




Chapter 2

The Power of Your Mindset



College, career, and personal excellence will be achieved by developing a Creator Mindset and discovering the power of your Response.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand and apply the formula $E + R = O$
- Change your default setting to a Creator Mindset
- Explain how to eliminate the Victim Mindset
- Identify negative self-talk
- Practice strategies to dispute irrational and self-destructive beliefs

Are you waiting for your moment? Waiting for a better job? Waiting for a phone call? Waiting for the one? Waiting for the right opportunity? Waiting for enough money? Waiting for someone to make you happy? Waiting for someone to give you the power to create the life you want? By the end of this chapter, I hope you'll be encouraged to stop waiting and start creating the life you want. You don't need a special title...a degree...a million dollars...or a genius IQ to begin. Many of the world's most successful people didn't start out as valedictorians of their high school or with millions of dollars in the bank. Successful people are masters at tapping into their own resources. The first step is to realize the power of YOU. This power can be unleashed through your **Mindset** and your **Responses**.



Realize the Power of Your Mindset to Create the Outcomes That You Desire

A **Mindset** is a set of ideas and attitudes that shape the way you think about yourself, others, and the world. Your mindset determines your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. It is how you see the world. Not in the literal sense of vision, but how you perceive the world, how you interpret information. Your perception is how you assign meaning to everything. The value it has is the value you give it. How you view the event is what determines its meaning to you. For example, my students walk into class assuming they will take a quiz over the reading as they usually do. I stand up and announce to my students that they will not have to take the quiz, but instead they will give a brief five minute presentation over the reading material. Immediately, some students cheer, “YES!” They perceive the quiz as a threat that they’ve just escaped. In the same instance, other students slam their hand on the desk, “No!” They perceive the quiz as less stressful than standing up in front of the class. The same situation for everyone, yet perceived very differently.

Your mindset is developed by your past experiences, your upbringing, your successes, failures, and your personality. Education and learning also have a significant impact on your mindset. Not keeping yourself continually informed can keep your mindset from developing. In the same way, maintaining an open mind and gaining new knowledge can break a limiting environment.

Since your mindset determines how you will interpret and assign meaning to an event, it also determines how you **respond** to that event with the choices that you make. Ultimately, your mindset directly and significantly affects the **outcomes** in your life; whether you persist or give up, succeed or fail, live in happiness or in sorrow.

“It’s not the problem you face, but how you face the problem.”—Kelvin Baker

$$E + R = O$$

Successful people understand a special formula and apply it in their daily life.

Event + Response = Outcome

$$E + R = O$$

It’s not the actual event that happens that matters; it is how you perceive that event and how you choose to **respond** to that event. Let me give you an example that I see in my class year after year.

At the beginning of the semester two students, who are similar in age, ability level, and potential walk into my classroom. They both fail the first quiz.

Student #1 I never see him again. He earns an F in the class.

Student #2 Attends every class from that point on. He earns an A in the class.

How can this be? How can two individuals with the same Event (the failed test) have Outcomes that are vastly different? The outcome is different because each student responds to the event differently.

Let’s take a look at the formula in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1

	Event	Response	Outcome
Student #1	Failed test	Drops Class	I never see him again. His final grade is an F.
Student #2	Failed test	Works harder, studies more	Final grade is an A.

Student #1 Failed the test. He perceived the failed test as a reason to quit; proof that he wasn't "smart enough" to be in college. So his Response is to drop the class. I never see him again. His final grade is an F and he doesn't return to college.

Student #2 Failed the test. He perceived the failed test as a reason to persevere; proof that he needed to work harder, so that he can accomplish his dreams. So his Response is to attend every class, read and take notes, study more, and visit the tutoring center. He brings his overall grade up to an A and persists to the next semester.

Each student's perceptions of the failed test caused them to make different choices in how to respond. It's not what happened (failing the test) that matters; it's how they perceived and responded to it. These choices directly affected each student's outcome. One failed. One succeeded.

Most people live by the equation $E = O$. They choose to blame the event for their outcome and completely ignore the most important piece of the equation. The Response is the only thing you can control. That's where the magic lies. Never underestimate the power of your Response.

