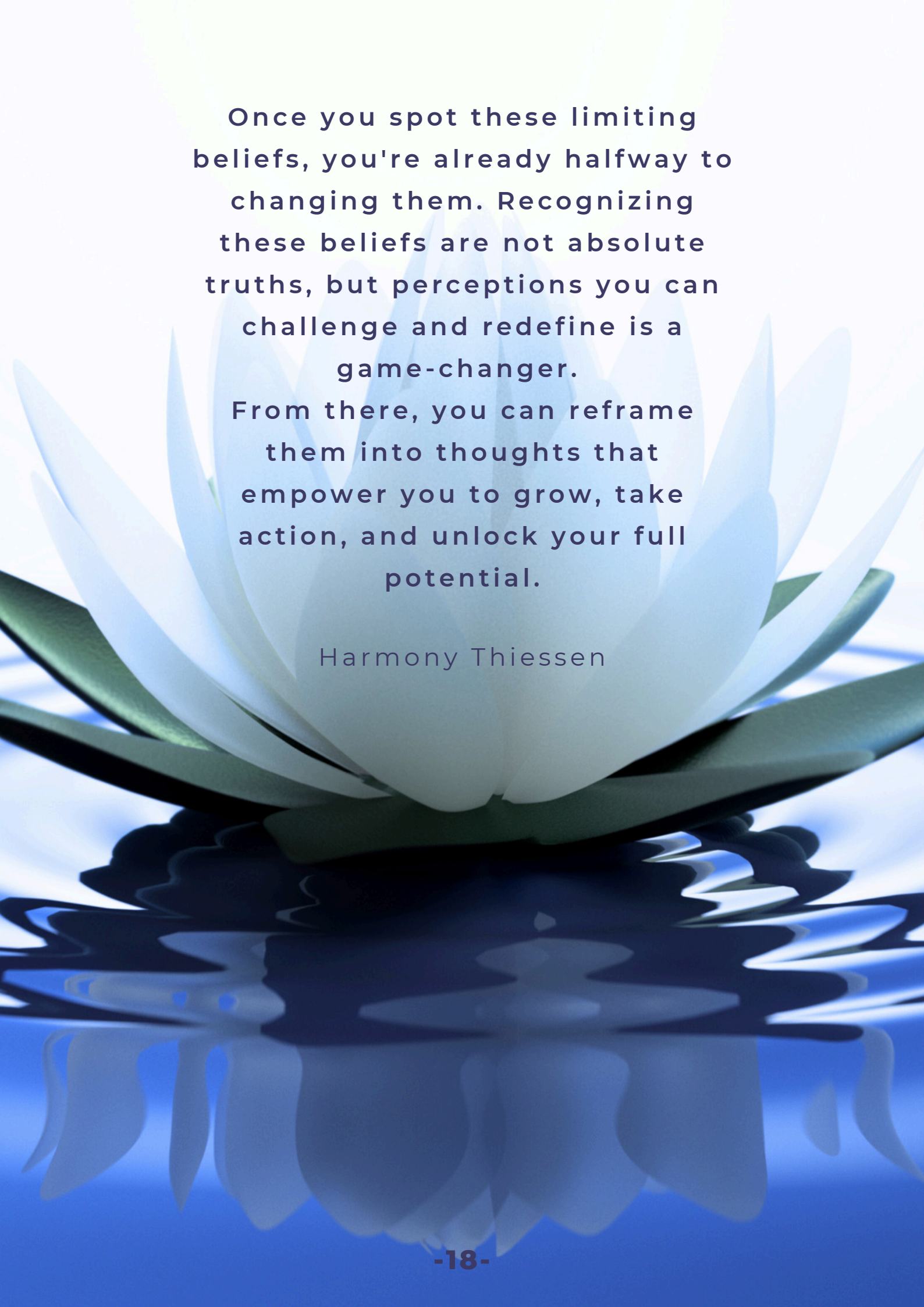
Could she spend that kind of money on herself? What would Mark think? Would her colleagues be upset if she took such a long vacation? The more she thought about it, the more anxious she became, so she declined the invitation, making up excuses to avoid judgment and confrontation.

