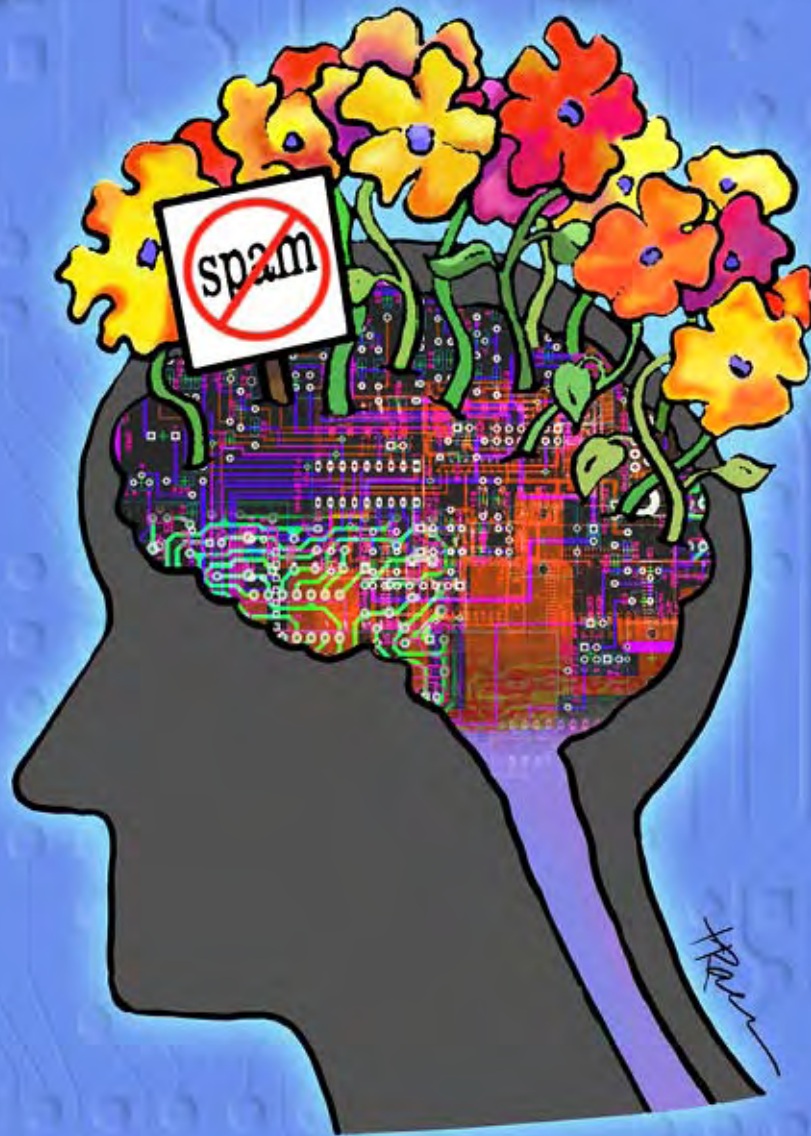


Banish Mind Spam



**Four Steps for Deprogramming
Self-Limiting and Self-Sabotaging Beliefs!**

by

Sheri A. Rosenthal, DPM

Banish Mind Spam:



Four Steps for Deprogramming Self-Limiting and Self-Sabotaging Beliefs!

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Spam

There is a bit of controversy regarding the origins of the common use of the word “spam” on the internet. Some feel it came from that crazy Monty Python song about Spam (the lunch meat). You might remember it went something like this:

*“Spam spam spam spam.
Lovely spam! Wonderful spam!
Spam spa-a-a-a-am spam spa-a-a-a-am spam.
Lovely spam! Lovely spam!
Lovely spam! Lovely spam!
Lovely spam!
Spam spam spam spam...”*

— SPAM SONG BY MONTY PYTHON —

Either the word refers to these repetitious strings of verbiage that have no value of any kind, like in the song above, or it indeed refers to the lunch meat itself, which most of us don’t want, don’t care to eat, and certainly don’t go out of our way to order.

Personally, I see the internal dialogue of the mind, that voice that is constantly chatting in our heads, as spam. It gossips all day long, telling us things that are not necessarily truth, and in fact are often self-limiting and self-sabotaging in nature. Mind spam is useless ongoing commentary which is neither wanted, needed, nor asked for.

It’s like the endless flow of useless spam in our computer in-boxes, except that mind spam crowds out the important messages we need to focus our attention on, like the ones from our heart, integrity and Spirit.

This book is about obtaining freedom from spam and from the programming in our minds that is responsible for generating it!



Prelude

More than ever, we're being exposed to alternative ways of living our lives. Self-help books tell us we can live in bliss and that the purpose of life is to be happy, yet at the end of the day, many of us can't imagine how that's possible in our own lives. "They" (these self-help books and the authors attached to them) are always talking about those other people, the ones who have more time, more money, less responsibilities, and more resources. We feel trapped by our lives and often resign ourselves to believing this is how it will be until we reach a certain age or a certain financial bracket — then we can be happy, then we can have fun.

"The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind."

— WILLIAM JAMES

An even more insidious trick of the mind tells us that we're already happy because we have absolutely no concept of what "real" happiness is. When I say real happiness, I mean the type of happiness that is not dependent on anything outside of ourselves, like our work, family, or financial status. Most of us believe we're happy when things are going well in our lives, but if things took a turn for the worse and we lost everything, that happiness would be gone in a flash. If all the wonderful things and people in your life were taken away, would you still be able to say you were happy? I doubt it.



We've been domesticated to believe we're at the mercy of life's circumstances. Our happiness and joy seem to be dependent on things that are occurring outside of us, events in our personal lives and world environment. We live life riding an emotional roller coaster, feeling happy one day and depressed, angry, frustrated, and jealous the next. We never consider that we have the ability to create our reality according to what we believe in our minds. No one has ever taught us that we can be happy all the time and that what happens out there does not have to take our happiness away. We don't have to feel victimized by our circumstances.

