

Shani Abromowitz
SOS - E4E Edible Landscaping
W7 (W9) E4E Recap
Winter 2016

Last night at Enterprise for Equity, the class reviewed our cash flow projections spreadsheet, where we sat on taxes, switched gears to busting beliefs, and ended with operating systems and flowcharts. This class was intense. Also, last night a fellow classmate hooked me up with a project she's working, one of her new clients are interested in edible landscaping. More on that can be read [here](#).

I met with my study buddy this week on wednesday. He asked for access to my work because apparently I'm pretty far along. We were both confused about taxes, but there is a tax workshop put on by the department of revenue which I'm going to attend. It's free and focused on new businesses.

Thursday night started with the Cash Flow Projections spreadsheet. To review cash flow projections, one needs access to a computer. Being that my laptop is second hand, old, and very delicate, I was left to listen and draw. The class reviewed the usual things, so, I just let them go for it.

From there we moved into right-brain territory; things got very touchy feely. Joanna started us on a Belief Busting exercise. Here she refers to [Byron Katie](#), or Katie for short. Katie is a Seattle based coach of sorts who offers helpful advice on dealing with interpersonal issues. These issues usually stem from projections of ourselves onto others, and thus we as the interacting observers become biased participants when we have negative communications with someone. However, just like we learn in lit class, the protagonist becomes antagonized by other people or entities, the environment, or themselves. A lot of the time the antagonistic voices coming from us to us are more debilitating than Hero's perspective on our life. It's easy to ignore people, it's hard to ignore our own critiques. These inner voices can either help or hurt you. As an entrepreneur, it's important to limit risks, even those stemming from you. That's why you

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need to question everything: beliefs, beliefs about those beliefs, opinions on anything, memories, the works. Question it all.

The exercise started by analysing the "Speed and Greed" culture we live, and the various forms this culture takes, physically, emotionally, mentally- it's hard to get away from this system. Here's some examples the class came up for the manifestation of this cvultuerwe in our lives:

- Monthly bills
- Trading on futures
- C cap and trade
- "Exponential Growth" (economics)
- Food as a luxury
- Health as a luxury
- Planned obsolescence
- Single use items
- No recycling
- Fast food
- Limited land access and price barriers
- "minimum wage"
- Personal exhaustion
- Externalization of the costs of goods made
- automation/technology
- Instant gratification
- cheap food and clothes
- A three hour wait for a ten minute doc visit

Y'all can probably think of much more. This is what we came up with in two minutes or less.

Obviously, we're inundated with this speed and greed culture. Further, the way we think about money is corrupt. You know the saying "Money is the root of all evil"? It makes people very intimidated and resentful of the power of money over their lives. However, that quote is wrong. The accurate quote is: "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." The *love* of money. Greed. Money is separate from obsession. We're blaming the object, not the participant. How responsible is it to scapegoat an object? I don't mean to get political, but guns really don't kill people. They sorta just sit there until acted upon by an outside force. It's the intention of the user that's important. Here's a few things the people in the class have grown up hearing about money, especially in their childhood:

- Money wasn't talked about
- "Money isn't important"
- "Money is power"

- "Money isn't everything"
- "Security first"
- "Start saving now"
- "Everything(one) has a price"
- "Money can buy people"
- "Do what makes money"
- "Sacrifice now for the long term"
- "Money doesn't grow on trees"
- "Pay yourself first"
- "Million tricks to money"
- "Penny saved is a penny earned"
- "Money isn't polite to talk about"
- "No one ever went broke overestimating the stupidity of people"

You decide what these quotes say about our attitude towards money. I remember, when I was around 12, my dad told me to close my eyes. I did. I heard him reach into his pocket, pull something out, and drop it. It sounded like money, and when I was told to open my eyes, I found I was right: it was money. My dad told me I was a decent kid, because Americans (my dad is Russian), are too focused on money. They would have opened their eyes. Because they're greedy. That's the mentality I grew up with around money- save it for a bad day, it's the root of all evil. Not the obsession of money- but the thing itself. How can anybody interact healthily with something they need to pinch their nose and hold at arm's length to deal with? It takes an attitude change.

This ushered us into, probably, the most emotional part of the night- where we challenged some of our deep beliefs. The exercise starts with us writing down some of our limiting beliefs. Here's mine:

- I will have to work until I die. My life belongs to the machine. There won't be money for retirement.
- Money will control my happiness by limiting what I can do.
- People won't take me seriously- I don't break 5', I'm a jewish female.
- When I get injured, I'll lose the use of my body and thus will lose my business/income.