Alone in her office, she felt a heaviness settle over her. Her life, once so full of potential and promise, now seemed like a never-ending loop of responsibilities and unfulfilled dreams.

She felt captive like she was sinking into a quicksand of her own making. The thought of the next twenty-five years stretched before her like an endless, gray road. "What's the point?" she wondered. "The best is over."

The idea of change seemed overwhelming, and yet the idea of staying the same filled her with despair. With a deep sigh, Rachel closed her eyes, trying to remember what it felt like to be passionate about something, to feel alive. But the memories were hazy, and the sadness felt all too real.

Are you able to spot some of the limiting beliefs in Rachel's life and how they affected her?

A white lotus flower is in full bloom, floating on a surface of blue water. The flower's petals are layered and spread out, with some showing a slight green at the base. The water is a deep, clear blue, and the flower's reflection is clearly visible in the water below, creating a symmetrical effect. The background is a soft, light blue gradient.

Once you spot these limiting beliefs, you're already halfway to changing them. Recognizing these beliefs are not absolute truths, but perceptions you can challenge and redefine is a game-changer.

From there, you can reframe them into thoughts that empower you to grow, take action, and unlock your full potential.

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RECOGNITION

How can we begin to recognize our own limiting beliefs as they happen?

Often, these beliefs manifest through specific behaviors and thought patterns, including:

1. Perfectionism and Overpreparation:

Individuals with limiting beliefs may engage in excessive preparation or strive for unattainable standards of perfection, fearing that anything less than flawless performance will expose them as inadequate. *(Which is how we feel inside most of the time and try to hide it.)*

2. Procrastination and Avoidance:

Putting off important tasks or avoiding challenging situations can protect oneself from the potential for failure, reinforcing the limiting belief.

(I admit, I have a master's degree in this technique!)

3. Downplaying Achievements:

Dismissing or minimizing one's successes and attributing them to luck, timing, or external factors rather than personal capabilities.

4. Difficulty Accepting Praise:

Feeling uncomfortable or dismissive when receiving positive feedback as it challenges the limiting belief of being unworthy or undeserving.

(Wait, are these pages someone stole from my diary?)

5. Constant Comparison:

Constantly measuring oneself against others and feeling inferior, perpetuating the belief that one is not good enough. Interesting point: those "others" are likely doing the same.



6. I Am A Fraud:

Avoiding new challenges or opportunities out of fear of not meeting expectations or being exposed as a "fraud."

"If they only knew!"

A large, white, stylized number '4' is centered on the page. The word 'CHAPTER' is written in a dark blue, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the '4'.

C H A P T E R

ACTION STEPS

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WHAT WON'T WORK

In their quest to overcome limiting beliefs, many women resort to ineffective or counterproductive strategies, only to be trapped in a cycle of self-doubt and frustration.

1. **Positive Affirmations Alone:**

While positive affirmations can be valuable, simply repeating affirmations without addressing underlying beliefs can be ineffective. In fact, repeating defeating behavior increases the strength of the limiting belief, further solidifying the belief as accurate.

If the subconscious mind is not aligned with the positive statements, the affirmations may ring hollow and fail to create lasting change.

2. **Willpower-Based**

Approaches: Trying to "power through" limiting beliefs solely through sheer willpower often leads to burnout and a sense of failure. Beliefs will persistently resurface. This approach fails to address the cognitive and emotional roots of the beliefs.

3. **Temporary Distractions:**

Attempting to ignore or distract oneself from limiting beliefs, rather than directly confronting and reframing them, can provide temporary relief but does not lead to sustainable change.

(Just ask my Netflix account!)

4. **Unrealistic Expectations:**

Setting overly ambitious goals or expecting a complete transformation overnight can lead to disappointment and reinforcement of limiting beliefs when the desired outcomes are not immediately achieved. Bootcamp-style gorilla warfare on deeply held beliefs may leave you bruised - but not transformed.

