



Our Beliefs: How They Develop and How They Affect Our Lives by Jayne Morgan-Kidd

Early Experiences and Relationships Influence Our Beliefs

Exploring childhood experiences and relationships is often something that happens in therapy. Very often, the problems that bring people into therapy have been created by the beliefs formed during childhood. Early experiences are important because it is through them that many of our decisions and beliefs are formed. If childhood experiences are mostly good ones, the beliefs one develops are positive. However when childhood experiences are filled with unhappiness, the beliefs formed are negative.

Common examples of these core beliefs are “I’m special”, “I’m smart”, “I’m a good person”, “I’m worthy”, or they might be “I am powerless”, “I’m not good enough”, “I’m stupid”, “I have to be perfect”. When these decisions and beliefs are positive, they create a firm foundation on which you move into adulthood with confidence. But when those decisions and beliefs are negative, they affect our self-esteem, our choices, our happiness, and our outlook on our lives. Negative beliefs about oneself developed during childhood can be the *very root of a present-day problem*. And they need to be challenged and changed.

So where do those beliefs come from? We develop ideas about our lives, our “goodness”, and our value from our own experiences. Most sources of information regarding brain development indicate that the human brain is not fully developed until somewhere between the mid 20’s to 30 years of age. Think about it. During childhood when we make these decisions, our brains are not really capable of making rational decisions or interpretations about someone’s behavior or about situations encountered; yet in these tender years is exactly when we are developing our beliefs about who we are and what we deserve in life.

When we are children, the most important people in our lives are those who care for us - or are supposed to care for us. Those important people may

be our parents, other relatives such as grandparents or aunts and uncles or for some, may not be relatives at all, but other kinds of caregivers. Whoever they are, they help us define ourselves, for good or not so good.

I believe that most parents are doing the best they can, given their own backgrounds, their own beliefs, their own experiences and the decisions and beliefs they formed as a result of their experiences.

Are you beginning to see how these chains of life experience can affect us? So if some of our beliefs about ourselves are negative, are we stuck with them? Are we limited to going through the rest of our lives with beliefs that do not serve us very well? Happily, the answer is no.

How Can We Exchange Our Negative Beliefs for Positive Ones?

Using EFT and EMDR, I have helped many people change negative beliefs into positive ones. The affect of creating more positive beliefs about oneself is so valuable. When you exchange Negative beliefs for Positive ones, you create more choices for yourself, open the door to emotional freedom, and bring more peace and contentment into your life.