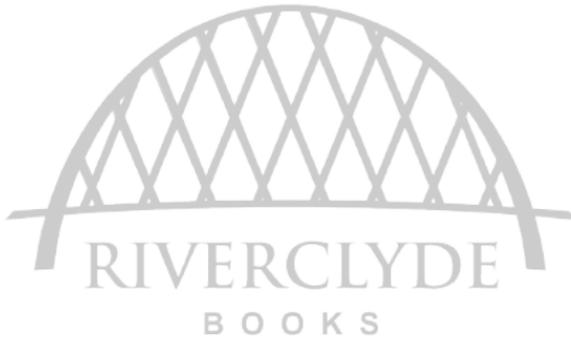


Breakthrough:

A Blueprint for your Mind

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We will feel what we think. You'll discover that all of our feelings are an entirely internal process controlled by the filters of our minds and not by people or the world around us. Find out how feelings are created and what that means for you.

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Our minds are governed by a simple set of rules that define every action we take. What are these rules? Where did they come from? Can they be changed? Let's look back before we start looking forward.

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One of the most difficult things we are ever asked to do is to just be ourselves. So, who are you . . . and how do you know if you are the 'right' you? Or the best you? Or you at all? Learn the skills of developing your own personal identity and proudly stamping it on the world.



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Blowing bubbles

Have you ever, in a fleeting moment of summertime whimsy, taken a big wedge of lemon and presented it to a young child on the pretence that your gift is some sort of sweet treat? Not that I am suggesting you play such an evil trick on any unsuspecting child, but there is a strange delight in watching as their face contorts as they experience the unexpected sour taste for the first time!

Think about it now. Try to remember the first time you ever tasted lemon. How strong was the flavour? Did it hit you all at once or was more gradual? If you can't remember the first time, try thinking about the most recent time instead. The distinctive lemony smell, the acidic tartness that makes you want to suck your cheeks in, the lingering aftertaste – try to really immerse yourself in everything lemon.

Now, this will be more powerful for some than others but, as you think about the lemon, is your mouth watering?

Well, that's a bit odd isn't it . . .? There is obviously no lemon yet your body responds as if there is. This little experiment demonstrates one of the fundamental workings of the mind.

You only need to *think* about a lemon (or anything else for that matter) and your mind and body will respond *as if* it was real,

producing effects similar to those that would be experienced in the presence of the real stimulus.

And in that lemon-flavoured nutshell is the secret to every emotion you will ever feel in your life . . . your mind does not know the difference between something that is real and something that is imagined. It will respond the same way to both.

This is very, very important. It's so important, in fact, I'm not only going to say it again but I'm also going to give it a line all to itself. . . .

Your mind does *not* know the difference between something that is real and something that is imagined.

When a picture of something pops onto the wee movie screen inside your head, your mind unconsciously triggers the appropriate emotional and physical responses regardless of whether the stimulus is right in front of you in real life or simply something you've made up.

It's important to realise that your mind only pays attention to what is playing on your movie screen even though what is playing may have nothing to do with the reality of the world around you or your circumstances within that world. Now that may not make a lot of sense just now, but just file it away and we'll come back to it later.

So why is this important? Am I suggesting you can change your life simply by thinking of lemons? Do I intend to treat all modern mental health issues with my citrus-based imagination game? Well, no, but think of it like this . . . if our unconscious mind only perceives our reality on the inside, what would happen if we replace the lemon with something else on the screen?

Think of strawberries. Does that have the same effect? Think about your favourite childhood meal. Does that cause your mouth to water or does it cause other feelings to appear? What if this technique were to be applied to your life.

- What if, rather than playing a movie featuring an event or memory that makes you feel happy and grateful, you play a movie about a silly mistake that left you feeling useless and a failure?
- What if, rather than looking forward to arriving on a sunny beach somewhere, you are playing a movie about your plane crashing into the sea?
- What if, rather than thinking about what you are going to do later that evening to relax and unwind after a long day, all you play inside your mind are images of chocolate biscuits and cigarettes?

Understanding this concept is so important for your own personal change journey that I'm going to repeat myself one more time for effect. In italics!

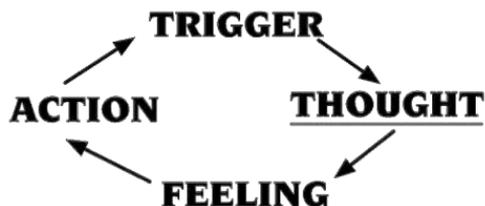
Your mind does not know the difference between something that is real and something that is imagined.

It doesn't matter if it's a lemon, a memory of the happiest day of your life or a horrible memory you'd rather forget, your thoughts (i.e. the pictures and movies on your screen) cause you to respond by feeling. These thoughts will override your reality and

you will feel whatever you think.

If you think lemon, you will respond as if the lemon is real. If you think plane crash, you will respond as if it is real. If you think 'I'm not good enough', you will respond as if you are not good enough. It is also important to know this works both ways, if you think 'I am truly loved and cared for', you will feel that gorgeous glow of love inside, feel wanted and cared for and your day will be just a little more awesome.

This is our missing link from Chapter 1, this is the secret to living happy. Our thoughts are the origin of all of our feelings. Our diagram should actually look like this:



Now take a deep breath and you might want to sit down for this bit. If you are a fan of the Matrix movies, imagine this in the voice of Morpheus. . . .

You will never 'touch' reality. You are never truly seeing or hearing the world as it is because nothing that you are currently experiencing is actually real.

Well, at least not in the way you currently understand 'real'.

Everything you currently see, everything you currently hear, everything you are currently feeling, tasting and smelling is being filtered by your mind. You are actually experiencing a secondary reality, filtered through a lifetime of experience and learning. Your

current experience is only a *version* of reality. To be even more precise, your current experience is only *your* version of reality.

Pretty mind-blowing isn't it?

There is not one other person anywhere experiencing the world in exactly the same way you are right now. There has never been anyone like you before and there never, ever will be again.

Every single experience you are surrounded by, every sound you have ever heard and will ever hear, every single thing you have seen or will ever see, and every sensation and emotion that you have experienced and are yet to experience, are all absolutely and totally unique to you. No-one will ever repeat them or experience them in the same way. Your version of this world is a one off event as unique as a fingerprint or a snowflake.

Now, to keep your version of the world familiar and comfortable, your mind has to act like a filter; changing and twisting your reality to make it match what you expect to see, hear and feel. In doing that, it produces a lifetime of unique experiences.

I often describe that filter like living inside a bubble that alters and interprets our reality in various ways to make it fit our expectations.

As an example, imagine a football match that has just come to an end.

After a fantastic game, both sets of supporters leave the stadium and, if we could listen to a sample of the conversations on each side, they would be very similar. Both are talking about how their team played brilliantly, how the other team were useless and