



The Structure Of A Belief

A social anxiety disorder consists of all sorts of negative limiting beliefs about yourself, others and the world. A belief is a thought you believe to be true because it FEELS true to you. It's a feeling of certainty you have about a certain thought. That thought is an idea or conviction that you have been thinking over and over again.

Common examples of limiting or negative beliefs can be:

- I'm not good enough
- People are out to get me
- Nobody likes me
- The world is a dangerous place
- I can't trust myself
- People can't be trusted
- I must be perfect or else people won't like me

Through your beliefs you filter the outside world. By doing this you end up filtering the world in a specific way unique to you. When you have positive beliefs such as:

"I'm good enough",
"I'm safe in the world", and
"people are nice and friendly"

... you have a totally different experience walking into a social gathering than when you have negative limiting beliefs such as:

"I'm not good enough"
"The world is a dangerous place for me"
"People are mean and out to get me"

In order to overcome your social anxiety, you need to find the negative limiting beliefs responsible for you feeling uncomfortable, insecure and anxious around others, and change them to positive ones.

Luckily, when you have a belief that is negative or limiting, it can be changed into a positive one. And to do this effectively there is a certain structure of going about it. That is what this article is all about.

I will explain to you in a simple way the structure of a belief so that you can then systematically eliminate the negative limiting beliefs responsible for your social anxiety and change them into positive beliefs.

You Were Born Without Beliefs

The beliefs responsible for your social anxiety come from all sorts of sources; your parents, teachers, peers, siblings, experiences you had, media programming, etc. You learned them somewhere, and you then have collected evidence of these beliefs being “the truth” (or more accurately, YOUR truth).

And so now you have a belief and you either feel it to be true, even though it might logically don't make sense to you, or you just “know” a belief to be true.

As an example, a belief that clients often tell me they *feel* to be true is “I'm not good enough”. Logically they know it's not true, but they *feel* it to be true. They feel not good enough.

Other times clients are really convinced of a belief being true. This is often where they have evidence to back up a belief (an example I hear often is “people are mean”). They also feel it to be true, but they are logically also convinced that it is true because they have these experiences they know of where this was true. They for example may have had experienced teasing, bullying, being an outsider and so on.

For these people they see the belief “people are mean” not as just a belief, but as something that is actual reality. This because they have evidence to prove that people are mean indeed!

And this **evidence to prove your belief** is exactly what makes it challenging to let go of a negative limiting belief by trying to change your thoughts, doing affirmations and so on.

Luckily, applying EFT in the right way is the solution here. By applying EFT in the right way you change a negative or limiting belief into a positive belief in a reliable way.

Destroying the evidence of a negative belief

Say that you have the belief “I'm not good enough”. You know you have this belief because when you say it out loud, it *feels* true to you. Let's say that you feel it to be true 10 out 10.

Since you are not born with such a belief you have to have learned this belief somewhere. You have to have had experiences in life where this was true to you in order for you to now believe this.

You have evidence of it being true.

These experiences where you really felt you weren't good enough are the evidence you have for believing that you are indeed not good enough.

Some question I might ask you:

- Where did you learn that you are not good enough? Or,
- How do you know you are not good enough?
- What does that feeling of not being good enough remind you of?
- When, with whom, and for what reason did you feel not good enough before?

The answers you come up with will be Significant Emotional Experiences where you learned you weren't good enough. This can either be single experiences, or repetitive negative experiences.

Maybe you once came home with a report card with B's and C's and your dad scolded you.

You felt you were not good enough.

Maybe you one day finally mustered up the courage to ask your crush out for the prom, but she chose this more popular guy over you. ***You felt you were not good enough.***

Maybe you would always be compared to your older sister and you never measured up.

You always felt you were not good enough.

Maybe you worked really hard to make it into that prestigious school, but you got rejected on your application. ***You felt not good enough.***

Maybe your brother got all the attention when dad would come back from travel, and you did not.

