

Overcome any challenge and access peace, power and prosperity right now.

*A lot of us are feeling the pinch right now. We're being asked to do more, for less – at work and at home. It's easy to feel like it's all too much. So how can we stay inspired and in action when so much seems beyond our control? This is my 3-step plan to turn any challenge into an opportunity to SHINE. It's called **LOVE IT, LEAD IT, LEAVE IT.***

In life, we have stuff we CAN control; for example, what we spend our time or money on, what we say and what we do. When we're operating in that circle, we feel positive, empowered and alive. We take action on what we can. Let's call this our **circle of control or influence.**

Outside of this circle are the things we CAN'T directly control but still feel concerned about; for example, the state of the economy, the train running on time, the weather. When we're in that circle, we feel disempowered and in survival. We tend to feel stressed and get stuck. This is our **circle of concern.**

In his book *The 7 habits of highly effective people*, Stephen Covey describes these circles. *((model circles and VT demo))* Interestingly, he says that the more we occupy the outer circle, the more fearful we feel and the less effective we are. Think of something you feel concerned *and* out-of-control about and check this out for yourself.

So how do we move out of the outer circle, and into the inner circle?

We can change our beliefs about it – LOVE IT.

We can take action on it – LEAD IT.

We can just accept what is – LEAVE IT.

STEP 1: LOVE IT – which means change your beliefs about it (image of love it)

Loving what you don't love is actually the most challenging step and offers the most breakthroughs, so I'm going to spend some time on getting to the bottom of this.

Life is made up of 'things happening' in reality. And that is exactly what they are: just things happening. A dog barks. A baby cries. The sun rises. As human beings, to make sense of life, we apply meanings or beliefs about what is happening. It's the meaning or 'belief' we give to what is happening that actually causes our reactions 'Dogs are dangerous. Dogs are great protectors.... I'm a bad mother if my baby cries. I'm glad my baby can communicate with me.' Why do I have to get up so early. It's going to be a beautiful day.....

Our beliefs or how we **see** things determine our actions (what we **do**). Our actions determine our results (what we **get**). Our results re-enforce how we see things. *((See do get model + VT))* The meanings we give things are *made up in our head*. They are interpretations which, by definition, can never absolutely true, only possible or valid. But we live our lives as if they're absolutely true.

We only have 'problems' because we see them as problems. In fact, when we can love what is, we can find peace, power and prosperity in any moment. *But how can you love something that seems unlovable?* The first step is to separate what is really true..

Think about your problem and answer these questions for yourself

STEP 1: LOVE IT - which means change your beliefs about it

- What do you believe about your problem?
- Can you absolutely know for sure that is true?
- In what way do you know it isn't true now?
- When you believe that thought, what happens?
- What would life be like if you didn't have that thought?
- What do you want to believe instead?
- In how many ways do you know this is already true?
- Choose the belief that will most empower you.

Image of love it

[Read a story about Emma my client who is feeling under pressure](#)

Emma's problem is that for the next six weeks, she *perceives* that she will be extremely pressured at work. Two major projects have been delayed, causing all her deadlines to slip. Her clients are asking for extra support, she has a young family, budgets are tight; there *seem* to be no extra resources available. Whenever she thinks about what's ahead, she feels it's all too much. She wakes at 4am wondering how she's going to cope. How can she love that?

What do you believe about your problem? Emma believes that she has more work to do than there are days in the week with no extra resources to call on. Let's summarise this as the belief '*I can't do all this work well*'.

Can you absolutely know for sure that you can't do all this work well? Emma is pretty wedded to her belief. Yet when confronted, she can't absolutely *know* that she can't do the work, because the future hasn't happened yet.

In what way do you know it isn't true now? Emma is already meeting some deadlines. Her clients are asking her to do more work, so she must be doing it well.

When you believe that thought, what happens? When she thinks '*I won't be able to do all this work well*', Emma feels anxious, disempowered, gloomy. She gets impatient with her family; she doesn't sleep properly. She drinks alcohol to relieve the pressure. The effect is that she doesn't do anything all that well.

What would life be like if you didn't have that thought? Emma recognises she would be more energised, with more sleep, more patient in her interactions with her family, confident about her work and her success. She'd also be more honest about her needs from her family at this uniquely busy time.

What do you want to believe instead? Emma has the work she has and the family she has (reality), and up until now has been believing '*I can't do all this well*'. What else could she believe about reality that could also be true and valid? Well, Emma would love to believe that '*I can do all this well*' (you can brainstorm a few until one feels right - usually it will be something like the opposite statement).