I had a student in my night class, Rigoberto. Rigoberto was from Bolivia and had just moved to the United States to create a better life for his wife and three-year-old daughter. At Ivy Tech, students have to score above a certain criteria on the Accuplacer, SAT or ACT to enter the English and Math courses. Rigoberto was intelligent and a hard worker, but with English being his very new second language, he just couldn't score high enough on the standardized test. In my class, Rigoberto not only completed all the assignments, he completed every activity in the book... even the ones I didn't assign. He would bring his essays to class and ask me to grade them. He wanted me to correct his work so that he could improve. When I would ask questions in class, he would hurriedly open his Spanish/English dictionary to translate my question, then raise his hand, while translating his answer in his head back into English. He knew he was making mistakes, but he knew he had to push himself to work harder than everyone else if he wanted to accomplish his goal. I gave the final exam on Blackboard, which automatically records the scores in the gradebook. When I opened the gradebook to see how my students scored, I was surprised to see that Rigoberto scored the highest grade in the entire class! I thought this deserved some credit, so I wrote a letter to the Vice Chancellor urging them to make an exception for this student, explaining that if he can receive the highest grade in my class, he will surely work hard enough to be successful in English 111. I was told that there was nothing that could be done to help this student. This was injustice! I was frustrated for my student! He thanked me for trying and said "It's okay, they can't keep me from trying." He wasn't mad. He wasn't broken. His adversity actually gave him more drive to succeed. His greatest adversity became his greatest advantage. Rigoberto didn't become bitter. He became better. A year later, I received an email from Rigoberto, telling me that he finally passed the English portion of Accuplacer and would be entering class in the coming semester. Two years after that, I received an email from him telling me that he graduated from Ivy Tech and was starting in his new career.

He refused to believe that

$E=O$

E My English is bad and I can't pass the standardized test to get into college.

Equals

O I have to give up on my dreams. I can't be successful in college and attain my dream career.

Instead he chose to believe

$E + R=O$

E My English is bad and I can't pass the standardized test to get into college.

Plus

R I will work hard by completing extra assignments, going to the tutoring center, asking for feedback from my professor. Nothing can stop me. I will keep trying until I reach my goal.

Equals

O I accomplished my dreams. I was successful in college and attained my dream career.

If you haven't been getting the Outcomes that you want in life, try changing your Responses. Your Response will make all the difference.

Your Responses will significantly affect your college, career, and personal success. As I mentioned earlier, the Response you choose, is influenced by your Mindset. Start creating the Outcomes that you want. You'll choose better Responses by getting rid of the Victim Mindset and replacing it with a Creator Mindset. Students with a Creator Mindset will experience more success and happiness than students with a Victim Mindset.



Figure 2.2

People with a **Creator Mindset** take 100 percent responsibility for themselves. They use their efforts and energy to consciously create the life they want. People with a **Victim Mindset**, do not take responsibility for themselves and instead waste their energy by blaming others, making excuses, complaining, or responding automatically.

Developing a Creator Mindset

People with a **Creator Mindset** understand that only they create their experience. Creators accept and appreciate 100 percent responsibility for everything in life. Webster's Dictionary defines the word *create* as "to make or produce something, to cause something new to exist, to cause a particular situation to exist, to cause something to happen as a result of one's actions, to produce by using your talents and imagination." Creators don't wait around for a favorable outcome; they create the outcome that they want.

Initially, when thinking of responsibility, you may think of your duties in life: taking out the trash, turning in your homework, feeding the cat. With a Creator Mindset, you also view responsibility as being morally accountable for your behavior, choices, and responses.

With a Creator Mindset, you understand that you are responsible for every success, as well as every failure. Every time. You take full responsibility for your present situation. When Creators reach a goal, they know that their success is a result of their own hard work, dedication, and attitude. In the same way, when Creators face an obstacle or defeat, they take full responsibility for their shortcomings. Creators learn from their mistakes and look for solutions to the problem. They consciously make efforts to improve their situation, and ultimately, their lives. You may not be able to change other people, but you can always change your mindset. Developing a Creator Mindset is one of the most important choices that you can make to ensure your college, career, and personal success.

"We cannot become what we want to be by remaining what we are."—Max Depree

To become Creators, we must get rid of the Victim Mindset.

People with a **Victim Mindset** do not take full responsibility for their actions. Victims believe their future is controlled by luck, fate, or others who are more powerful than them. Victims believe that they don't have control over their lives, so there is no need to try to improve their situation. Victims make choices to protect themselves from admitting fault or to avoid dealing with a problem in an appropriate way. When you don't want to take full responsibility for your actions, the Victim Mindset offers you a cop out. You don't have to take action or solve the problem because "that's just the way it is" or "there's nothing I can do about it."

