Finding the Root Cause of Your Client’s Obstacles

When you are helping a client, it can be easy to go with a quick solution to a problem. For a person that is overweight and wants to diet, creating a menu for them and monitoring their progress might seem like the right way to help them. Someone who struggles with low self-esteem might be helped by counseling sessions and confidence builders. But sometimes, the problem is deeper than something that can be helped with an easy solution. Sometimes, you have to find the root cause if you want to help someone. So, how do you go about finding the root cause of someone’s behaviors in sporadic coaching sessions?

Believing, Thinking & Acting

There is a specific process that people go through when they exhibit behaviors. It is the belief-thought-action cycle; understanding that cycle can be the key to solving their deeper issues, because often, a behavior that is destructive is linked to a belief that is driving it. You have to work your way back through this cycle in order to find out where a specific behavior or action comes from if you want to help your clients overcome these problems.

**Actions:** Actions seem like they are choices that we are making right there in that particular moment. But that’s actually not the case at all. In fact, most of the behaviors we have and the actions that we take are already predetermined because of our thoughts. For example, if a client always clams up whenever they talk to a member of the opposite sex, and it is something they want to change, you have to look at the thoughts behind it.

**Thoughts:** The thoughts that you have are actually what drives that action. For example, this particular client might be thinking that they don’t know what to do say, and they don’t have the ability to talk to this person. Those thoughts drive the actions, but where do the thoughts come from?

**Beliefs:** That’s where the beliefs come in. You can actually trace behaviors all the way back to the beliefs that a person holds. In the case of our example, they might have the belief that they just aren’t good enough to talk to attractive members of the opposite sex. You have to help your clients figure out what these beliefs are, and then help them to evaluate them and decide if that particular belief is something they need to change or not.