WHAT WON'T WORK



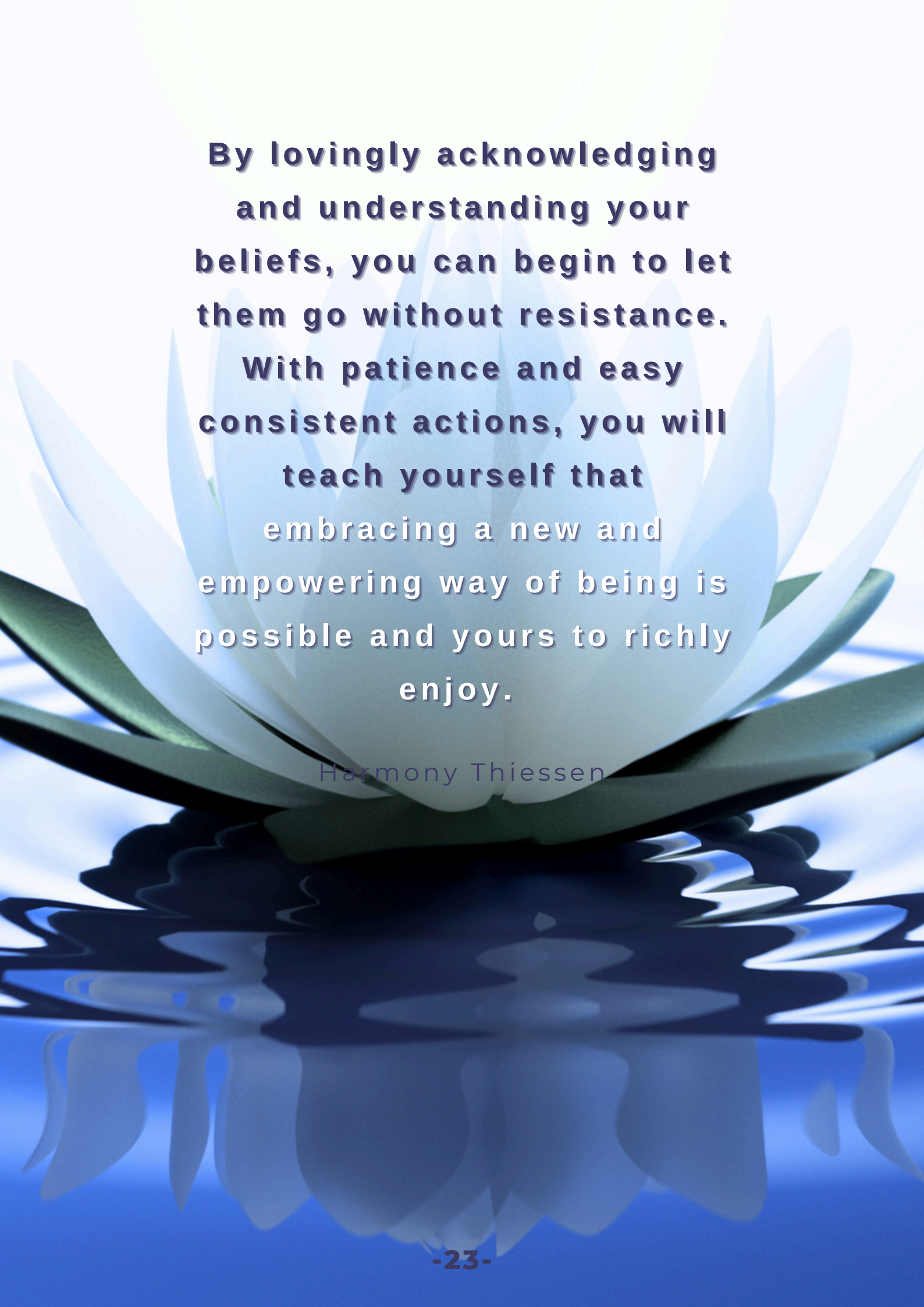
These ineffective strategies often leave women feeling frustrated, disheartened, and trapped in a cycle of self-doubt. Ultimately, they reinforce the very limiting beliefs they are trying to overcome.