Instead of looking for a solution to the problem, Victims

- Complain about the problem
- Make excuses for their situation
- Blame someone or something else
- Remain on autopilot; saving themselves from making a new choice or putting forth effort

Making choices with the Victim Mindset might temporarily make you feel better, but will not solve the problem. So you remain stuck or feel trapped. Victims believe that someone else is responsible for their problem, so to solve the problem, someone else is going to have to change. You can sit around and blame others to feel better but in order to move forward in life you have to realize that:

You made a bad decision. You waited until the last minute to start the project. You wanted kids. You picked social media over homework. You quit. You chose the job. You let him treat you poorly. You wanted to move. You ate it. You registered for college even though you have a full-time job. You married her. You didn't read the material for the quiz. You decided you weren't worth it. You ignored the red flags.

Your current situation didn't happen on accident. You're not lucky or unlucky. Your life, this very moment, is the direct result of your past experiences, choices, thoughts, beliefs, expectations, and actions. Now that you have this information, use it to your advantage. Use this knowledge to create the exact future that you want, from this moment on. Realize that with every situation you face, you are always in control of the way in which you react, your Response. You always have that choice. You may not always be able to change the situation, but you can always change your Response to create a more favorable outcome. To consciously create the future you want, you have to stop using the four Victim responses below.

You have to **stop blaming**. Blaming takes the focus away from you and places it on what is not in your control (the Event). When Victims achieve less than optimal outcomes in their lives, they point the finger beyond themselves because that's the easy way out. Of course I failed, you wouldn't let me study.

You have to **stop making excuses**. Victims make excuses to shrink their responsibility. They come up with an excuse in case it doesn't work out as planned or if they are unable to finish something in an acceptable way. I didn't have much time to study, so I probably won't do well on this test. I'm sure everyone cheats at some point, so why shouldn't I? What excuses will you tell yourself if you don't finish this book?

You have to **stop complaining**. Victims complain to temporarily relieve themselves of the problem. I'm so tired of school. Read this, write that. Those instructors must think that I don't have a life. This is a waste of time.

You have to **stop responding automatically**. Party? Of course. Cookie? Why not. When we respond automatically, we make choices almost as if it's a reflex. Stop and think, *is this choice serving me well? Or am I simply doing this because it's what I always do? Am I responding automatically because it saves me from making a new choice? Am I responding automatically because it is saving me from the effort of discovering a new, healthier way to live?*

Victims and Creators live in the same world and are faced with the same situations, yet experience the world so differently. Your success or failure, your happiness or sadness, your relationships, every outcome in your life, is a result of how you responded to situations that happened to you. You can blame others, blame the world, blame the weather, blame society, blame your lack of resources, blame your upbringing. None of those things are limiting you now; you are limiting yourself by responding like a Victim. If you want to stay in the same rut and be average, then you can continue this behavior. If you want more out of life, you need to change your response to the event until you get the outcome you desire. We may not have control over the events, but we have complete control over our response to those events.

I was teaching this very concept one winter afternoon, when I noticed Michael vigorously taking notes. I'm sure it caught my attention because Michael didn't like to take notes. He didn't usually like to come to class on time, or read the textbook, or participate either. But today was different. The following week, as I was preparing for class, Michael knocked on the door. "You're early. Please come in." I said, almost falling out of my chair from the surprise of his early presence. He walked up to my desk and said, "For the first time, my life makes sense. I hated high school. I always complained that it was because everyone hated me. But when I use that Creator Mindset

you were talking about, I realize they hated me because I was such a jerk to everyone for so long. I blamed my teachers for giving me bad grades, but when I take 100 percent responsibility, I have to admit, they gave me bad grades because I never did my homework and slept through half the classes. When I blame other people, I feel better for a little bit, but my life still sucks.” He stopped, as to hold in the tears that would explode from his eyeballs if he said one more word.

I gave him a reassuring smile. “Michael, you’re young. You’ve got this now. Don’t look back. Doesn’t it feel great to know that you can make your college experience completely different from your high school experience?”