In how many ways do you know this is already true? I asked Emma to think about three times in her life when she worried whether she would achieve something at which she ultimately succeeded. She cited an award-winning project, the birth of her daughter, and her climb up Mt. Kilimanjaro. (In fact she realised she had many more examples.) I also asked her to consider how those experiences

would have been if she had believed in her success up front. She recognised that she would have succeeded *and* enjoyed the journey along the way.

Finally, I asked Emma, **Choose the belief that will empower you.** She can believe 'I can do all this work well', OR she can believe 'I can't do all this work well'. Both are beliefs. If she chooses the first, she feels more at peace with her family and more energised. If she chooses the latter, she feels tired, impatient, guilty and gloomy.

Emma authentically chose the belief that will most empower her life. You can too.

STEP 2: LEAD IT – which means take action on it

'Lead it' is about taking action in the inner circle of control. Having learned what to love in the situation, actions we can take easily appear now that we hold an empowering belief. These are invisible to us when we hold a limiting belief. These are invisible to us when we hold a limiting belief. It's like taking off dark glasses and literally seeing things that were not there before. Sometimes, it's as simple as just taking the action we know to take.

STEP 2: LEAD IT – which means take action on it

- What is in your control?
- What actions can you take?
- What is your next step?
- (image of lead it)

How can Emma lead it?

Emma saw that what she needs from her family is support, acknowledgement and space, and that the dramas she creates around work are a signal to her family to acknowledge her. Emma's going to act by sharing with her family her belief that she will do her work well over the next six weeks, and explain from them she needs time, support and acknowledgement for that.

And there were other actions Emma could now see to take on her projects that moved her into the inner circle of control. Negotiate on certain deadlines, manage specific expectations with clients and set some clear priorities. (Now this may seem obvious to us reading now, but when Emma was wearing the dark glasses of the belief 'I can't do all this well' and feeling disempowered these actions were shaded from her view.)

STEP 3: LEAVE IT – which means accept it and let go

Once we have a belief turnaround and are in action, this is often enough to leave us empowered. However sometimes, we still have something that is diminishing our peace and power in some way. This means there's something to *let go of*. It will usually be a form of resentment, resistance or regret. Letting go means, leaving it be, allowing it to be the way it is and the way it isn't without judgement or resistance.

STEP 3: LEAVE IT – which means accept it and let go

- What are you resenting, regretting or resisting that you could let go of?
- What do you need to accept?

(image of leave it)

What can Emma leave?

Having found ways to LOVE and LEAD the situation, Emma realised she could find new ways of accepting it – of letting go of her resistance to reality and LEAVING it be. Emma can let go of her resentment to her clients for the project delays, and her regret at again finding herself under pressure.

Emma looked visibly less troubled by the end of the session. She will now anchor her new belief into her life, by reminding herself each day of her new belief and taking actions consistent with it.

Instant version

Here's my real-life instant example of LOVE IT, LEAD IT, LEAVE IT. I use it in my life all the time.

My husband's away at the moment. I live in a village in Southern Spain where the roads are narrow and winding. I just scraped the car when trying to park. I know my husband's not going to be thrilled and I'm worried. I've got a deadline to write this article today. **Can I love it?** No, let's be honest I can't, but my belief 'this is a disaster and I'm in trouble'...well yes, I can turn that around. 'It's not a disaster and he'll be understanding' certainly helps me right now. **Can I lead it?** I could take the car to the garage, but I want to write this article today and my husband's home tomorrow. No action to take right now. **Can I leave it?** Can I accept that I scraped the car (again) and that I've caused damage that he may react to? Yes I can. I can accept this situation, stop regretting it, resisting it. I'm going to leave it behind for today and stay in control of today - and not drift into the circle of concern of tomorrow.

PS. He was understanding when I eventually told him. I waited for the right moment when I was feeling centred and empowered, and explained honestly what had happened. He said: 'Oh well, could have been worse!'

Next steps

LOVE IT, LEAD IT OR LEAVE IT is a powerful tool. The end game is peace and empowerment versus stress and feelings of helplessness. You can use this process with yourself. Although it's helpful to do it the first time with someone who can ask these questions to help guide and challenge you.

When the clouds get in the way, it's easy to forget that the sun is still there. A professional coach can help you release clouded beliefs and create new ways for you to turn your challenges into opportunities and enable you to flourish and shine. If you'd like some expert support to help you, [get in touch with Elizabeth Lovius](http://www.elizabethlovius.com) or visit www.elizabethlovius.com.

If you want to get deeper into the process, here are some great teachers I've found helpful.

For loving what is: Byron Katie www.thework.com/index.php

For being proactive: Stephen Covey www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits-habit1.php

For belief busting: David Shepherd www.performancepartnership.com/docs/products/index.php