5. Seeking Validation from Others:

Relying on external validation from others to overcome limiting beliefs can create a dependence that fails to foster genuine self-acceptance and confidence.

This includes:

- Family
- Partner
- Boss
- Colleagues
- Other Moms
- Kids
- Kids Friends
- Teachers
- Mentors
- Friends
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- TikTok
- YouTube
- Bridge Club
- Sports Team
- Hiking Group
- Classmates
- Competitors
- Dates
- YOU NAME IT

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**By lovingly acknowledging
and understanding your
beliefs, you can begin to let
them go without resistance.
With patience and easy
consistent actions, you will
teach yourself that
embracing a new and
empowering way of being is
possible and yours to richly
enjoy.**

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ONE EASY ACTION

"One Easy Action" isn't about fighting your limiting beliefs or battling frustration with sheer willpower. You will lose. It's not a quick fix or something you can ignore and hope will heal with time.



Instead, we advocate for a compassionate approach to ourselves. We release their tight grip one action at a time, or as author James Clear so powerfully outlines in *ATOMIC HABITS*, using the 1% Rule.

Limiting beliefs are not the enemy. They form to keep us 'safe.' Based on faulty information, these personal truths form a cocoon around us using preconditioned limitations to protect us from a dangerous world.

Understanding this can help us be more forgiving and understanding towards ourselves and set ourselves free.

A FEW EASY STEPS

A comprehensive and systematic approach is required to break free from the shackles of limiting beliefs. This process involves the following key steps:

STEP ONE

Self-Reflection and Awareness:

Begin with introspection to identify the limiting beliefs holding you back. Be aware of your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, especially when triggered.

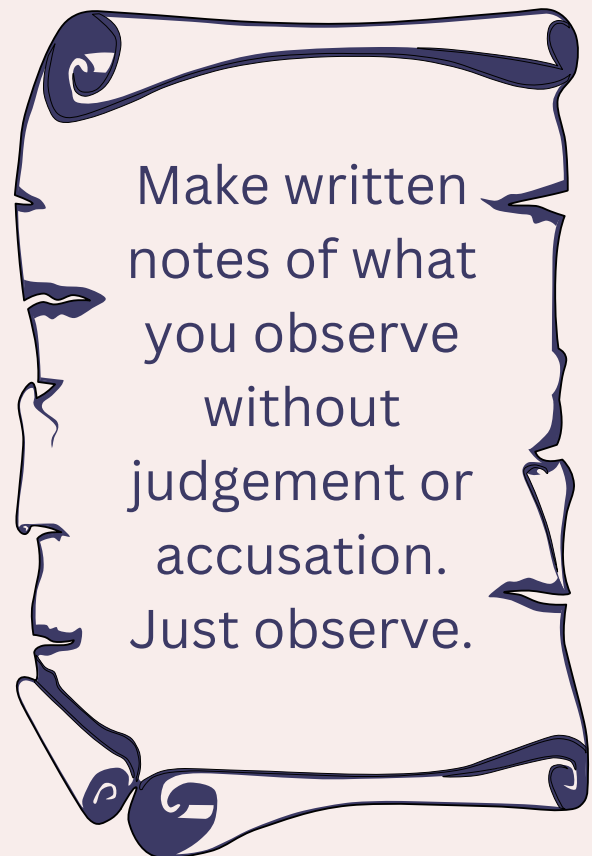
Notice the anger you feel or how discouraged you are in the moment.

Listen to your internal voice. Has “she” gone “batchS!! T” on you, suggesting that “you are no better than the common cold?”

That is a surefire sign that it’s time to notice the patterns of your thoughts and subsequent decisions or behaviors.