“Sitting in class last week, it hit me like a slap in the face. It felt good realizing that I had control of my life. That no one could make me feel like that again. I felt happy and alive. But then I got really mad. I felt angry that my parents didn’t teach me this. Mad that none of my other teachers taught me this sooner. Then I realized I was blaming other people again. Maybe my brain just can’t get a Creator Mindset.” I could feel his frustration.

“Michael, the fact that you caught yourself and realized that you were blaming others for your situation shows that you are beginning to develop a Creator Mindset. You’ve had the Victim Mindset for a long time. Blaming others has become a habit for you and will take a little time to break. Changing your mindset doesn’t happen overnight, but it will happen. It takes practice. The more you practice and focus on making choices as a Creator, you’ll only get better and better.” By the end of the semester, Michael had totally developed the Creator Mindset. And you can too!

You and only you have the power to create the life you want. Once you realize this concept you can consciously create your life just as you would like it to be. To create college, career, and personal excellence, you need to take 100 percent responsibility for everything in your life: your grades, your job, your relationships, your attendance, your effort. When you succeed, it will be because of you. You tapped into the power of your Mindset and CREATED that success.

Self-Talk

Over the past 15 years, teaching students ranging in age from 5 to 65, I’ve witnessed the fact that the Victim Mindset doesn’t discriminate based on age, gender, or socio-economic status. It seems as though we all, at times, are tempted to have a Victim Mindset. We have these inner thoughts that hold us back from gaining a Creator Perspective. Have you ever noticed that there is a 24/7 conversation going on in your mind? It’s almost as though we are a real time commentator at this amazing sporting event called Our Life. Listen, what do you hear?

For a fun activity to reiterate this topic, I had my students pay attention to their self-talk on the way to their car after class. As soon as they got in their car, they needed to write down as much as they could remember word for word and bring it to the following class to turn in. Here is Amy’s example, “This bag is so heavy, why did I bring all these books? I should have known I wouldn’t have time to read psychology and that book weighs 5 lbs. Ouch, who put that wall there? Maybe I need glasses, it looked farther away than that. I wonder if anyone saw me run into the corner of that wall? Yep, that person smiling at the floor definitely saw me. Pretty funny, huh guy? Seeing people get injured is funny to you? What’s wrong with people? Brrr, why is it so cold in September? Why is the weather guy never right? I do my job. Why can’t he do his job? People need to know whether or not they’re going to need a jacket. Oh shoot, I didn’t put a jacket on Gracie. She probably froze at recess. She’s probably the only kid in preschool whose Mom didn’t put a jacket on her this morning. No Mother of the Year Award for me. This car is a piece of junk. Oh, here I am, I’m supposed to write down all of my self-talk.”

Self-talk is important because it's what you're telling yourself about everything in your life. It's what you say to yourself about yourself and about the world. Our mind and our bodies are connected; as a result of every thought you have, there is a physical reaction. There is compelling evidence that expectation and belief can affect physiological responses. Recent studies using topographic electroencephalographic (EEG) mapping demonstrate that by changing mental activity we can demonstrate measurable changes in central nervous system activity. These, and other, studies demonstrate that mind-body interactions are real and can be measured.¹ Basically, your thoughts create your actions.

What have you been telling yourself about you? Your appearance, your work, your job, your intelligence, your competence, your skills and abilities, your worth, yourself as a parent or family member, yourself as a spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend, the likelihood of graduation, your happiness?

“Your key to freedom lies in the power to control your thoughts.”

To improve self-esteem and allow yourself to develop a Creator Mindset, you must learn to recognize inaccurate beliefs and irrational thoughts. According to Dr. Albert Ellis, one of the greatest psychologists, an idea is irrational if it distorts reality, is illogical, or it prevents you from reaching your goals. These Victim thoughts and beliefs lead to unhealthy emotions and self-sabotaging behavior.

Victim thoughts that allow you to defeat yourself and needlessly make yourself miserable come from your Inner Bully and Inner Blamer.

