

Overcome Limiting Beliefs So You Can Stay on the Path to Success

FEBRUARY 27, 2019 BY [CARL GREER](#) — [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

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My doubles tennis partner and I were playing in the championship of a tournament and far ahead of our opponents and if we were to win the next point, we would win the match. But suddenly, our limiting beliefs got the better of us: We started to play not to lose. Instead of continuing to play as we had, we became afraid that something would go wrong and we would lose that point, then the set, and then the match. We sabotaged ourselves by being too cautious and fearful of making mistakes. It reminded me that if you want to overcome limiting beliefs, you have to recognize the fearful belief that underlies them.

For my tennis partner and I, the fear was that we could not count on our streak of excellent playing to continue, that our luck would run out. The truth was we were playing especially well due to our hard work at building our skills individually and as a team. Our mindsets had not yet caught up with the truth that we were playing better than ever. Our fear was that playing as we had been would not be good enough to win.

How often do *you* prematurely change a winning life strategy?

All of us have limiting beliefs based in our past experiences, and they can get in the way once we start to see evidence that those beliefs are no longer true. A person who finally begins to lose weight and stick to an exercise and eating pattern that is keeping the weight off may look back at the past and think, "I have to be wary. I start out great but always end up reverting to the old habits." Limiting beliefs can sabotage your ability to fully trust that circumstances have changed—and that you have changed. Whether your old, limiting belief is, "I am never going to exercise regularly and eat well," "I'm unlucky at love," "I'm not a winner," or something else, when you let it influence your thinking in the present, you end up playing not to lose—but then do.

The past does not have to determine your perceptions about yourself. Old, limiting beliefs can cause you to unknowingly sabotage yourself. If your successes are new, give yourself credit for making positive changes. Perhaps you are more mindful of your movements, or you now work more collaboratively with others. Perhaps you have built new skills that are serving you well. Don't assume that your successes are due only to luck that can change quickly. Take the time to give yourself credit for what you have done well to get you to where you are now.

It's never too late to rethink the strategy of trying not to lose. You can overcome your limiting beliefs of the past and recognize that you are capable of achieving success at this moment in your life. Identify what those limiting beliefs about yourself are and then consciously choose to change them. Ask yourself, "What beliefs would I like to hold instead"?

One way to overcome limiting beliefs and replace them with more desirable ones that support your success is to find a somewhat secluded spot out in nature and become quiet and fully present in the moment, focusing on your breath as you inhale and exhale. Observe yourself as part of nature and, like, nature, changing as new things come to life and old things die away. As you feel yourself more relaxed, and connected to the force of nature that surrounds you, you can ask three questions, allowing plenty of time for the answers to arise within you.

"What do I need to know right now so that I stop playing to lose?"

"What do I need to let go of?"

"What do I need to bring in?"

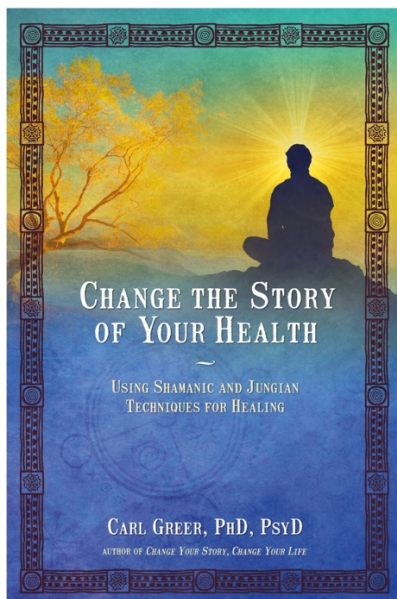
When you are finished, think about what you learned and how you can apply it to your life. What beliefs do you want to say good-bye to so that you can play to win, not to lose? What beliefs do you want to instill? How will you affirm them and make them a part of your mindset?

All of us can change our luck, change our beliefs, and change the stories of our lives by using the power of the mind. Working with your unconscious, letting its wisdom guide you as you become quiet and reflective, can help you ensure that you overcome limiting beliefs, stop self-sabotaging, and move forward on the path to success. Recommit to the possibility that you can achieve your goals, and acknowledge that now, you are playing to win.

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