

The Mind Virus

Let me ask you a simple question?

What do you see with?

Now most people here answer, “*duh, with my eyes dummy!*”

To which I smugly and very annoyingly reply, “*NO, hahahahaha!*”

And then spend a few minutes basking in my own intelligence.

We actually see not with the eyes but with the brain. The eyes are simply the instrument for taking in the visual field. The brain is where that information is taken, processed, put together into an image and then interpreted as to what it means in terms of our survival. This last part is crucial, it is the brain which assigns meaning to the information it is receiving.

But your brain can't tell the difference between real life, memory and imagination. Don't believe me?

There was an experiment done where volunteers were told to take their shirts off and shown a red hot coal. The experimenter then proceeded to move the coal closer and closer to the subjects back. Asking them if they could feel the heat. Obviously as the coal got closer to the subjects back they could feel it getting hotter and hotter.

Then without telling the subjects the experimenter swapped the hot coal for an ice cube and actually touched the subjects back with it.

The subject reacted exactly as they would do if they had been touched by the hot coal, describing feelings of burning and heat. Amazingly the skin reacted in the same way as if it had been touched by a hot coal and blistered up exactly as if it had been burned..

We literally cannot tell the difference between reality and imagination/memory, the brain interprets and reacts to them in the same way.

Ok interesting but how is this useful?

Let's take a quick detour...

Imagine you have millions of sets of scales in your mind. You have one of the scales for every single belief you hold. So you have one which relates to how good at maths you are, one which relates to how confident you think you are, one which relates to how good at football you believe you are, one which relates to whether you believe in God or not...and the list goes on and on.

Now, as we go through life we stack rocks on these scales. So for example if you believed you were a great footballer you probably had many past experiences of scoring goals, of dribbling past opponents, of crunching tackles. Each time you'd performed one of these actions you had stacked rocks on the side of the scales related to being a great footballer.

The crucial thing to realise here is, belief is formed from your perspective only...it doesn't matter what other people think. If you believe that each of these actions confirms your belief that you are the greatest footballer since Pele you will stack rocks on that side of the scales (even if you were in fact bloody awful!).

Now pay attention because this is important.

Your beliefs then become your reality, which then form your identity or who you are.

So in the example above by placing rocks on the side of the scales of believing you are a great footballer, this belief will lead you enjoy playing football more (*we all enjoy doing what we are good at*) which will mean you get more practice, which will, in time, make you a great player.

The same is also true of the opposite.

Let's say in the same situation, you thought you were a great footballer but everyone around you told you you were useless, you start placing stones on the opposite side of the scales, especially if some of those people were people you really respected (*in which you place very heavy stones*).

Now this leads to a situation where you play football less and less as you really don't enjoy doing something you suck donkey balls at. Your belief becomes your reality as you really never get better, which in turn leads your identity to become that of a bad footballer.

Now remember how we said your brain doesn't know the difference between reality, imagination and memory?

So lets say, early on in your football career you were a great player but you had one bad game, and your coach who you greatly respected told you you were rubbish and would never make it as a footballer.

This places one (albeit heavy rock) on the side of scales saying your a rubbish footballer, which in itself isn't enough to reset the balance. But you then re-live that moment over and over again in your memory.

Each time you re-live it, you add more rocks to the scales eventually tipping them over, to the point where it becomes a belief, where it becomes your identity.

So now, despite the fact you actually started out as a great footballer and just 1 person said just one thing, just once. You have literally re-lived that moment 1000's of time in your head adding rocks to the scales each time and made it your belief and your identity.

This is the power of the mind virus.

The good news?

Once we understand this it's possible to change your beliefs and your identity by moving the rocks.

You see, it doesn't matter what is true only what you BELIEVE is true because with work it will become true.

The problem is we are taught from an early age to have an entrenched view of who we are...we stack rocks on the belief that you have to be true to yourself, that you should be authentic, that you shouldn't change for anyone. This leads us to fight tooth and nail to resist any change to our sacred idea of self and this is why most people never transcend themselves. Never achieve their dreams.

Because they believe that by shifting rocks to become the person they need to be in order to achieve their dreams they are somehow selling out. But we have already seen that you as you are now will never achieve your dreams without evolving.

Look, scientists have proved you are a completely different person personality wise at 10 than you are at 80...a totally different person often with absolutely **NOTHING** in common with your younger self. So your idea of self is shifting whether you like it or not, the only question is are you going to choose how you evolve or let it be shaped by external forces?

The real question should NEVER be, "*who am I?*" As this will lead to a static answer where we are defined by the rigid (and often erroneous) beliefs of our past.

Instead once we realise changing our identity is as simple as shifting a few rocks around the question should be...

"Who am I becoming?"