Inner Bully

The Inner Bully bullies you with negative and self-sabotaging thoughts about yourself. To others, these thoughts would obviously be total misrepresentations of the truth; however, for the Victim, they are very real. I failed a quiz? I'm so dumb and totally not cut out for college. I missed an appointment? I'm always so irresponsible. He didn't call me? I don't deserve love anyway. I completed the wrong assignment? I can never get anything right. You can't hang out tonight? I'm such a loser. The teacher called on me? What did I do wrong this time? Your Inner Bully belittles you and is always thinking of the negative. Where did your Inner Bully come from? Here's an example of how an Inner Bully can be created. As a child, Juan heard his teacher tell his parents “he's average and he lacks effort.” Juan then began to believe, “I don't put forth effort, I'm just average. I'm getting by, so it's okay to be average.” The next year, he felt motivated to start a project early, but remembered, “Hey, I don't put forth effort, I'll wait and do it later, I'm just average anyway.” We start to believe these made up lies about ourselves and sometimes we even begin to live our lives accordingly. I'd like to ask Juan's teacher, “How exactly do you measure effort?” Is it one hand raised per hour or two? Is it three pages of notes per chapter, or four pages of notes? How exactly do you measure effort? Another example, my student Anna, described growing up and hearing her parents often say that her sister is “the smart one.” She decided that she must be “the dumb one”. At some point, someone may have told you something in anger and it hurt you or someone teased you about something in school and it stuck with you. You may have heard a label so many times, you now believe it. But is it really true? Where's the proof? Someone's opinion of you does not have to be your reality.

I grew up with a girl named Katie. We cheered together for many years, but our senior year of high school, she didn't make the cheerleading team. To make matters worse, some of the girls started calling her “fat cow” behind her back. We graduated and went to different colleges. In our sophomore year of college, we reconnected over the phone and decided to meet up over Christmas break. When I walked into the restaurant, I barely recognized Katie. She looked like

a skeleton. As I hugged her, I could feel every bone in her back. Minding my manners, I tried to make small talk. Katie ordered food, but I noticed she was just tossing it around on her plate. I finally got the courage and asked, “Are you going to eat that, what is going on?” She started to cry and admitted how crushed she was after getting cut from the cheerleading team. Katie heard the names that the other cheerleaders were calling her, and after our senior year, began struggling with anorexia and bulimia. She told me that she can’t even put food in her mouth without hearing an inner voice calling out “fat cow.” I was so confused. She was a skeleton. There was not an ounce of fat on her body, but in her head, she was a fat cow. It was a complete and total misrepresentation of the truth.

The Inner Bully has the ability to turn a neutral situation into criticism towards you. You get a phone call from your friend telling you that she can’t hang out tonight because her teacher gave her so much reading homework. Thinking rationally you might reply, “Oh, yes, I had that same teacher last semester, she does give a lot of homework. Let’s hook up next week.” However, a person ruled by their Inner Bully imagines criticisms that aren’t there. A person dominated by their Inner Bully might completely disregard the fact that the friend had homework and instead think, “I must have said something wrong. Why doesn’t she want to hang out with me anymore?”

When you hear the thoughts of your Inner Bully, you need to realize that these are irrational thoughts. They are not the truth and will only hurt you and bring down your self-esteem.

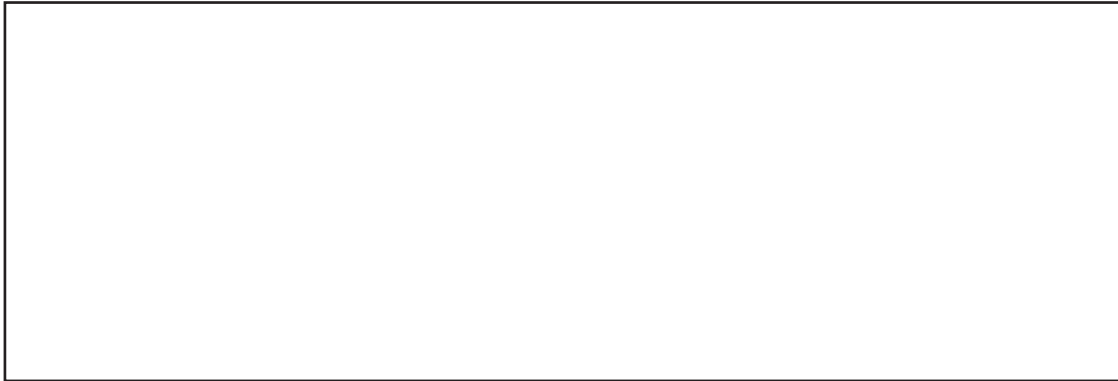
Make the Connection

Now you’ll have the opportunity to recognize the voice of your own Inner Bully. For this activity, complete Activity 2.1.