You may notice:

"I have a persistent belief that I'm not smart enough to succeed in my career, which causes me to avoid taking on new challenges."



A FEW EASY STEPS

STEP TWO

Questioning and Challenging:

"Once you've noticed a limiting belief, take a moment to ask yourself some investigative questions.

"What evidence do I have that this belief is true?"

Ask yourself if some facts or experiences genuinely support your belief. For example, if you believe "I'm not good at anything," consider when you've succeeded or received positive feedback.

"What would I say to a friend who had this belief?"

Imagine someone you care about told you they felt the same way. What would you say to them? Often, we're much kinder and more rational when advising others. This question can help you see your belief more compassionately and recognize that it might not be as valid as you think.

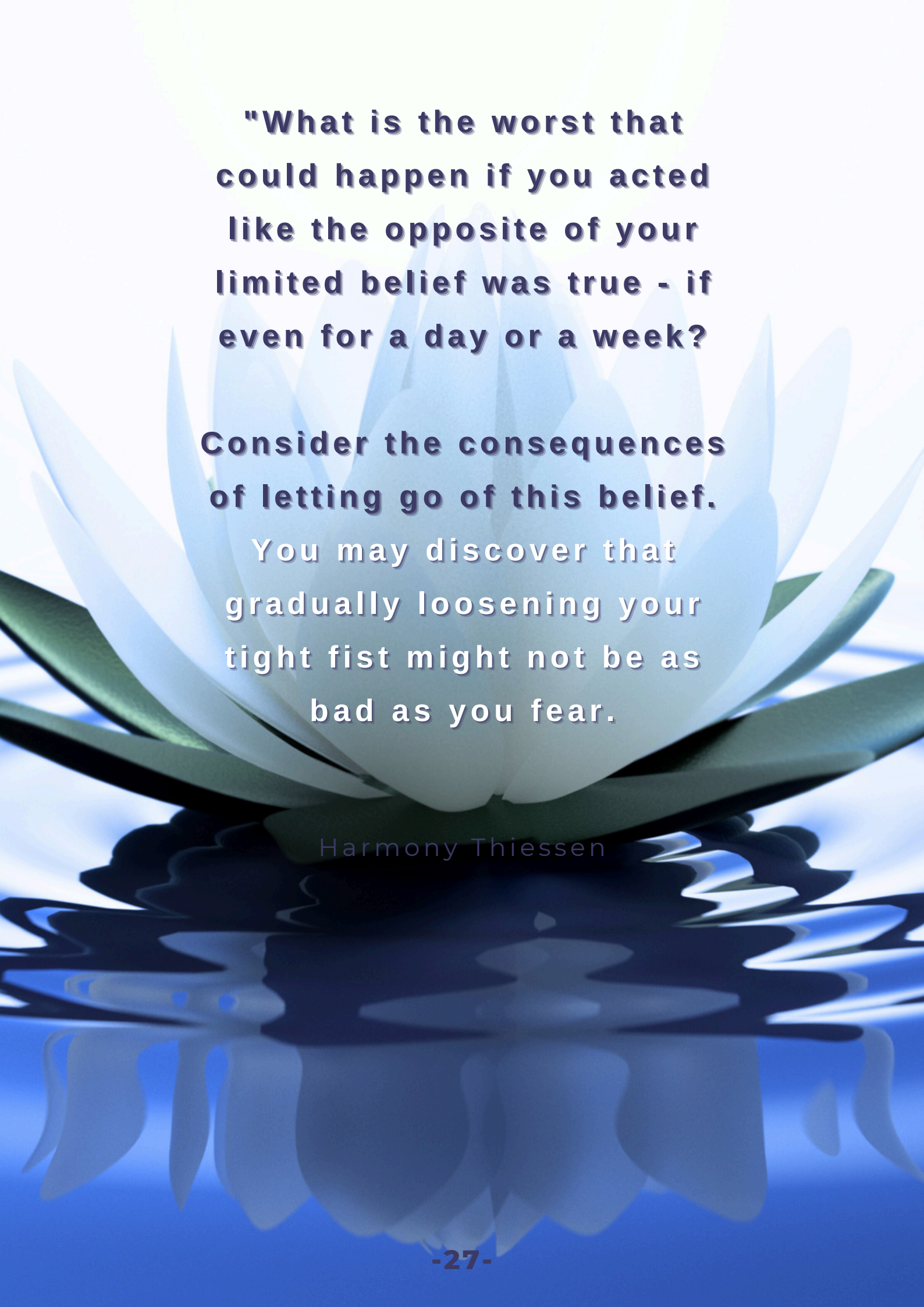
Ask Yourself

"What evidence do I have that I'm not smart enough? Are there instances where I've demonstrated my capabilities? How might someone else view my abilities?"

"Is there a time when this belief wasn't true?"

Think of situations or moments where this belief didn't apply. For instance, if you believe "I always mess things up," recall when you handled a situation well or completed a task. This belief may be accurate sometimes and only represents You sometimes. What about the rest of the time?



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"What is the worst that could happen if you acted like the opposite of your limited belief was true - if even for a day or a week?

Consider the consequences of letting go of this belief.

You may discover that gradually loosening your tight fist might not be as bad as you fear.

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A FEW EASY STEPS

STEP THREE

Cognitive Restructuring:

Replace the limiting belief with a more empowering, realistic perspective. Develop a balanced, rational thought pattern that aligns with your true potential and abilities.

Limiting Belief: "I don't deserve to be happy or successful."

Examine this belief. Consider where it comes from. Is it a memory or an offhanded comment a significant person made that cemented in your mind?

Such beliefs are often rooted in past experiences or feelings of unworthiness. Replace the belief with a positive affirmation, such as, "No past experience determines my ability to be happy today. I choose to create rather than stagnate."

You Might Say

