



*Clear Thinking newsletter from Uncommon Knowledge - Issue 71*

In this month's Clear Thinking...

1. 3 steps to overcome limiting beliefs in your clients
2. Learn how to use hypnosis in your practice

## **3 steps to overcome limiting beliefs in your clients**

*Limiting beliefs can be a serious roadblock to effective therapy. Learn a tried-and-tested model to overcome them, clearing the way for rapid change.*

Sometimes a client's limiting beliefs can get in the way of doing good therapeutic work with them. Someone who can't even begin to imagine themselves as a non-smoker, a confident public speaker, or looking slim and healthy, or who constantly tells themselves "It's impossible!" needs your help to clear that barrier.

### **Casebook example: It's really hard to stop smoking!**

A woman came to see me recently to stop smoking. She had a pretty fixed belief that stopping smoking was going to be extremely difficult for her, that it was a 'huge thing' that she could barely contemplate doing.

It would not have been helpful to tell her it can be surprisingly easy to stop smoking. Telling a client they're 'wrong' or arguing with them puts them on the defensive, and can actually further entrench a limiting belief. But I needed to help her get past this conviction or she would continue having trouble making the changes she needed.

So this is what I said:

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***"Absolutely! Making a significant life change like freeing yourself from that smoking pattern can seem overwhelming at first. It's a bit like the overwhelm people feel when starting a new job or moving to a new area. Everything feels a bit unfamiliar, and you might have doubts about whether you'll make a success of it, and settle in properly.***

***And that uncertainty is normal, and as long as you give yourself a chance to acclimatise to the new environment, to start to notice all the benefits that come as you find your feet, then before long you'll notice you feel at home with the change, and you can barely remember what you were worrying about."***

She immediately relaxed and began to smile. Once she had a way to set that limiting belief aside through 'giving herself a chance', she could much more easily engage with the session.

### **Three steps to surmount limiting belief:**

#### **3 questions that will enlist your smoker's personal autonomy**

- **Agree with it**  
I started out by saying "Absolutely!", putting myself in a position where I'm on her side, and I go on to describe how it's completely normal to feel that way.
- **Reframe the belief as a perception - not a reality**  
Instead of agreeing that stopping smoking is really difficult, I'm actually agreeing that it "seems overwhelming", thereby reminding her that it's a perception, not a reality. You could also use talk about how it "looks daunting" or "feels impossible at first".
- **Give universal examples of perception change**  
I talked about how people put doubts and worries behind them when starting a new job, or moving, but you can use whatever examples will work best with your individual client – e.g. learning to drive, or having a baby. When you flesh these out a bit with some detail, it gives people time to take them in fully and respond.

Of course, that wasn't the end of it. We also homed in on accessing her strengths, reinforcing her self-belief, and breaking up the smoking pattern. But having a graceful way to invite someone to suspend an initial limiting belief is a key therapeutic tool that will make you a more effective therapist.

## Learn how to use hypnosis in your practice

If you're not trained how to use hypnosis your work as a therapist or counsellor, it can be hard to see just how useful it is. Below are links to a few of the many articles Uncommon Knowledge have published on hypnosis so you can get an idea of why we're so committed to it.

[Articles on hypnosis by Uncommon Knowledge](#)

And if these articles pique your interest, you can train online with Mark Tyrrell on our course 'Hypnosis Unwrapped' to understand what exactly hypnosis is and how to use it flexibly with clients.

Our next course starts on 23 September which means there's still plenty of time to benefit from our 25% early bird discount (but not all the time in the world as we only have 25 places available).

Here's where to [sign up for Hypnosis Unwrapped](#). There, I hope you enjoyed that! See you again in 2 weeks.

[Mark Tyrrell](#)

Co-Founder

Uncommon Knowledge

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Who do you know that would benefit from this article? If this issue of Clear Thinking has been forwarded to you, you can sign up for [therapy techniques every two weeks here](#)

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