To be truly happy, we need to heal our emotional wounds and break the cycle of socialization that has held us captive to a particular mind set. I'm suggesting a way to do this based on simple



common sense and an acute awareness of how the “program” in our domesticated mind works. By “program,” I am referring to the totality of information and adopted beliefs contained within our rational minds as a result of our domestication and socialization. In essence, our programming is our own worst enemy, constantly telling us that we’re not. It tells us that we’re not beautiful or handsome enough, not strong enough, not clever enough, not smart enough, not brave enough, and not good enough. (And lest you think otherwise, realize that even the most successful people have these types of fears, self-loathing, and self-doubt.)

This type of internal dialogue is enough to make anyone unhappy, and truly qualifies as “mind spam.” Our constant focus on what our minds are telling us keeps us locked into a limited point of view rather than on the infinite possibility of Spirit within us.

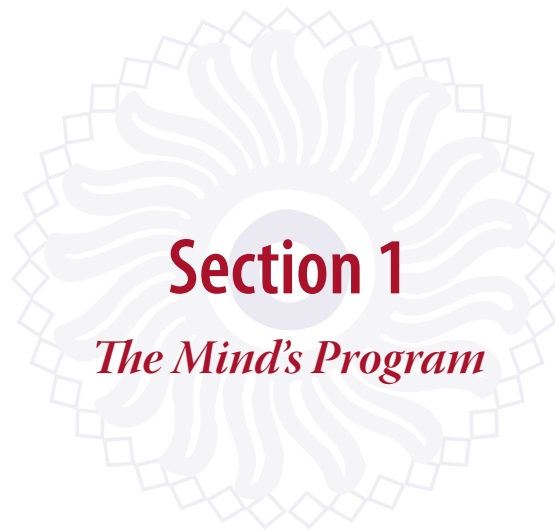
Obtaining true freedom (and by extension, true happiness) is what I am alluding to here, freedom from our own programming and mind spam, which means even a person incarcerated could become free from the beliefs that caused him or her to end up in jail in the first place. That example may seem extreme, but in essence, we all live in a jail of our own creation made up of the limitations we have imposed upon ourselves. The only way to change is to cultivate awareness of what we believe about ourselves and our world. Once we’ve taken stock of what’s what, we can transform what is not serving us. After all, we can’t change what we don’t know exists!

Over the years, I have observed with much sardonic humor how similar my mind is to that of my computer’s. I started to see how everything that I do, think, and say is but a reflection of the totality of the program in my mind. I saw how all the major information necessary for my life in this reality was downloaded during my domestication, or childhood (something I’ll go into greater detail



about in Chapter 2). And the most fascinating thing I noticed was that not all of the contents of my program were necessarily true! There was information in there that was actually harmful to me and went against my integrity (meaning the oneness of the real spiritual me as part of the universal whole). I started to look at those harmful beliefs in my program as if they were viruses that were corrupting, distorting, and contaminating the way I saw and experienced the world. I realized I wasn't in charge of my life; instead, a program filled with virus-ridden beliefs and damaged files was! How could I have clarity regarding my life choices when I wasn't even making those choices for myself?

As anyone who has had contact with a computer knows, programs can be debugged; viruses quarantined, and corrupted files re-written. My goal is to make your process of transformation an enjoyable and fun experience, to assist you in the inventory your program, and to search and seek out those aspects of your program that are stealing your happiness, joy, and emotional peace. You will also see that it's possible to reconcile the technical world in which you live with the spiritual being that you are.



“Neo, sooner or later you are going to realize just as I did, there is a difference between knowing the path and walking the path.”

— MORPHEUS, as said to Neo, “THE MATRIX”

The mind is a fascinating piece of machinery:

We’re taught at a very young age to think in certain ways, but we never acknowledge that way we think isn’t exactly the same as any other human! Although we’ve all been programmed with the same concepts and ideas, we haven’t fully understood that we all have our own particular interpretation of what those concepts and ideas are. So even if we’re speaking the same language, we have no idea if we actually comprehend each other in the way we intend to be comprehended!

It’s no wonder that with all of the different programs interacting out there, our lives can get quite messy. This section will explain how we can begin to take charge of our own programming and thinking. The first step is in understanding it.



Life as a Program

Chapter 1

Years ago I used to subscribe to a soft covered book club, as I was an avid reader. In January 1998, I received a book written by author don Miguel Angel Ruiz (The Four Agreements), who was teaching Toltec philosophy and how to be happy in life. Well, you know the saying that when the student is ready, the teacher will come? As a result of receiving that book, don Miguel became my teacher and I the apprentice. It was the beginning of my journey of self-discovery (and a rocky one it was, I can assure you!). I was blessed to meet someone who has committed his life to reflecting to people that they are wonderful, deserving, and incredible manifestations of Spirit. He has the patience of a saint to devote so much time, energy, and love to help people see that they are incredibly beautiful, even though they argue against it to the very end!

*“Slow down baby,
you’re going too
fast.
You got your
hands in the air
with your feet on
the gas.
You’re ‘bout to
wreck your future
running from your
past.
You need to slow
down baby, slow
down baby.”*

So please let me share a little bit about myself with you and how I came to have a teacher in the first place. I grew up in Brooklyn and Staten Island, a feisty Jewish girl with a mischievous bent. After a “normal” childhood of public schools, Good Humor ice cream, malteds and summers on Coney Island Beach or in the Catskills, I escaped to the University of Buffalo for college. I say “escaped” because I grew up in your typical dysfunctional family and could not wait for the opportunity to leave home. An average teen, I had developed the same aspirations as my friends at the time. We were going to take advantage of the new opportunities available to us that our parents never had. And at the same time, we were going to get married and have families and great careers. After all, this was the ‘60s and ‘70s and we believed anything was possible!

— SLOW DOWN BY
INDIA ARIE



My parents thought a good Jewish girl should become a doctor or a lawyer, so after college I entered Podiatry school. I received excellent grades and married a fellow I met during those medical school years. He was just what I thought I should marry. The “what” came from a list of requirements I had regarding what I believed would constitute the perfect mate. (For example, I believed that a man should come from a good family, be well



educated, be a hard worker, have the same religious beliefs as me, want children, and not drink or do drugs.) Of course my list of requirements reflected the programming my parents downloaded into my mind in my youth. He was a nice enough man, but I was not equipped with the skills needed to have a successful relationship. Eventually we split up and I entered into serious relationship number two. I actually believed that if I picked a man opposite in personality to the first one that would solve my problems. Guess what? Marriage number two was headed for doomsville!

