

A close-up photograph of two chrysanthemum flowers. The flower on the left is a light pink color with many small, pointed petals radiating from a green center. The flower on the right is a bright yellow color with similar petal structure. A white geometric shape, resembling a stylized 'A' or a triangle with a diagonal line, is overlaid on the image, framing the text.

The **Expatriate AIM**

REWRITE YOUR STORY
REBOOT YOUR LIFE

WWW.EXPATEDIT.COM

Do you want a fresh take on your expat experience?

You've seen a million posts about expat living on Insta and read the blogs looking for wisdom about how to find connection, build success and have the energy you need for your expatriate life. Along the way you probably found a few helpful recommendations, a couple of useful tips, maybe had an 'ah ha' moment or two ... but ultimately you're still wrestling with the challenges of expat living.

Why?

Because the real hard stuff of moving to another country isn't to do with getting the right visa, meeting the right people, or making a living, even though all of these things really matter.

The biggest shift has to do with mindset.

This is a self-coaching workbook with some simple but powerful questions to get you thinking.

- You'll get clearer about where you are and ...
... what's holding you back from what you want.
- You'll take steps towards designing and doing the things that will bring this to reality!
- You will get past limiting beliefs and the fears that keep you in your comfort zone.
- You'll see how one small word can take you from helpless overwhelm to seeing hope and opportunity all around you!

You'll discover the power of 'yet'.

I hope you enjoy the journey.

Lynne



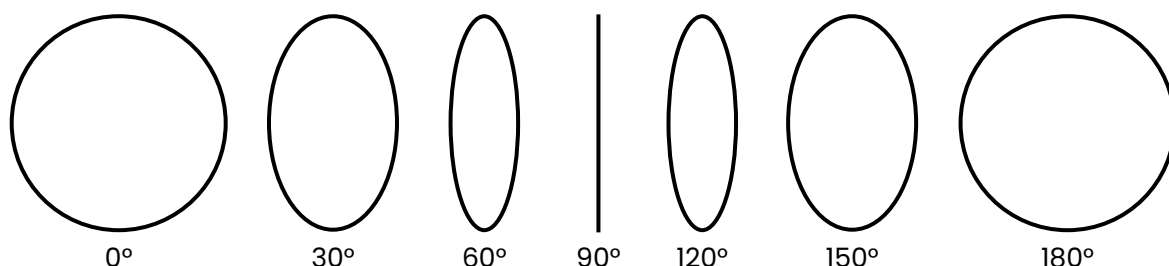
Mindset – Why It Matters

All experiences are subjective. Two people can witness the same event and interpret it in completely different ways. For instance, consider a heavy rainstorm during an outdoor event. One person might see this as a disaster, ruining the day's plans, while another might view it as a refreshing and unexpected twist that brings everyone closer together.

What accounts for this difference? **The answer lies in mindset.** You can think of your mindset as the lens through which you view all the events in your life. It's the way you approach life's experiences, shaping your perceptions, reactions, and overall outlook.

If you hold up a lens, like a magnifying glass, for example, you'll notice that what you see through the lens changes as you move your head. The same principle applies in life. **If you wish to change your life, you need a new perspective. To get a new perspective, you either need a new lens or a new angle from which to view the world.**

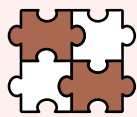
WHAT YOU SEE DEPENDS ON THE
PERSPECTIVE FROM WHICH YOU'RE VIEWING.



Fortunately, your mindset is not static! Research shows our brains are neuroplastic, meaning they can form new connections and pathways throughout life. **So before you go saying "that's just the way I am" or "that's just the way the world is," you might just need a new set of glasses!**

Fixed vs. Growth Mindset

According to researcher Carol Dweck, there are two mindsets: fixed and growth. Someone with a fixed mindset assumes that qualities or traits, such as intelligence, are innate and unchangeable—you have only what nature gave you. In contrast, someone with a growth mindset believes that you are a work in progress. As a result, adopting a growth mindset makes you more likely to take action and achieve your goals. **Below are some key differences between the two mindsets:**



Growth Mindset

Defines success as gradual improvement and growth.

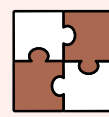
Embraces challenges. Looks for challenges for self-growth. Sees failure as a part of the process.

Focuses on getting gradually better. Believes in constantly learning new skills. Sees failures as temporary setbacks.

