

# Don't Believe Everything You Think



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**T**he thoughts that pass through your head at any particular moment reflect the explicit and implicit beliefs you have come to embrace over the course of your life, reinterpreted in light of your current physical and emotional state, under whatever your current circumstances happen to be. Note that many of your beliefs and important aspects of your personality were present at birth, and many others were impressed upon you immediately thereafter by whatever family, culture or cult you happen to have been born randomly into. The earliest beliefs you arrived at on your own

were childish and often mistaken, as were your feelings about those beliefs. You were then drawn, more or less by chance, to communities of people and ideas that influenced the further evolution of your thinking and belief according to their own biases. This house of cards is the source of the ideas that come spontaneously to your mind these days, many of which are mistaken or beside the point. You are thinking this way most of the time, and so is whoever you are having trouble with. You should be skeptical about both of you and about what you think of each other.

The good news and the bad news is that words actually spoken, as opposed to thoughts merely think, can have an outsize effect on the thinking and speaking that follow. The bad news follows when the words are treated as statements of fact or arguments to be defended. The good news follows when they are taken as intuitive hypotheses to be critically examined, tested and evaluated. This is the method of critical reasoning, of science, and of my approach to psychotherapy and personal counseling. It works best when you aren't committed to believing everything you think. Trust me. Call me.

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