Not only were my relationships not working, but I was overworked, tired, bored, stressed, and just not happy. (Sound familiar?) Having seemingly everything in life and being successful was not all it was cracked up to be! Yes, I experienced many happy moments over the years, but I realized I could not claim I was truly happy inside. It took approximately five years after the second marriage and an involvement in a new and failing relationship to see that I needed to do something. I was finally able to be honest enough to admit that I was neither happy with my life nor myself. After the demise of a third major relationship I realized I had to stop blaming everyone and everything else for my situation. The economy, the medical field, my parents, my husbands, the stock market, and society were not to blame for my state of affairs; I was. I had never been taught to take full responsibility for the life I had created for myself, at least not in the way my teacher eventually taught me to. I kept changing my life circumstances rather than addressing the real problem: myself.

By this time, I was experiencing heart palpitations and other stress-related symptoms — nothing incapacitating or debilitating, just a series of messages from my body telling me things were not going particularly well. I was tired of taking medications to keep each new set of “symptoms” at bay. Truly, I felt that if I didn’t do something soon, I would die. What I didn’t appreciate at the time was that I was dead already; I just didn’t know it. So that



was it. I had reached rock bottom. I couldn't live my life another day this way. I couldn't take another pill or have another spoiled relationship. So I did the only thing I could think of at the time: I put my podiatry practice in Florida up for sale, ditched my boyfriend, sold my townhouse, put everything into storage, and jumped in my car and left. I always had a flare for the dramatic!

That was just around the time I read don Miguel's book and decided to follow him around to his different lecture engagements and apprentice with him. I also used the time to travel about the West Coast of the U.S., hiking, relaxing, and meditating on my life. After a couple of years of serious self-reflection, quiet inner study, and much-needed brutal self-honesty, I moved to California to take up my studies more seriously and to work for don Miguel's organization. Many people who read his books don't realize they come from the Toltec tradition because they sound so much like plain old common sense.

Toltec philosophy is not a religion, although it contains the same basic teachings found in many esoteric and religious traditions. A more accurate description is that it's a way of living one's life that encourages alignment with one's integrity and Spirit. Toltec stresses things like learning to love yourself so that you can love others, and that we're all part of one being, so harming another will result in harming yourself. Ultimately you learn who you really are and that everything you need to be happy and successful in life is contained inside yourself and has always been.

You see that happiness can't be found outside you, no matter how far or how long you journey, nor is it something you can purchase with money or barter for with influence. No teacher can give happiness to you, nor can they wave a magic wand over your head and speed up your process. Finding true happiness takes absolute dedication to yourself and the path you are walking on, just like Dorothy's journey in the Wizard of Oz. She always had the ability to get herself back "home," but she needed to discover



that for herself, to claim her own power, we can say. You too, can find your way back home, but you need to find the strength and personal power within yourself rather than hoping someone else will give it to you.

Please don't take these actions lightly! Growing up in a very pragmatic household made it difficult for me to just drop a successful medical practice in order to take off and follow some man from Mexico around the West Coast. My parents were convinced I had entered a cult; in fact, it's still a source of great humor for my family even now! My parents did eventually meet don Miguel and have been ever thankful for the wonderful influence his teachings have had on my life — and theirs.

I must admit that my path of self-discovery and awareness was the most difficult thing I have ever involved myself in. Medical school was easy compared to delving into the deep dark corners of my own mind. I believed I was a focused, disciplined, intelligent person who could achieve any goal. What I didn't realize for many years is that although those are lovely traits to have, it's even more important to have patience, grace, gratitude, and love for ourselves in order to be able to make it past the denial system that guards the maze we call our mind. Honestly, these were kindnesses I never had learned to give myself! A good question to ask yourself at this point, with all the honesty in your heart, is if you have absolute patience, grace, gratitude, and unconditional love for yourself! The truth is most of us don't, and it's no wonder, since the importance of these skills are not emphasized in our society.

When I first started on the Toltec path I asked myself, "What do I want from these teachings?" I had read many of the popular published Toltec books, and they always talked about personal power and personal freedom. I figured that would be a good place to start, since the idea of personal freedom intrigued me. At the time I didn't truly understand what I was trying to break free from.



The thought never entered my mind that I could be a prisoner of my own programming, domestication, and mind spam. I needed to understand for myself what constituted personal freedom and personal power.

My comprehension of those concepts has slowly evolved with time and experience. For me, personal power is all about freeing your faith from everything you believe about yourself and your world. You have personal energy invested in maintaining, justifying, and protecting the things you believe in and that particular energy constitutes your faith or your personal power. To put it plainly, if you let go of everything you were taught to believe to be true and right in your life, all the faith you had invested in those beliefs would return back to you. The benefit of this type of process is that you can re-deploy all that personal power and energy into making the changes in your life you've always wanted to make.

*Perhaps you have seen the movie *The Matrix*. Neo, our hero, spends the entire movie learning that he has been living his life putting his faith blindly into an interactive computer program for his mind. But by the end of the picture, he has taken his faith and personal power out of the program and redirected it into believing in himself and life. With that faith in himself, he is capable of performing great miracles. Yes, this is only a movie, but the concepts are absolutely applicable in our lives. We, too, are all capable of great miracles if we have faith in ourselves instead of our programming! These are very powerful concepts and I will talk more about them throughout this book.*

During my years of traveling this path, I've looked for less esoteric and more practical methods of expressing these concepts. I've always felt that these teachings would be so much more accessible to people if they could be put in terms that we use in our everyday lives. As I became more involved in the Toltec path, I was able



to see how much my mind behaved just like the computer on my desk, which has no freedom to behave any differently than it was programmed to. To alleviate my tendency to get dramatic and despondent, I made the choice to find a way to make it funny. To that end, and to help you understand all of this more clearly, I will use computer analogies throughout the rest of this book.