Sees obstacles as inevitable parts of the process. Knows that all problems have solutions.

Is inspired by the success of others. Tries to learn from their success.

Sees effort and consistency as the main ingredients for success.



Fixed Mindset

Defines success as being right and not failing.

Gives up when challenged. Avoids challenges to avoid failure.

Believes that they're good at something or not. Has excuses why they can't learn or do something new.

Gives up in the face of an obstacle. Sees an obstacle as the limit of own abilities.

Sees the success of others as threat. Thinks it's unfair that others are succeeding while they are not.

Does not feel motivated to put in the extra effort.

Challenges

Skills

Obstacles

Success of Others

Effort

★ **QUESTION:** Would you describe your mindset as more fixed or growth-oriented? Why do you think this?

Understanding Your Comfort Zone

Another concept that goes hand in hand with growth mindset is “comfort zone”. To learn and grow, you first have to break out of your comfort zone (where you feel competent). Notice how you can’t get to the learning and growth zones without first going through the fear zone.

This means that being afraid is a normal part of the process. It’s up to you to decide if you let it hold you back.

**But it's not all about getting uncomfortable either.
That's just one part of it.**

The comfort zone is where you will spend most of your time unless: you’re pressured externally (by people in your life) or internally because you want to grow.

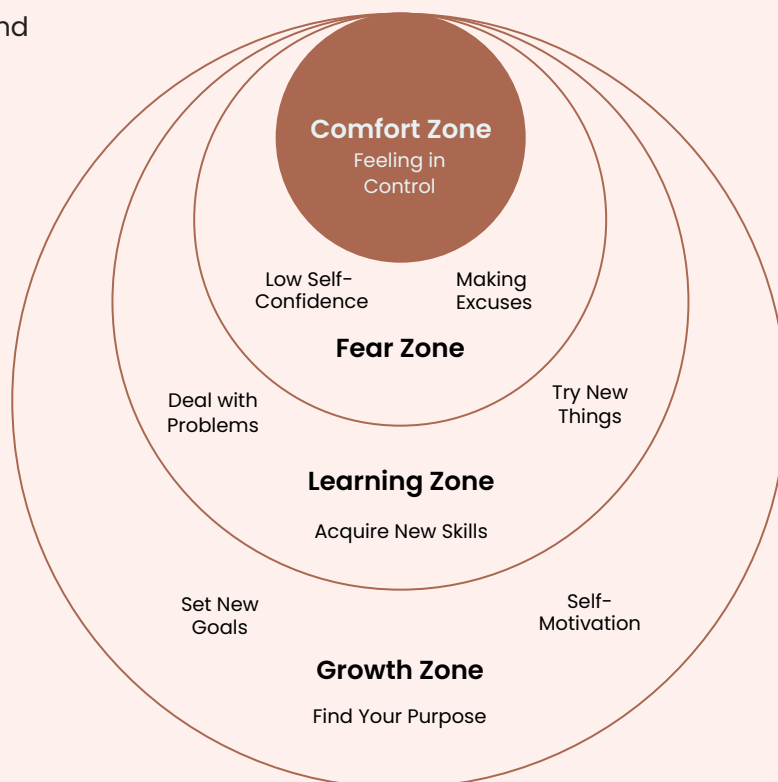
So, whatever new activity you do, or whatever new skill you're trying to learn, you'll probably be uncomfortable at first (and not very good at it!).

You may feel silly, or anxious because you don't want to fail.

That's normal.

The more you do the new activity, the more comfortable you'll feel.

This is how you expand your comfort zone!



EXERCISE: Escaping Your Comfort Zone

★ **01:** What are some of the things in your life that you'd like to do but feel uncomfortable doing?

★ **02:** What fears are holding your back? What kind of thoughts does doing the thing/s you fear bring to mind? What do you think will happen if you do it anyway?

★ **03:** What are you missing out on by letting your thoughts and fears hold you back? (e.g experiences, new skills)

★ **04:** What would happen in your life if you decided not to listen to your fears and do the things that are making you uncomfortable? What kind of person would you be? What could you achieve?

How Your Beliefs Become Your Outcomes

What happens if you always stay in your comfort zone?