-It would be easier to work for somebody else.

-There's no point, because we're all gonna choke on carbon and methane soon enough.

-I will never have enough money.

-I won't have time to do what I love to do (art).

Now the goal of this belief busting exercise is to turn any of these sentences in on themselves. It's not as easy as saying, "Well, I will have enough money". That's disingenuous, just words I don't believe. As a student, I volunteered myself for this exercise because I'm insatiably curious and want to know what the impact of this exercise really could be. So I took one of my cruelest beliefs for this exercise:

Question one) What is the belief?

"When I get injured, I'll lose the use of my body and thus will lose my business/income."

This belief is very real for me. I injured my knee a few years ago, it took me out of the farming game for a year. I couldn't use my leg. I was stuck on crutches waiting three months for my surgery, and then went through an 8 month active rehabilitation, just to teach myself to walk. The pain was horrible, I was allergic to most of the meds they gave me, so I stopped taking them a week or so after the surgery. There's so much more to say, but no way I can explain it if you haven't gone through it, and if you have, you don't need me to explain it. Let's say I had quite a bit of money before my injury. Afterwards, L&I left me high and dry, I wasn't getting scholarships, I had no job, and by the end of it I landed into the same poverty I struggle with today. My work is very physical. If I get hurt, what am I supposed to do? Not what I'm doing.

That's how I prefaced my belief that I'll be left to struggle in poverty with a broken body if I get hurt. With Trump trying to repeal the ACA, and me unable to afford healthcare, this belief sends me into a panic attack. So, Joanne walked me through how to flip this belief.

Question two) Is the belief true?

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Yes, this belief stems from experience.

Question three) How does this belief make you feel?

As I've said, this belief is very real for me. I had a panic attack thinking about. I went sweaty, I got shakey, my face went red, my leg started throbbing, I relieve the pain of a medicine-less rehabilitation- it's not a fun feeling.

Step four) Pretend you're completely unable to think that thought. That belief literally cannot exist in this reality. Pretend it was never possible to believe that belief.

Easier said than done, but sure, pretend I've pretended.

Question four) How do you feel without that belief?

The same way I feel everyday. Pretty neutral. Perhaps, instead of becoming a poor invalid after an injury, I could bring on interns to act as my body, I'll get good at online work, and I'll become a famous artist. Maybe I'll write a book.

Question five) Is there a stress-free reason to keep thinking this belief?

Absolutely not.

Question six) How do you feel now?

Still depressed. The threat of injury is still very real, and very painful, and heavily laced with negative consequences, but the way I participate in this plot is different- more active.

So, that's the exercise. Just because we started at point A- a place of fear and victimization, and we turned it into something other than a death sentence, doesn't mean that the belief is unfounded. It just shows that we have control over what those beliefs mean to us- how desperate we start out being, to the cunning people we turn into when we're not weighed down by so much negativity. We fear fear. We actively hurt ourselves emotionally, to protect ourselves from physical pain. "It would be easier to work for someone else" means, "I would be

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at less physical risk if I think this limiting thought, and thus I am protecting myself. Question everything.

We sort of switched back to left brain from there. We finished the night on our business Operations, which basically is a flowchart of instructions. This includes, but most certainly is not limited to: customer service, production, labor, accounting, sourcing, marketing and promotions, bidding, distribution, negotiations, sales, human resources, operating procedures, inventory...For my service business, these systems are mainly: record keeping, marketing and promotions, client courting, bidding, contract writing, paperwork, production, constant communication, R&D, resource procurement, potentially delivery, implementation, maintenance, billing, and taxes. To manage these systems, the protocols start as soon as I begin courting a client, and do not end until that client has terminated our project. The protocols can be displayed in a drop box, or a thought-web, or a flowchart. I prefer a flowchart. This flowchart is meant to be an explicit step by step of every job and subjob. This streamlines a workflow, offers troubleshooting, and helps instruct the client.

Which is where we end- the homework for this week is to:

- Keep working on everything up until this class.
- Turn around our beliefs and be more positive about our business.
- Operational systems (the flowchart)

It's pretty light, lucky for me, because week 10 is next monday.

Until next time!

Shani A

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