The Program and its Pitfalls

Chapter 2

Picture the brain as the most amazing computer ever created. Not only is it capable of orchestrating the mind to create a perfect 3-D virtual reality of the world we live in, but it can also perform calculations and memorize huge amounts of information. If that's not enough, the mind is also capable of filtering and interpreting the incoming perceptions that our human bodies react emotionally to.

"The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents."

— H.P. LOVECRAFT

Imagine that when a child is born, it has a brand new Pentium IV hard drive, but with no software included in the package! At this point, the baby's "computer" interacts through its capacity to react emotionally. It feels Mommy's warm body and it smiles and coos. When it's tired or it poops, it cries. It doesn't have any information in its program yet to explain or understand what it's experiencing, it just experiences! Unless a baby is sick, tired, hungry, or has just relieved itself in its diaper, it's happy and full of love.



From the time a child is very small, the humans around him or her start downloading millions upon millions of bytes of information and spam into the little computer. Parents start by teaching language, words for people and objects like "mommy," "daddy," "bottle," and "cookie." Later, as a child matures, parents start teaching abstract concepts — for example: love, family, friendship, ugly, pretty, stupid, smart, right and wrong, and what constitutes a good child versus a bad one. In teaching these concepts, parents domesticate their child by downloading files pertaining to social rules that exist in our reality and by using reward and punishment. If a child is a "good" boy or girl, he or she will get a reward and parental love. If the child does not obey the program, he or she will be punished. This training helps reinforce the socialization files so that no harm comes to the new little computer out in the world.

In the beginning, most of what comprises a child's computer program has been given to them from their parents, an entire set of human concept files and their corresponding beliefs. As



the child becomes older, though, information and spam starts coming in from sources other than their parents, and all of the downloaded files are not compatible. Parents, friends, family, TV, school, books, magazines, radio, and religious education teachers all download different information files into the child, in addition to all of the child's personal experiences and encounters. Amazingly, the mind actually finds a way to make some kind of sense of all this incoming information and files it in a way that makes it accessible at a moment's notice! It creates an actual structure for all the incoming data, like a massive filing cabinet!

Every time we acquire a new belief in our program, we have to agree with it in order for it to be accepted by the mind's computer, sort of like clicking on the "I accept" button when you are installing new software on our home computers. For example, if your parents told you that God lives in the sky and watches over us, you accepted that belief and it became part of your religion file. If they told you that you are ugly or stupid, that belief was put in your self-worth file.

How do we fall prey to this domestication process? Simply because we believe our parents. As children we don't know any better. Even if a child asks, "Why, Mommy?" parents keep repeating their own beliefs until the child agrees and accepts those beliefs as truth.

Once we grow up, we actually don't need our parents to domesticate and socialize us anymore because we have their belief system, programming, and spam imbedded in our mind. Think about the voice in your own head. Can't you just hear your parents talking? That voice tells you, "No, you can't do that. Yes, you can do this. That would be appropriate, but this would be inappropriate." Even if your parents are no longer living, you may still be arguing with them in your mind! That voice in your head originates from stored information in your computer program.



In other words, every stored file has the capacity to open and display its contents to you at any moment, sort of like those unwanted pop-up advertisements that appear on the screen of your computer when you're on-line! It's a constant barrage of extraneous information, or what I call mind spam!

We go through life experiencing everything through the eyes of our program. We perceive and interact with our reality depending on the information we already have stored in our computer, in addition to the daily accumulation of our personal experiences, which supports what we already believe. Once a belief is added to the program by agreement, a piece of personal power goes along with it to secure the file in place. As I said earlier, your personal power is your faith that the piece of information you just agreed to accept and download into your program is absolute truth. Once you put your faith into a belief, it becomes yours to keep. By the time you are an adult, you have accumulated thousands of concept files filled with multitudes of varying beliefs!

Many of these files have corrupt information, though. For example, if you were told as a child that you were not lovable and you believed it, that belief in your self-esteem file will act like a virus, corrupting and damaging many other files and creating the capacity for the computer to crash at any moment. (After all, if your home computer had executive or system files that were not totally compatible with one another or had corrupt information, do you think it could process information correctly? Absolutely not!)

This means every time you engage in a relationship, the "I am not lovable" belief in your self-esteem file will be opened and it will contaminate your perception and experience of the relationship. Moreover, your program will make sure that you create situations in life that prove and support the contents of your files. In this case, that means you will continue to have relationships that constantly prove to you that you are not lovable until you decide



that you are not going to put your faith or personal power into that belief anymore! I think you can see how our beliefs color our experiences, and not always for the higher good.

We go though life experiencing everything through the eyes of our program. We perceive and interact with our reality depending on the information we've already stored in our computer, in addition to the daily accumulation of personal experiences, which support what we already believe to be true.

It's the brain's job to take the sum of all the information the senses receive, and filter it through the information and experiences already contained in the mind's program files. The mind will then analyze, pigeon-hole, define, index, sort, label, register, log in, classify, catalog, compartmentalize, and categorize every situation it encounters! Ultimately these files affect our ability to make healthy and wise choices in our lives. As a result, we don't have clarity in our lives simply because we're always interpreting our situations through these conflicting and corrupt files.

Even more fascinating is that, by the time we're adults, we actually come to believe we're our computer program! In other words, we think "we" are the ones who are thinking. We totally forget that "we" are the entity we call "Spirit" that lives between the cells of our own body and we're not our mind or the totality of our programming. "We," as Spirit, have the power to utilize the program's files or not. Do you see how insidious the belief system and domestication are?

- Imagine if you had the ability to review the entirety of your system files and reorganize and re-structure your entire program.
- Imagine if you could rewrite all your corrupt and damaged files and quarantine all the viruses.



- Imagine if you could change all your files that tell you that you are not wonderful, smart, beautiful, handsome, fun, creative, successful, friendly and loving.
- Imagine if you could re-program yourself to believe you are capable of a most wonderful life filled with joy, happiness and love.

I'm here to tell you that you can do all of this. You are not required to hold onto beliefs that are creating unhappiness in your life! Now, that's what I call personal power!

You need your personal power to be intact in order to change the circumstances and conditions in your life. If your personal power is totally invested in maintaining your program, in what you believe about yourself and what you can or can't accomplish in life, nothing will change. Only by changing what you believe can you change your life. Failure to recognize this as a first step is the reason why so many people have read tons of books or taken classes and workshops and still find no real change in their lives!