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Activity 2.1 Inner Bully Activity

Directions: We all have different ways in which we irrationally judge ourselves. Draw a picture of your Inner Bully. You can also draw scenery, or make word bubbles. It's okay to use humor, it reiterates how irrational the Inner Bully can be.



1. What exactly does your Inner Bully say (labels you have been given)? What does the voice of your Inner Bully sound like?

2. Where do you think this Inner Bully came from? (parent that was never satisfied, bully in school, Pinterest perfect Mom, etc.)

3. How do you feel when you hear the voice of this Inner Bully?

4. Do you normally believe the irrational and self-sabotaging talk from your Inner Bully? Why? Is there proof?

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Inner Blamer

The Inner Blamer allows you to escape responsibility by placing blame on other people or the world. This is a protection of your ego. In order to avoid shame, you place blame on someone or something else. You just can't allow something bad to be your fault. I would have passed if the teacher didn't make things so difficult. I hit her because she pushed me over the edge. I cheated because he's too controlling. I can't get a job because I live in this one-horse town. I forgot my homework because my boyfriend made me so upset I couldn't think straight. I copied my book review off the Internet, because everyone else does it. You won't let me study. He doesn't support me. My parents didn't raise me right. This school is messed up. It's the President's fault for this terrible economy. Deep down you might believe that it's not okay to make mistakes. You blame others for your problems or undesirable situations, which makes you feel better temporarily, but in the end it sabotages your future.

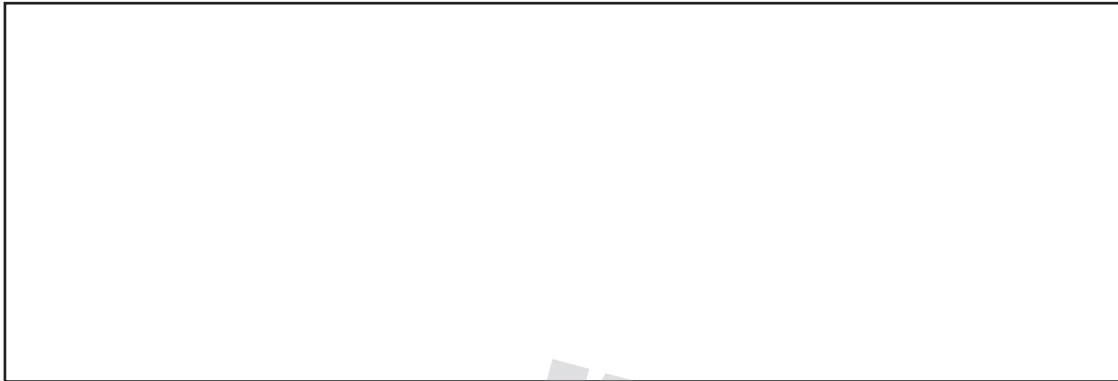
Complete the Inner Blamer Activity in Activity 2.2 to identify the ways you use Victim language.

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Activity 2.2 Inner Blamer Activity

Directions: We all use Victim language differently. Think about the forms of Victim language you most often use (making excuses, blaming others, complaining, running on autopilot). Draw a picture of your Inner Blamer. You can also draw scenery, make word bubbles, etc. It's okay to use humor, it reiterates how irrational the Inner Blamer can be.



1. What exactly does your Inner Blamer say? What excuses do you tell yourself? What does the voice of your Inner Blamer sound like?

2. Who do you blame for your failures or inadequacies?

3. Which form of Victim language do you use most often? (Making Excuses, Blaming Others, Complaining, Running on Autopilot)

4. Why do you think you choose this Victim language? (It's easier, it's hard to admit fault, makes you feel better, escape responsibility, to allow inappropriate behavior)

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The beliefs that you hold about yourself, others, and the world are a choice. Up to this point in life, you may not have thought of it that way, but it's true. You get to choose. You can believe that you are incapable or fully capable. You can believe that obstacles are a sign that you should quit or a sign that you need to work harder. You can eliminate beliefs that keep you from happiness and goal attainment. You can create new beliefs that move you toward your dreams.

True Self

Creators listen to the voice of their True Self. The True Self is only concerned with finding a solution to the problem or improving your situation. It doesn't worry about criticizing you or others. Your True Self is there to shine light on the truth, so that you can effectively take action and solve the problem. Even if you are at fault, you can just chalk it up to a learning experience, then move on to solve the problem.