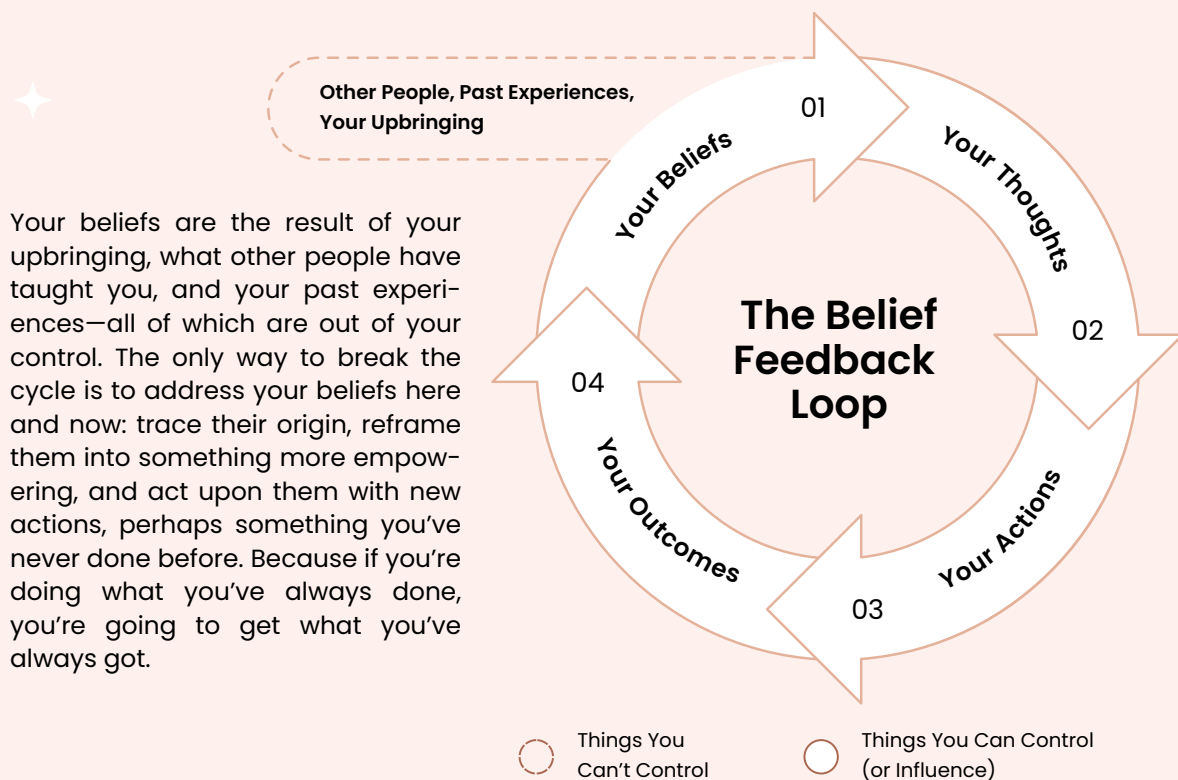
It's very hard to change anything when you don't want to change anything. Always choosing comfort means it's almost impossible to learn anything new. Remember back when you were at school trying to learn algebra? I bet it wasn't comfortable! The same applies to when you first started to walk - now you just don't remember the frustration of how hard it was to make your first steps.

Avoiding the uncomfortable also means that whatever you believe about yourself, others, and the world never gets challenged, because challenging your beliefs is painful.

Sometimes it makes sense to question your beliefs because they determine the actions you take and don't take. Which in turn determine the outcomes you get, which in turn reinforce your reality.

For example, if you believe that you're too old for a career change, you'll probably not look into acquiring new skills. And if you don't acquire new skills, you can't break into a new career. And then when you think you can't break into a new career because you don't have the skills, the cycle repeats—reinforcing your original belief that you're too old for a career change.

Below is a simple diagram of how this process looks:



EXERCISE: Uncovering Your Limiting Beliefs

- ★ **STEP 01:** The first step in overcoming your limiting beliefs is to identify them. Use the prompts below to get started:

What is it that you want to do? What change are you looking to make?

Now, think of all the reasons you can't do this . . .

(Ex. "I don't know where to start," "I'm not good at this," "I'm not ready," etc.)

**THESE ARE YOUR
LIMITING BELIEFS!**

PS! If you find it helpful, you can use the list of most common limiting beliefs on the next page.