The problem is our personal power and faith is all tied up maintaining a contaminated program. Our faith is the magic power that Spirit has endowed all of us with. Another word for this is Intent (In Toltec terms), which is our power of creation, the force that life uses to manifest itself in this reality. But instead of creating wonder and beauty in life, we spend every ounce of energy defending and supporting our beliefs, most of them based in fear. Using our awareness, we can choose which beliefs are borne of love and are serving us, and which spring from fear and are limiting our lives.

A limiting, fear-based belief that I found in my own program (dating back to my childhood), is that a person must be in a relationship to be complete in life, fulfilled and happy. This belief is based in the fear that a person isn't capable of making it on



their own and that they have no self-worth without a partner. After all, if you can't get a partner, something must be wrong with you and you could end up a "spinster." Thankfully I no longer subscribe to that belief but there are still millions of people who believe they will never survive without a partner, that they aren't good enough, not smart enough, not educated enough, or not innovative enough to make it on their own. They feel like failures without a relationship, rejected and alone. That's why so many people stay in relationships with partners that are abusive or just plain unrewarding rather than going solo. It's also why internet dating services are so popular.

If your own self-worth file contains a belief that says you are stupid and can never accomplish certain things in life, your life will be a very limited, self-fulfilling prophesy. Thy will be done. If you believe you are shy or ugly, what do you think life will reflect to you? If your faith is invested in these virus-ridden beliefs, your program and the universe will make sure your beliefs will be proven to be true. This is how Intent works. What you believe is what manifests in your life.

The concept that what you believe is what you create in life is not a new one, and can be found in many traditions including Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism. Look at this example from the New Testament, John 1:1: "In the beginning there was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." What we believe is what exits our mouth, and what exits our mouth, our word, is the power invested in us by Spirit to create our reality. When we use our word in vain, by speaking badly about ourselves or others, what are we doing with that gift of word? Are we creating a life of happiness, peace, and love?

The first time the structure of your program was created, you accepted all those concepts and beliefs without question, but as an adult, you have the ability to open the file cabinet, look through



your files again, and decide which ones are no longer serving you. If you look carefully, you can see that there is no inherent reality to any information in your program. Beliefs are quite arbitrary. Facts can be changed or manipulated. Truth depends on your personal point of view, the century you live in, or the country where you reside. (Knowing this, we have to ask ourselves why humans argue with loved ones, go to war, and waste their precious time and energy defending what is not even real.) By doing an inventory of the mind, the files that are not working can be transferred into a special storage cabinet reserved for items that are no longer useful. This allows you to create a new reality using your free will and to exercise choice as to which beliefs you'll invest your faith in.

Since humans are creatures of habit, we can easily look at our lives and see the patterns that have consistently repeated themselves. (An excellent example of this is the pattern I shared with you in Chapter 1 regarding the multiple failed relationships in my own life.) Basically, we're always reacting to situations rather than taking action in them. Why? Because we have no free will available. Free will means having the ability to make a choice. With all of our faith tied up in supporting and maintaining the beliefs in our program, we're left with very little personal power to make choices outside of the box. If I keep acting the same way in my relationships, is it any wonder that they always turn out the same way?

In any given situation, someone may say or do something that will "push your buttons." Immediately, without even thinking, you go into reaction. You can't even stop yourself; it's as if you're on auto-pilot. Even if you know you're about to say or do something you'll later regret, you can't stop; it's if you are possessed. Indeed, you are possessed by the computer program in your mind. A specific type of event will trigger very specific emotional responses, behaviors, and actions based on events that occurred during your domestication period and the beliefs and agreements you made regarding those events.



For example, perhaps your mother has always been demanding and prone to laying guilt trips on you. When she calls and says; “Why don’t you ever call me or come over for dinner?” you feel an argument welling up within you. Immediately, you go into reaction as your mind spam tells you, “I need to defend myself against her accusations.” This is because you have a belief deep in your program that says you are a bad child, and you can never please your parents. Of course your mother can’t make you feel guilty unless you already feel that you are. The guilt comes from the belief that you should please your parents and do everything that they tell you to do to be loved and approved of.

Perhaps when your partner forgets to take the garbage out, your reactions are caused by a different set of old beliefs than what sets you off where your mother is concerned. Maybe your partner has never been much help around the house, or he always waits for you to blow up before he’ll lift a finger. As a result, chores have become a battle ground. When you come home from working all day and see the smelly garbage in the kitchen, you go into reaction, becoming emotional and engaging in the same old unhealthy behavior patterns: “He hasn’t completed his chores as a considerate partner should. I don’t feel appreciated because my partner is not doing things the way I know they should be done, and I am sure as heck going to let him know about it. Doesn’t my partner know what his responsibilities are (according to my point of view)?”

As in the example with your mother, there’s no free will available to behave in a different way, only reactions, a series of behaviors based on wanting to be right according to the point of view of your programming and your past experiences. Click on a certain type of situation and a particular outcome plays out. It was quite a realization for me to see that I never acted in my life, only reacted based on my programming!



Normally, beliefs evolve slowly with time, but even if you have adopted new and more supportive beliefs, I'll bet many of your old virus-contaminated and corrupt beliefs are still driving your life, working insidiously behind the scenes. They act as hidden executive or system files that you can't easily find in your program. That is why you do things that you later regret and why you can't stop yourself from saying things and behaving in ways that you know are not healthy for you, physically or emotionally. For example, you don't want to argue with your mother, but somehow you do it anyway!

As humans, we only have a certain amount of energy per day. How we choose to use that allotment is up to us! You know how exhausted you feel after an argument? Well, imagine that you have used your allotment of energy for the day in that quarrel. Sometimes, we're even exhausted the following day because not only have we used that day's energy allotment but we've borrowed energy from the subsequent day! Now, after wearing yourself out in this way, do you really feel like changing things in your life? Probably not!