My past does not define my future. I have the superpowers to improve and to fulfill my dreams. My happiness is not dependent on anyone or any circumstance. My happiness is an inside job with full-time benefits!

Limiting Belief: "I am too old to start something new."

Challenge this belief by questioning its basis. Ask yourself, "What evidence supports this belief?"

Are there examples of people who have successfully started new endeavors at my age or older?"

Consider stories of individuals who began new careers, learned new skills, or pursued new passions later in life.

A FEW EASY STEPS

STEP FOUR

Behavioral Experimentation:

Put your new, empowering beliefs into practice through small, incremental experiments. Gradually expose yourself to situations challenging your limiting beliefs, observe the outcomes, and gather evidence* to support your transformed mindset.

*(Remember calendar marking or journal entries!)

If your limiting belief says you can't handle crowds:

Participate in a group activity where you interact with others, like a book club or a cooking class. Start with smaller groups and gradually increase the size as your comfort level improves. Notice how you feel. No judgements allowed! Any feeling is fine. Now go back to step two and ask some questions of your limiting belief.

How to Run an Experiment

1. Identify the Limiting Belief

Start by clearly identifying the limiting belief you want to challenge. For example, "I don't do well in crowds." Write down this belief and be specific about what might happen.

2. Plan the Experiment

Decide on a simple, manageable experiment to test your belief. Choose a situation that involves a small, controlled exposure to what you fear. For example, spend 10 minutes observing the crowd without interacting in a busy park. The next day you might up the ante.

3. Predict the Outcome

Before you experiment, predict what you think will happen. For example, "I will feel anxious and overwhelmed," or "I will want to leave immediately." This step helps you understand your current thoughts and assumptions. Make notes before you leave.

4. Conduct the Experiment

Go through with the planned activity, keeping it simple and brief. During the experiment, observe your thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. Stay focused on what is happening at the moment rather than getting lost in what you fear might happen.

(AFTER THE EXPERIMENT)

After the Experiment, Take Time to Reflect

After the experiment, take time to reflect on what happened.