What's the origin of these beliefs? When did you start to believe them?

How are these beliefs holding you back? What are you missing out on?

Common Limiting Beliefs

I CAN'T ...

- I can't do public speaking.
- I can't change.
- I can't learn a new language.

I DON'T ...

- I don't have the time.
- I don't have the skills.
- I don't have the right background.

I SHOULDN'T ...

- I shouldn't apply for that job.
- I shouldn't ask for help.
- I shouldn't feel this way.

I'M NOT ...

- I'm not a great people-person.
- I'm not athletic.
- I'm not creative.

IT'S TOO LATE ...

- It's too late in my life to wear something like that.
- It's too late to go back to school.

I'VE TRIED ...

- I've tried applying to different jobs, but no one hires me.
- I've tried to lose weight, but nothing works.

I DON'T DESERVE ...

- I don't deserve love.
- I don't deserve the right to ask for a raise. Maybe in another year.

I'LL NEVER ...

- I'll never be a millionaire.
- I'll never get over my fear of "X."

I'M NOT WORTHY ...

- I'm not worthy, I'm pretty sure I just got lucky.
- I'm not worthy of love.

THEY'RE BETTER ...

- They're better at this task, so I should not even try.
- They're better suited for this opportunity.

IN THE FUTURE ...

- I'll have enough time to start my own business.
- I'll have more knowledge to tackle this project.

IT'S POINTLESS TO ...

- It's pointless to try when the odds are against me.

★ **STEP 02:** Reframe your limiting beliefs using the following framework.
(This is a filled-out example—find a blank worksheet on the next page)

	My limiting belief: I'm not ready to start my own business.	
REALITY TESTING	What evidence do I have for and against this belief? For: I still have more to learn about business fundamentals. I don't have enough savings yet. Against: I know people who started with less experience and savings who are doing well. My skills are decent enough to get started. I can learn as I go.	Is this a fact or an opinion? (Fact means that it's 100% true without any exceptions) There is no definitive moment when one is absolutely "ready." It's based on my perception.
	Alternative Explanation If I was thinking more positively, how would I perceive this? I don't need to be perfectly ready to start. I just need to accept the uncertainties and see them as a part of an exciting journey. I can learn new skills as I go along.	
LOOKING AT THE EXTREMES	If I act according to this belief, what's the worst thing that can happen? I'll forever be stuck in analysis paralysis. My confidence in myself erodes. 20 years from now I'll regret I never tried.	If I act the opposite of this belief, what's the worst thing that can happen? I struggle at first but learn and adapt. A business fails but I gain valuable experience. Most successful people have failed at multiple businesses before they struck gold.
	Showing Self-Compassion If a good friend had a similar limiting belief, what would I recommend to them? Being 100% ready is a myth. If it's something you're passionate about, take the leap. Trust yourself to figure it out and ask others for help when needed. Failure is not that bad. Not trying is the worst thing you can do.	
VALUES	Does this belief align with my values? If not, how can I phrase it so it would? Delaying contradicts my values of learning, determination, and fulfillment. Something that would be aligned with my values: I FEEL that I'm not YET ready to start my own business, but that's okay. This does not mean I should put it off. I'm determined to bet on myself and at least try. Everything I need to know, I can learn along the way. I feel that reaching for this goal brings me fulfillment, even if I fail.	

- ✦ **Step 02:** Reframe your limiting beliefs using the following framework.
(Analyze each of your limiting beliefs separately. You can use the extra writing space on the next page.)

REALITY TESTING	My limiting belief:	
	What evidence do I have for and against this belief?	Is this a fact or an opinion? (Fact means that it's 100% true without any exceptions)
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATION	If I was thinking more positively, how would I perceive this?	
	If I act according to this belief, what's the worst thing that can happen?	If I act opposite of this belief, what's the worst thing that can happen?
GAINING PERSPECTIVE	If a loved one had a similar limiting belief, what would I recommend to them?	
	Does this belief align with my values? If not, how can I phrase it so it would?	
SELF-COMPASSION		
VALUES		

★ **BONUS:** Quite often, your limiting beliefs can be the results of cognitive distortions. Cognitive distortions are common patterns of thought (or beliefs) that can lead to negative emotions, behaviors, or reactions. **They represent a skewed way of viewing the world or ourselves, often reinforcing negative beliefs or emotions.**

Below is a list of common cognitive distortions. Check if any apply to your own limiting beliefs.