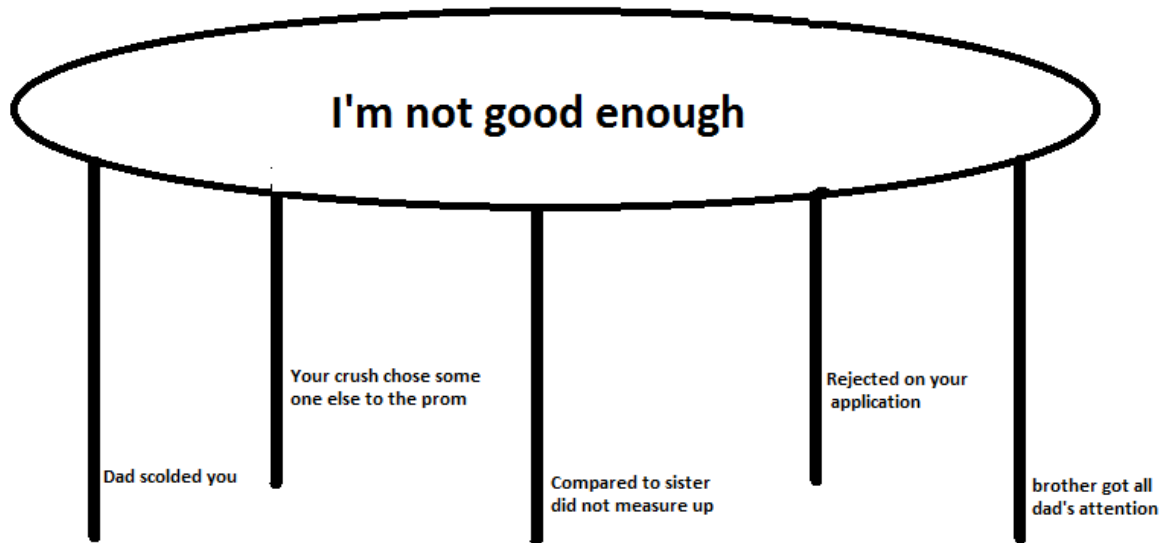
You felt not good enough.

All these experiences where you felt you were not good enough are the evidence you have that supports the belief of not being good enough. This evidence needs to be destroyed because it's the experiences in life that you had where you *felt not good enough* that are the causes of you not *feeling good enough* today.

Once you destroy that evidence, the belief no longer holds true today. And you won't feel and believe it to be true. Let me give you a simple metaphor...

You can see a negative limiting belief as a table top. A table top is of course always supported by legs. If there are no legs holding up the table top, the table top will obviously fall down. The legs that keep the table firm in place are the negative experiences (Significant Emotional Events) that you have as evidence of the belief being true. Once these are removed, the belief will no longer hold true for you.

Picture: "table top of the belief "I'm not good enough" supported by the legs of S.E.E.'s"



There are some key experiences in life that taught you that you weren't good enough. And these Significant Emotional Experiences are the legs holding up the table top.

Now what happens when you revisit some of these key memories, and you get rid of the negative emotions from them and you change them into something positive, you are destroying the legs of the table top and the "I'm not good enough" belief will be destroyed in the process.

As you cut down the legs one by one, the table top will eventually fall and the negative limiting belief no longer will feel true to you.

An Example:

James holds the belief that he is not good enough. When he says it out loud it feels totally true, a 10 out of 10 true. He understands the concept of the table top and starts working on the Significant Emotional Experiences he had in life where he learned that he wasn't good enough.

He tunes into the feeling of not being good enough and asks himself what it reminds him of, or what the earliest time is he can remember feeling that way (the earlier a memory, the more powerful they are).

Always go for the earliest experiences as when you were really young the S.E.E.'s had most impact on you).

He goes with the first thing that comes to his mind (always go with the first thing that comes to mind, it is what your subconscious gives you, it's the right thing in 99% of the cases. Don't doubt it, don't judge it, simply go with it, even if it seems unrelated), which is the memory where dad came back from sea and his brother got all of dad's attention, and he got none.

He uses EFT on this experience thoroughly and changes the experience to something positive.

After this he checks in with the 'I'm not good enough' belief by saying it out loud again and measuring how true it feels to him on a scale of 0-10. Because he successfully removed one of the supporting legs of the table, the table is a bit more wobbly, and it feels less true to him. 8 out of 10 it now only feels true to him. So he continues...

When he was tapping on the experience with his dad coming back from sea before, an image came up of dad comparing him to his older sister and him not measuring up. Since he was already working on the S.E.E. of dad coming home from sea, he made a note of it and finished working on that S.E.E. first (I recommend first finishing the S.E.E. you work on and making a note of other S.E.E.'s that come up, and then treating what came up later. Unless what comes up is much stronger and needs your direct attention. If that's the case, first treat the new S.E.E. that came up, and then go back later to finish the original S.E.E.).