We waste our personal power and energy when we argue with other people about what we think is right, or about the way something should be done. Truth is relative and changes with your point of view. Imagine a big beach ball with pictures of several animals scattered around its perimeter. If you were looking at one side of the ball you might see a bear. If I were standing opposite you, I might be seeing a lion. Both of us would insist the ball contained only what we could visualize, a bear for you, and a lion for me. We would both be expressing what we believe about the ball from our personal points of view. Although both of us would see a portion of the truth about the ball, neither of us would have the whole truth, which can only be seen when you take into account all possible points of view.



When you think you're right about something and are ready to defend yourself, think carefully if you have truly considered all possible points of view or if you're operating from the limited perspective of your personal beliefs. We frivolously use our power by arguing, getting angry, defensive, jealous, and by holding grudges — all because we have to be right and because we don't recognize that we're just defending a belief in a program... and one that isn't necessarily truth!

As a result, if you spend your day defending and justifying your point of view and what you believe about yourself, you won't have any free energy to change what you don't like in your life. (Turning on the TV or watching a movie to zone out is sometimes all you have the strength to do after engaging in some particularly unpleasant interactions.) It will seem that your life remains the same year after year. If you defend your belief that you can't get out of your current circumstances because you don't have the money, you have children to take care of, no one cares about you, you can't leave your current relationship, you have too much work and not enough time, etc., surely nothing will change in your life. All your energy and personal power will go into supporting your belief that you are stuck and a victim of your circumstances. This doesn't have to be the case, though.



These are the steps needed to reprogram and eliminate our mind spam!

- First, take inventory of the totality of the program and all the beliefs and spam contained within its files.
- Second, quarantine and sequester all infecting viruses and isolate the files they have corrupted.
- Third, heal the damage the viruses created in your program so it can function and run in a healthy way so you can cease your reactive behaviors and emotional responses. To do this you must re-write and replace all the virus-ridden beliefs contained within your damaged and corrupted system files.
- Last, add files that are specifically designed to create and support love and happiness and optimize the efficiency and speed of the program.

By following these four steps you will be on your way to a happier and better functioning mind –which is exactly what we will be doing in this book!



The Universe in the Mind

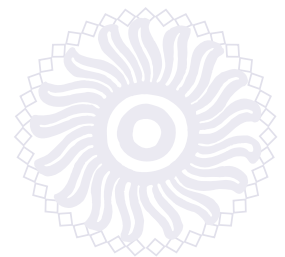
Chapter 3

In Chapter 2, I talked about how the program is formed, how information is downloaded into the mind, and how we use our faith to hold those beliefs in place. Now we need to look at how what we perceive with the senses affects the creation of the program. This is critical because everything we perceive and experience in life is received by the brain and either affects or is affected by the mind's program. To be able to understand this process I'm going to explain how the brain receives information and how that information is processed and perceived. And no, you don't have to be a doctor to understand this; it's actually very simple.

"Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts."

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

Your eyes are open. You see a book before you, correct? Well, how are you seeing? You're seeing because there is light present. Light hits objects and people, bouncing off them all the time. This light goes in through your pupil and lens, and creates a little image on your retina, the special tissue which is located in the back of your eye. Then your optic nerve (the big nerve that collects all the information that has been recorded on your retina) transforms all this information into a series of chemical and electrical messages. These messages then split off and spread along multiple nerves taking the picture of this book into many sections of your brain. Based on this information, you can say you have never seen an object in your whole life, just the patterns of light reflecting off of those objects. In other words, your brain assembles the object in your mind for you to "see," a true virtual reality! There the information is interpreted, analyzed, qualified, and pigeon-holed.



Your eyes function just like mirrors since they contain a tiny replica of the outside reality projected onto the back of your eyes. Therefore, no interpretation is done in the eye at all. Once the brain receives the information, it sends it to various areas to be processed. This same procedure occurs with your other four senses too, although sight and hearing tend to dominate. The brain creates a 3-D image in the virtual reality of your mind of the person or thing you are observing and interprets and



analyzes the information according to what you have been taught and what you have experienced. This is normal, and is exactly what the brain is supposed to do. Two scenarios can occur any time you perceive: Your perception is either filtered through the multitude of program files and distorted or colored by what you already believe; or the perception is new and creates a belief or agreement in the program based on what you are experiencing for the first time.

For instance, let's say as a child, you had an uncomfortable experience with a brown-haired girl from Brooklyn. Maybe she was a bully who used to beat you up. As an adult, your friend introduces you to a woman with brown hair who has a Brooklyn accent. Your retina receives this picture and then sends it to your brain. Then your mind says, "Oooh, I don't like her. I know what she's about." Or perhaps instead your best friend from Brooklyn had brown hair and your childhood world revolved around her. In this case, you entered information into your friendship file as a child and made an agreement that brown-haired Brooklyn girls are great. As a result, upon meeting a brown-haired Brooklynite as an adult, your mind interprets the data according to your past and you hear, "Oh, that woman looks very sweet. I would like to know her personally." In both cases, you have perceived this new woman with your senses, but interpreted and reacted to her according to what you have experienced in the past. What you believe in your program about brown-haired Brooklyn gals has colored your current life experience. This happens subconsciously, as it's part of our computer's function.

If you grew up in a home where your family always talked derisively about people of other religions or races, you would have put that information in your file on humanity and you would take this information as truth. As you matured, you would experience everything through these beliefs and they would color your perception of everyone you meet in life. Your agreements would affect whom you choose as a friend, who you work for,



Values & Concepts Become Corrupted

Chapter 4

We're all so busy and immersed in our own lives that we're totally unaware of the lies we all are living. Think about this for a moment: From the time you were young, you were taught how to be a man or a woman, what it means to be a man or a woman, what men and women do and where they can go in life. But ... according to whom? According to your parents, your teachers, the TV, and the movies? According to this society, the big program out there? Does anything that you have been taught have any inherent truth to it? What if this life, this reality, were something totally different? You never had a chance to choose your reality; you were born into it, and of course, you bought the illusion, lock, stock, and barrel!

"It's the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions."