Realize that many of the thoughts of a Victim Mindset are irrational. They serve the purpose of temporarily allowing us to feel better, but ultimately they bring down our self-esteem. People with a Victim Mindset allow the voices of their Inner Bully and Inner Blamer to control their actions.

When you've been ruled by a Victim Mindset for most of your life, your brain seems to use that as your automatic response to situations. It's your default mode. Just like the new app that you downloaded onto your phone, you can stay in default mode or you can make a conscious choice to change the settings to what you prefer. In life, you can stay in default mode, with automatic responses, or you can make a conscious choice to change the settings and create the results you prefer.

To effectively change your default setting to the Creator Mindset

Follow these steps:

1. Learn to recognize the inaccurate beliefs and distortions of reality from your Inner Bully and Inner Blamer.
2. Allow your True Self to replace your irrational, self-destructive thoughts and beliefs with more accurate, rational statements.

Dr. Albert Ellis taught individuals to identify, challenge, and replace their self-defeating thoughts and beliefs with healthier thoughts that promote well-being and goal achievement. Here are ways that you can replace limiting thoughts with healthy thoughts. First, identify the problem and your irrational thought about the problem. Next, choose a method below to help you think more rationally about the problem.

1. Can I rationally support this belief? What evidence proves that this isn't true?
2. If there is evidence that this is true, what can I do to solve the problem or improve the situation?
3. Could there be a positive explanation of the problem?
4. Is this situation/problem really THAT bad? Is the sun still going to shine? Will my family still love me?

Lastly, with healthy thoughts, you can focus on solving the problem or at least improving the situation. Replace irrational Inner Bully and Inner Blamer thoughts with healthy rational thoughts to solve the problem.

Let's practice.

Figure 2.3

Situation	Victim Thought	Thought Character	True Self (Choose 1 of the 4 methods)	Healthy Thought Replacement to Replace Victim Thought
Last week I got an F on my Anatomy test	I knew I wasn't college material. I should have waited until I didn't have to work a full time job.	Inner Bully	Can I rationally support this belief? What evidence proves that this is isn't true?	Wait, I am getting an A in my other classes, I AM COLLEGE MATERIAL. Since I work a full time job, I need to carve out 2 hours on Sat. and Sun. to study Anatomy each week
Last week I got an F on my Anatomy test	I got an F because my professor doesn't speak English well and I can't understand a word she is saying.	Inner Blamer	If there is evidence that this is true, what can I do to solve the problem or improve the situation?	It's true that my professor doesn't speak English perfectly. Knowing this, I'll have to read the chapter ahead of class and go to the tutoring center to be sure I understand.
My girlfriend isn't answering her phone.	She's probably cheating on me.	Inner Blamer	Could there be a positive explanation of the problem?	I'm sure there is a reason that she isn't answering. Maybe she fell asleep early to get the rest that she needs. I'm sure I'll hear from her in the morning.
I have a math test tomorrow. I'm stressed!	I know I'm going to fail my test tomorrow.	Inner Bully	Is this really THAT bad?	I have prepared for the test and I will probably not fail. However, if I do, I still have time to bring up my grade before the end of the semester.



Call for Action

Envision yourself completing your degree, sharing your talents in an amazing career, enjoying life with the people you love, while creating the experiences that bring meaning to you. This chapter has presented you with information and tools that will lead you to that success. You and only you have the power to implement the strategies into your life so you can accomplish your goals. Only you can change your responses to get the outcomes that you desire. Only you can refuse to respond with a Victim Mindset. Only you can make the decision to act right now. In this Call for Action, I encourage you to make a commitment to your future success by replacing your Victim thoughts with healthy rational thoughts. Complete the activity in Call for Action Activity 2.3.

Unleash the power of your Responses and develop a Creator Mindset. Let your greatest adversity become your greatest advantage. Take control of your internal dialogue. Replace thoughts that limit or defeat you. Affect others and the world, instead of letting others and the world affect you. You and only you have the power to create the life you want. Your successes are due to conscious effort and premeditated actions and anything less than a commitment to achieving your goals, is permission for failure. Realizing and living this concept will create happiness in addition to college, career, and personal excellence.

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Following the examples above, apply this information to improve challenging situations in your life.

Activity 2.3 Call for Action				
Situation	Victim Thought	Thought Character	True Self (Choose 1 of the 4 methods)	Healthy Thought Replacement to Replace Victim Thought