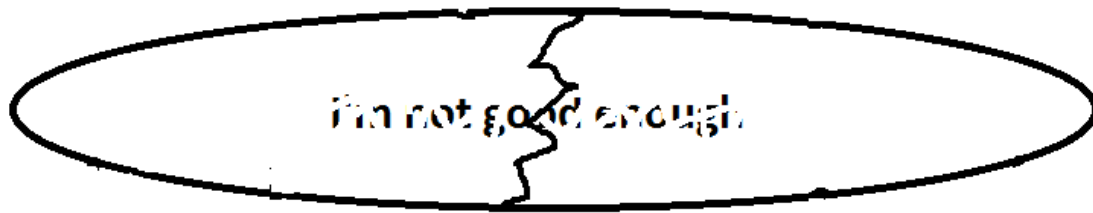
Since dad comparing him to his sister was a repetitive negative experience, he used the bundling baggage bundles technique (you will learn, or have learned how to do this in the SCS) to eliminate all of them in one go.

In doing so, he collapsed another table leg of the 'I'm not good enough' table top. He says "I'm not good enough" out loud and it now feels a lot less true to him. It feels less strongly negative when he says it. He guesses (if you don't know what your number is on a 0-10 point scale, just guess! Your subconscious will likely give you the right answer, and it's not a science experiment, you just want a rough measure of where you are) that it's now at a 5 out of 10 true.

He continues and releases the negative emotions from the S.E.E. with the rapport card and changes it into something positive. Yet another leg collapsed. He checks in with his belief and it is a 4 out of 10.

After releasing the S.E.E. of his rejected application and his crush picking the more popular guy, the belief of "I'm not good enough" no longer feels true to him. The key experiences that were responsible for his belief have been eliminated; the legs supporting the table top are collapsed.

Picture: The collapsed table top of the belief "I'm not good enough"



Note: Sometimes it is the case that you have tapped on all the evidence you can think of, and you have done some research and you think you have covered all the S.E.E.'s that served as evidence, and still the table top won't buckle completely. If this is the case, tap on the belief itself.

There might be an emotion associated with the thought, and saying the statement "I'm not good enough" out loud will have emotion attached to it and so it feels true. Tapping on the general belief statement will then release the negative emotion attached to the thought, and make the table top fall.

So you would tap:

Even though –say the belief out loud (I'm not good enough)- and that makes me feel X –say out loud how it makes you feel (sad), I deeply and completely accept myself

And you then say your limiting negative belief out loud as you go over all the tapping points.

EB I'm not good enough
SE I feel X (sad) when I say that
UE I'm not good enough
UN this sad feeling
CH I'm not good enough
CB this sad feeling
UA I'm not good enough
LP this sad feeling
WR I'm not good enough
TH this sad feeling

Deep Beliefs and Surface Beliefs

In the example belief I have given you above, I'm not good enough, I used a very common belief that is a deeply ingrained one. It is an identity belief. Usually a belief that is very strong which takes some persistence to fully resolve and let go of. Quite some evidence/table legs/S.E.E.'s need to be treated for it to no longer feel true to you completely.

There are also other beliefs that take a lot less persistence to let go of than Identity beliefs. I call these surface beliefs. These beliefs are just ideas that you might have less evidence of, or maybe even none.

Examples of these are perfectionistic standards about how you should perform in social situations (I must always say the right thing, I can't ever offend anyone, I must have everyone's approval 100% of the time, etc.) and cause-effect beliefs concerning social evaluation (if others know the real me they won't like me, if someone disapproves of me it means there is something wrong with me, if I become embarrassed people will see me as weak).

These limiting negative beliefs *can* be less deeply ingrained. And it is possible that with some tapping on the belief itself, some challenging of the belief, reframing it and then choosing to believe something else instead, they change into positive understandings rather quickly.

However, it is usually the deeper underlying identity beliefs (I'm not good enough, there's something wrong with me, I must be perfect to be accepted/loved, I am bad, I am unlovable, I am unworthy, I am invisible, I am ...) that hold the smaller beliefs in place. And it is in more than 90% the case that these deeper identity beliefs have been formed in early childhood.

Once the deeper beliefs are dealt with though, you can start getting rid of the more surface beliefs. Getting rid of the surface beliefs can be done with the help of the videos under the section Limiting Negative Beliefs which you find on the bottom of the Social Confidence System page.