— THOMAS HENRY
HUXLEY

Many times along my path I have asked myself, who am I really? Growing up in the '60s and '70s it was considered cool to ask those types of "metaphysical" questions. I was 40 years old when I realized I still was asking the same questions, living the same stressful life, and didn't know one iota more about who I was than I had when I was young! So much for the belief about being older and wiser! In reality I was more stubborn, opinionated, and rigid. At that point, it became a crisis of sorts to truly understand who I was. I asked myself, am I just a compilation of my experiences on this planet, a combination of all I have been taught or am I the formless, limitless woman that Spirit has placed in this manifest form we call the body? Am I really what I believe I am? Am I my personality? Are you?



When you say, "This is how I like to dress, this is the music I like, the car I drive, the neighborhood I live in, the furniture I have," who is really saying that? Is it the computer program in your mind, what you have been taught to believe, or is it the real you? Is it really true that you have to look the way you do, speak the way you do, or choose the friends you have? Are you really the religion you were born into, the color of your skin, or the profession you work in? Do you call yourself ugly, short, tall, skinny, fat, stupid, smart, funny, serious, shy, outgoing, poor, or



rich? Are you truly any of those things? Have you ever considered the limitations you have put on the expression of your Spirit by the way you describe yourself?

When I was practicing medicine, I was a fan of jazz and classical music. Upon looking at my beliefs on a deeper level, I came to realize I believed that “intelligent people” listened to these types of music, and I wanted people to see how educated and sophisticated I was, so I convinced myself that I loved these genres of music. The truth is that I love many types of music: R&B, rap, pop, rock & roll, and world music in addition to jazz and classical. I was limiting my experience of what I was willing to listen to because I didn’t want to be judged for listening to “lesser” music. To be able to admit something like this to yourself takes the ability to be absolutely truthful and fearless regarding the contents of your program. If we have thousands of beliefs like this that limit our enjoyment of life, how can we be truly happy and free to express ourselves? Without awareness, I would never have moved past my denial system to be able to see this limiting belief.

Humans have values and concepts in our program that other living beings on earth don't. We have concepts like marriage, relationships, money, work, vacation, property, health, fashion, war, religion, sports, education, manners, food, politics, friendship, family, etc. Every person you meet has opinions and beliefs on each concept based on their own program. Let's look at a very practical example of this: Imagine you have been married for several years and your anniversary is coming up. In your mind, you believe that if your partner loves you, he will surprise you with a lovely gift or even a night out on the town. Instead, the big day comes and you receive a blender. Now you're really angry. You start an argument with your beloved, saying, "You don't care enough about me to put some real thought into what I would like for a gift. We've been together all these years and all you can think to buy me is a blender? You probably forgot



about our anniversary and got this at the last minute. If you really loved me, you would have bought me something nice! You are the worst and most inconsiderate partner!”

What would have to be in your programming in order for this argument to occur? First, there’s the concept of marriage and all of its inherent rules. Obviously, there is a belief that one must celebrate the anniversary of a marriage. Then there is the belief that there is great importance in recognizing that date. There is a file about what constitutes a proper gift. The cost and the quality are important and there are rules about what items can even qualify as a gift, and not only qualify as a gift, but as a gift for this particular occasion. Then there are rules from the love files, which state, in a nutshell, that if your mate loves you, he should know exactly what you have in your program. He should have the ability to figure out exactly what makes you happy by anticipating your every need (which is exactly what he would have done if he knew the contents of your programming)!

In the above example, you would have used what you believe about marriage and love and twisted and distorted it to justify and defend what you believe your partner should do for you. You would then feel justified to argue and be angry with your partner for what you feel are his shortcomings. Your partner’s program, on the other hand, may tell him that anniversaries are not important and that living a happy life together is all that matters. To him, a blender may be the perfect gift for entertaining. He probably never thought this type of reaction would the result from this gift. This is a perfect example of how we hurt others by defending what we have in our programs.



It's also possible to take the concept of friendship and manipulate friends into doing a favor for you by saying, "If you were my friend, you would help me move. After all, I always help you out when you need it." Who said friendship means having to do what you ask of someone? Or you can manipulate and distort the concept of honesty by saying, "Oh, I am not stealing those things from work. They have plenty of money and they don't pay me what I deserve anyway." Any concept can be twisted to reflect warped programming.

If we look carefully at our beliefs, we can see all the trouble they can create in our lives and our world. When we believe in things that are coming from fear, happiness can't possibly be the result. An extreme example of this would be the tragic events of 9/11. When Osama Bin Laden orchestrated the bombing of the World Trade Center, he did so because his beliefs regard Americans as evil, unclean infidels and that his actions would be rewarded by Allah. Many people were very angry at the Moslem faith and the Moslem people because of this. But it's neither the religion nor the Moslem people who are at fault; after all, the Moslem faith teaches love. One man took the beautiful writings of the Koran and the Moslem faith and twisted and distorted them because of the viruses contained in his personal program.

Once the teachings were corrupted in his own mind, he felt justified taking action according to what he believed. If our personal beliefs are based in fear — fear of people different from us, fear of different religions, political systems, race or color, only anger, hatred and violence can result. In return, our fear of people who we believe are not like us, justifies our actions in waging war on them. Fear-based beliefs begetting more fear-based beliefs. Believing we're all separate (the concept of duality) rather than part of the One is the root of this fear.



At one point in time, I believed that there was evil in the world, but I don't believe that at all anymore. I feel that people are all manifestations of Spirit and that evil is a result of the presence of corrupted virus-ridden files in the minds of human beings and people obeying the contents of those files. When we take knowledge and distort it and believe things that aren't true, it creates fear in human beings. It's then that they are capable of committing indescribable acts of violence and evil.

Of course, our actions may not be as devastatingly violent as Bin Laden's, but we definitely have hurt our friends and family with our need to be right! We justify and defend our beliefs and make them correct at the expense of others. We all take these wonderful human concepts and twist and distort them to support our personal point of view. How many people in your life have suffered as a result of your defending your own fear-based beliefs? Take some time right now to think of how you do this in your life!



Silencing Spam with Spirit

Chapter 5

Your programs files and beliefs have been spamming you constantly as you have been reading this book. While trying to understand the many new concepts here, you may be having a conversation in your head that sounds like, “Oh, that’s interesting. I wonder what she means by that?” or, “Hmm, I don’t like what she just said.” As I mentioned earlier, your mind is just doing its job of qualifying and analyzing everything it perceives and comparing it to what is already contained within your program. Understanding this is important because it’s essential to be able to recognize the difference between the real you, or Spirit, and your program. If you can’t tell the difference between your mind and your Spirit, you will always be tempted to listen to your spam (which sometimes can be quite tasty but not necessarily good for you!).