Compare the actual outcome with your predicted outcome. Ask yourself questions like, "Was it as bad as I thought?" or "What did I learn about myself and my ability to handle this situation?"

Use this reflection to adjust your beliefs and plan your next experiment. Gradually increase the challenge as your confidence grows.

By following these steps, you can start testing and challenging your limiting beliefs, gathering evidence that can help reshape your thoughts and build confidence over time.

Bonus Tip

I encourage clients to share these self-observations and reflections with a trusted friend or family member. Speaking them out loud opens us up even more. If you don't feel comfortable sharing with anyone, record your thoughts using a voice recorder.

A FEW EASY STEPS

STEP FIVE

Develop a Growth Mindset:

Developing a Growth Mindset:

Cultivate a growth mindset where you view challenges and setbacks as opportunities for learning and improvement rather than threats to your self-worth.

Embrace Challenges:

Start by stepping out of your comfort zone. Take on new challenges, even if they seem difficult or intimidating. View them as opportunities to learn and grow rather than obstacles to avoid. Each challenge you tackle helps build resilience and confidence.

Learn from Feedback:

Instead of seeing feedback as criticism, view it as valuable information that can help you improve. I suggest that you actively seek feedback from others and reflect on it. Consider how you can use it to grow in your work, relationships, or personal development.

"Mistakes are not failures, but chances to learn and grow. I will embrace them as part of the journey towards achieving my goals."

Set Learning Goals:

Focus on setting goals that prioritize learning and improvement over immediate results. For example, instead of aiming to "get an A," set a goal to "understand the material thoroughly." This shift in focus helps you value the growth process rather than just the outcome.

Practice Self-Compassion:

When you make mistakes or encounter setbacks, be kind to yourself. Recognize that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. Instead of getting discouraged, use setbacks to analyze what went wrong and how you can improve next time.

Cultivate Curiosity:

Adopt a curious mindset by asking questions and seeking out new knowledge. Take time to explore topics that interest you, even if they're outside your usual areas of expertise. Curiosity leads to continuous learning and self-expansion. (Curiosity is a superpower!)

A FEW EASY STEPS

STEP SIX

Find Your People

Discover Your Tribe

Get Connected

Support WORKS

Building a Support System:
Surround yourself with individuals who can provide encouragement, accountability, and a different perspective to help reinforce your new, empowering beliefs.

Join a Community or Group:
Look for local or online communities focused on personal growth and mindset development. This could be through social media groups, forums, or local meetups. Being part of a group with similar goals allows you to share experiences, learn from others, and stay motivated.

