



## Attitude Management

We live in an uncertain and fast changing world with a lot to be anxious about, but within this whirling sea of change that can sometimes feel out of control, we have control over just one thing. What is it?

No one can make you feel bad. No-one forces you to have road rage when someone cuts you up at the traffic lights. If your car is off the road, you can choose to see it as a way of getting some exercise or catching up on your reading on public transport. Whoever you are, whatever you do, you can control your attitude. How fantastic is that?!

*'No-one can make you jealous, angry, vengeful and greedy - unless you let him.'* Napoleon Hill.

Isn't it wonderful to know that you can choose your attitude to redundancy, to criticism, to your kids or grandchildren making a mess on your carpet, to an uncertain pension, health service or economy?

The ultimate in control. The ultimate in power. Choosing your attitude.

In any one moment, however stressful, however difficult, you can choose your attitude to what's occurring.

Let's face it, it would be easier if our minds had an 'off' switch'. If only! But they don't, so noticing the thoughts and feelings that you have and choosing to change your attitude is the alternative. It takes practice, but it can become a habit before you know it.



Here's some examples:

- When you get made redundant, you can choose to see it as an opportunity to find work that's more you, rather than feel rejected
- When you are stuck in a traffic jam, you can choose to enjoy the unexpected free time and relax and listen to your favourite music, or you can get wound up about the delay, about which you can do absolutely nothing and raise your blood pressure
- When a friend cancels a night out, you can cook yourself a nice meal with some unexpected time relaxing or you can choose to feel resentful and annoyed
- When your partner doesn't respond to you in the way that you want, you can create meaning and negativity about this, or you can accept it and move on
- When it rains on a weekend and you are stuck inside with the kids instead of outside with lots of space, you can choose to create a tea party with home made cakes and have fun, or you can choose to sit around and mope and put the kids in front of the TV

I'm not saying it's always easy, but it's a choice to make a choice and to choose your attitude.

Our minds can really torture us! They are a sign of our intelligence as animals - the human race, but they can imprison us! In coaching we call the chatter in our heads "Gremlins". They are the unhelpful negative constant chatter that fills our heads with negative rubbish and stops us from being present in the here and now.



Any of these sound familiar?!

- *Why didn't he put a new toilet roll on the holder? What does he think I am, a servant?!*
- *She's at it again, nattering away, interrupting the football!*
- *He never listens to what I'm saying; I don't know why I bother!*
- *Why doesn't she let me wind down from work?! I just need a bit of time to let go of the day's stresses and I'll be happy to chat*
- *My boss doesn't care whether I enjoy my job or not, he's just interested in his own agenda*

It is amazing how many inner rather than outer conversations we have and how many assumptions we make without clarifying or evidence! It's a whole world up there in our heads!

You can choose your attitude and reaction to anything, it is just making a conscious choice, knowing how and developing a habit. It's a bit like exercising a muscle, it takes a bit of work but once you have, it gets easier to stay in shape. I was getting nervous the other day about doing an event, and I didn't like how I was feeling, so I chose to be relaxed, and it worked! As a result the week leading up to the event was enjoyable rather than stressful.



## 10 tips to choose your attitude

1. Accept what is
2. Notice what assumptions you are making about something or someone
3. Ask clarifying questions
4. Notice what meaning you create from what someone says without checking what they actually mean and the impact this has
5. Notice recurring negative thoughts and feelings and when they arise
6. Try choosing a positive attitude to whatever happens for an hour
7. If you catch yourself being negative, say to yourself, 'but on the positive side', ...
8. Notice what vicious circles – 'conversational cul de sacs' - you get stuck in with people close to you, draw them out on a piece of paper and discuss them
9. Pretend you are someone else and respond as they would respond to a challenging situation
10. Listen intently to the sounds around you and your inner mental chatter should quieten

## Client quote

*'My life before coaching was like MDF, now it's like oak'. James C.*

Rachel Brushfield is a director at Energise, The Talent Liberation Company, tel 0845 22 55 010; [rachel@liberateyourtalent.com](mailto:rachel@liberateyourtalent.com) Energise provide bespoke programs to unlock people potential and help people to change career and work better. Rachel specialises in career reinvention. [www.liberateyourtalent.com](http://www.liberateyourtalent.com)