“And now here is my secret, a very simple secret; it’s only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential to the eye.”

— ANTOINE
DE SAINT-EXUPERY

Simply put, Spirit speaks through the heart with your feelings and not through your mind with words. Oftentimes, you will hear something in your head and think it’s Spirit speaking but this is not truth. Spirit’s silent and is easily hidden by the noisy mind and its programming. The mind likes to be boss; it’s very smart and certainly does not want to relinquish its power to Spirit, which is the expression of your heart. It’s constantly talking to (or spamming) you, to divert your attention from your heart. When the program in your mind stops you from trusting your gut feelings or intuition, this is what is happening! By recognizing and acknowledging this process, you can start listening to your true self instead of a program filled with false information.



The real self is “no-thing,” as opposed to nothing. Spirit has no name, personality, race, color, or body type. Many, perhaps most, people relate very strongly with the belief that they are the color of their skin or their race, but only the physical body has these attributes. When we die, of course, we don’t take our physical body with us. Although I grew up Caucasian and Jewish, I now realize that I am truly neither one of these things. Caucasian is just what color we attribute to skin like mine ... and color in itself is a just a human concept.



Not all creatures on earth even perceive color! For example, my mother's dog can't tell the difference between a Caucasian, an Oriental, or an Afro-American person. She only sees black and white and shades of grey! Bats see with sonar and have no eyesight at all. All humans look the same to them!

Religion is another human concept, something we have invented in response to a calling we feel deep inside us. But Spirit can't be defined by the dogma humans have created with their religious practices. Spirit is simply "I am." It exists, it's conscious, it's aware, it creates, it's life, and it's unconditional love. Even using the word "Spirit" and my lovely descriptions are limiting the expression of that which is "no-thing."

At the beginning of my journey, I found it difficult to realize that I was not my mind or my body ...after all, I am thinking and moving, aren't I? Our association with ourselves as Spirit rather than as mind or body (or matter) is certainly a complex concept to ponder! The way I was able to understand this better was with a little experimental mind game. Imagine for a moment that you had one leg amputated. Would you still consider yourself "you" if one part of your body was missing? What if you had both legs removed ...would you still be you? What if both legs, both arms, and all your non-essential organs were removed ... then what?

All matter, ourselves included, is made of atoms. They compose our skin, hair, eyes, brain, cells, organs, blood, etc. So then what resides in between the millions of atoms composing our body? You do! As Spirit, you are present in your physical body, living in between and around the atoms that your body is composed of. That is why when a body part is physically removed, "we" are still there, whole and undisturbed. Your Spirit can't be cut off from you or split into parts or pieces.



To express yourself on this plane of reality, you must use the vehicle you have been given, your body. Luckily for all of us, this vehicle includes one great computer, the mind. But we're not the computer; we only utilize it. Once I could picture this, I was able to start separating myself from my mind! I understood that my mind had a program and I could choose to use the program or not, or change the program as needed. I stopped believing the mind spam and fear-based things my mind was telling me. It was easier for me to see how arbitrary the beliefs in my mind were. I started to connect with a vague feeling of unconditional love, peace and contentment I had deep within me. Later, I was not only able to expand this feeling of divine consciousness within me, but I was able to connect with the divine presence within all living things.

It's important to understand that anyone can have this kind of experience with Spirit but in order to do so, one must detach totally from the mind. In fact, most humans have actually experienced this at some time but never really understood what transpired. For example, have you ever had your breath taken away from you just by perceiving the beauty and immensity of nature? You know the kind of feeling that is so overwhelming it brings tears to your eyes and takes your breath away? You're not thinking in those moments, just perceiving with all your senses and feeling. Why do you think you're having this kind of emotional reaction? Well, it's quite simple; you're perceiving the real you reflected within the immensity of nature, your true self, the absolute wonder of the perfection of creation, and the unconditional expression of universal love.



Imagine if all humans had this awareness. No one would bother to go to war over religion or any other invented human concept because they would realize that there is only the illusion of difference. No one would bother to attach their self-worth to their body weight, clothing brands, car, or where they live! People would not try to impose their beliefs on others because they would know they are arbitrary. It's possible to live in a world like this, but we all need to come to feel that this is true for ourselves and not just because we read it in a book. I can assure you that once you have an actual experience as Spirit, this will no longer just be a theosophical theory. And the more you separate yourself from the noisy voices and mind spam in your head, the more you will feel Spirit moving through you. With time, you may even be able to quiet your inner dialogue and totally detach from it. You don't need that spam talking in your head 24/7 in order to survive in the world — even though your mind would have you believing that you do!



FOR MORE...



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Also on her web site, you will find information on her exciting events, mentoring program and workshops — or you can sign up for her free newsletter, free weekly audio message and free teleclasses. In addition you will find a fantastic community forum, a busy blog, pithy podcasts and a scintillating store! If you are ready to embark on a Spiritual Journey or Retreat, please visit:

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I look forward to the opportunity of meeting you and passing along the message of unconditional love, light and joy!

*Blessings along your path, and may your life
be filled with the abundance of
the wonderment and magic
that life has to offer.
With all my love,
Sheri*

***Que tu sol sea brillante!
— May your sun shine brightly! —***



About The Author

Sheri Rosenthal is a Mentor Toltec Teacher trained by don Miguel Ruiz, the author of [THE FOUR AGREEMENTS](#) and has apprenticed with him since 1998. She was a Podiatrist for 16 years and the director of a surgical residency program. For 2 years Sheri acted as Executive Director of Sixth Sun Foundation, a Toltec non-profit corporation. Most recently Sheri has been appointed as a Fellow of the Center of Spiritual Life at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida.



Over the past years Sheri has had many profound experiences that have changed the way she sees reality. It is her goal to share the possibilities of reality and the light of the divine to all those she meets. Sheri is the author of [THE IDIOTS GUIDE TO TOLTEC WISDOM](#). (Click on book title for ordering info.)