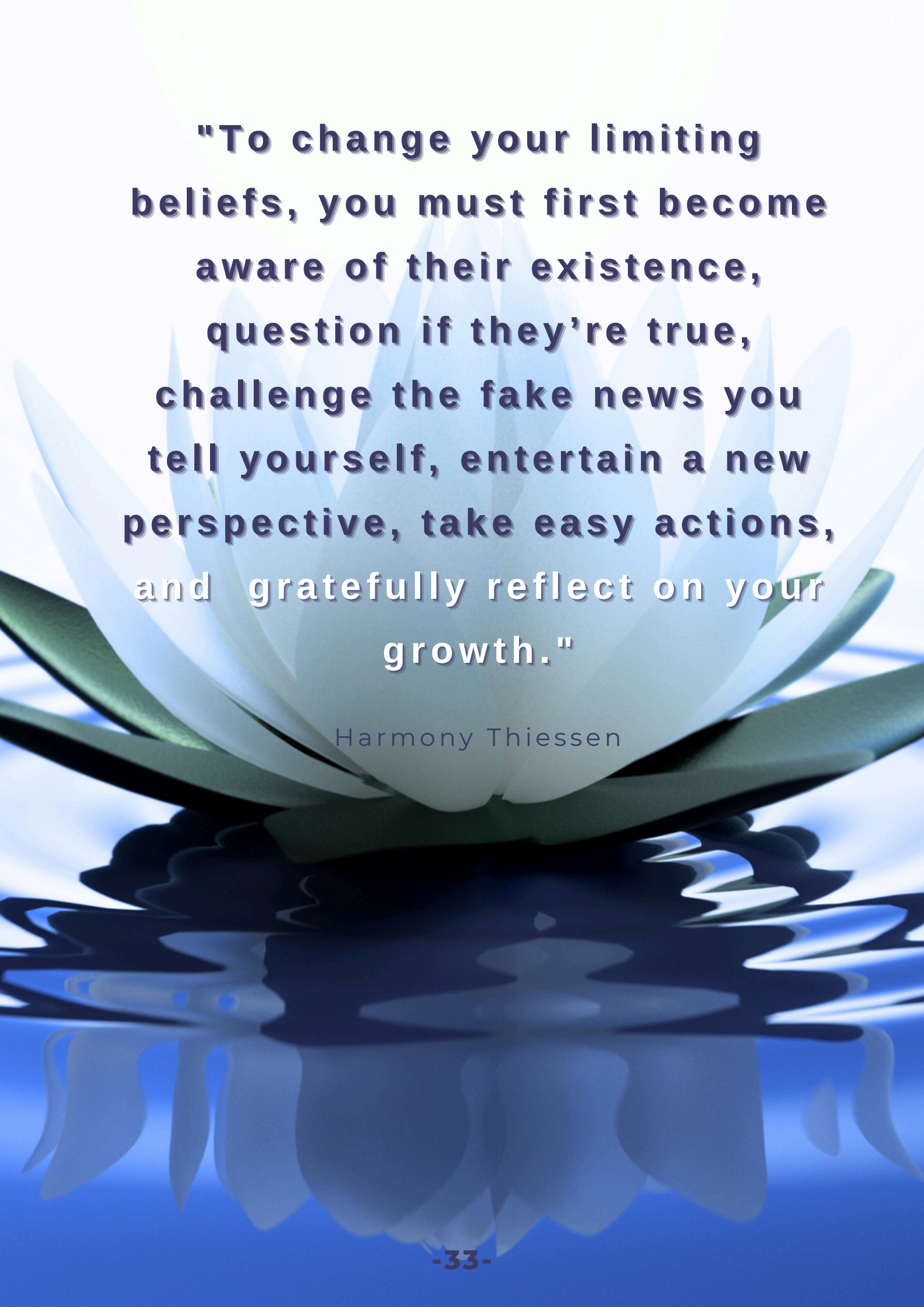
We learn to see things differently through another person's eyes. Our vulnerability, although uncomfortable at times, enables us to be seen and quit hiding in the shadows of our limiting beliefs.

Find a Mentor or Coach:

A mentor or mindset coach can provide guidance, support, and accountability. They can offer personalized advice based on their experiences and help you navigate challenges as you develop a growth mindset.

Engage in Accountability Partnerships:

Pair up with a friend, family member, or colleague interested in mindset development. By checking in regularly with each other, you can share progress, discuss challenges, and offer mutual encouragement. Have someone hold you accountable. It can make a big difference in your commitment to your growth journey.



"To change your limiting beliefs, you must first become aware of their existence, question if they're true, challenge the fake news you tell yourself, entertain a new perspective, take easy actions, and gratefully reflect on your growth."

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5

C H A P T E R

RESOURCES

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NOW IS YOUR TIME



Now that you have identified some key ideas to move you forward, it's time to take action.

You can begin your transformation today.

Here are a few simple steps you can take:

Re-read your guide as often as you like.

Discover resources on limiting beliefs and belief modification online, at your local bookstore, or in the library.

Join me for the weekly live session Superpowers Book Review on YouTube.

Subscribe to my weekly newsletter - SUPERPOWERS

Schedule a Conversation **It's free.** I offer you a keen listening ear and my full attention as your mindset life coach for the hour. I am ready to help you conquer your limitations and experience the joy of an awakened purpose.

S U B S C R I B E A T

H A R M O N Y T H I E S S E N . C O M