Over-Generalization

Drawing a conclusion based on just a few data points. Ex. All swans are white because I've only seen white swans.



Polarized Thinking

When you think that something can be only black or white—good or bad. Ignoring any nuances.



Mental Filtering

Focusing only on the positive or negative. Acknowledging the positive side but finding a way to turn it into a negative.



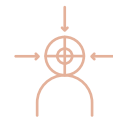
Fortune-Telling

Predicting events will turn out badly, without evidence. Ex. "I just know I'll do terribly on the presentation."



Blaming

Blaming others and always feeling like a victim. Finding ways to say how others are responsible for one's situation.



Personalization

Taking everything personally. Feeling like everybody's actions are directed for or against you.



Jumping to Conclusions

Assuming you know other people's motivations and making predictions without substantial evidence.



Labeling

Judging others or yourself by a single event (often negative). Not taking into account the nuances.



Emotional Reasoning

Anything that feels a certain way must be true. Taking feelings as a proof of validity of one's own opinions.



Should Statements

"Should" and "Should Not" statements are used to create pressure on yourself or others and are often not followed through.



**Do you recognize any of the cognitive distortions in your own limiting beliefs?
If yes, which ones?**

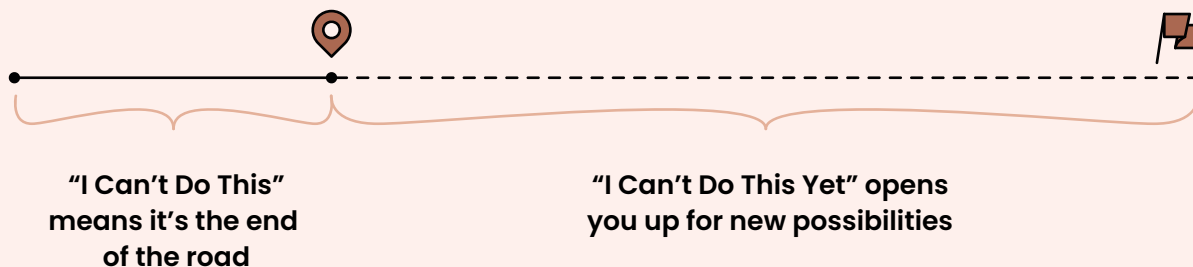


How can you reframe this limiting belief so it would be more balanced and motivate you to take action?

For example, if your belief is about how you will fail, you can acknowledge that failure is possible, but failing means you are out of your comfort zone and learning (so it's actually a good sign—something to look forward to).

TIP: The Power of “Yet”

Sometimes a mindset shift can look really subtle. For example, when you say, “I can’t do this,” you close yourself off to the opportunity for growth. But, by adding “yet” to the end—“I can’t do this yet,”— you acknowledge your current limitations while also recognizing the potential for change. This subtle shift implies that while you may not possess a certain skill or knowledge now, there is room for improvement and learning. Try it next time a limiting belief crops up!



What is it that you want to do that you can't do ... yet? What actions will you take to get into your growth zone?

Once you're able to push yourself to stay in the learning zone for prolonged periods of time, you start to reach into the growth zone. This is where your fears lessen and you feel like you have clear vision forward. What seemed impossible before will now seem very doable.

✦ **01: What small steps could you start taking to face your fears?**

✦ **02: If you were to embrace the discomfort of doing the thing/s you fear, what would you do?**

✦ **03: What new thing/s will you start learning? What steps will you take to start?**

✦ **04: How will you know you're in the growth zone? How will you keep track of your actions and the outcomes?**

ABOUT ME

I'm an Australian expatriate who moved from the East Coast of Australia to lovely Madrid. I'm also a Professional Coach (ICF-PCC).

As an expat and coach I know that making a great expat life isn't just about joining groups, learning the language, managing the practical things and wearing your best smile as you meet new people.

It's about mindset shift.

With the right combination of mindset, intention and action you can achieve the things that matter to you - even the things that seem wildly out of reach right now.

If you're thinking that you would like to dig deeper into some of the work you've started here, consider The Expat AIM.

The Expat AIM is 6 coaching conversations that will challenge you with some powerful questions to get you thinking about the things you want bad enough to be intentional about going after them - and help you plan and be accountable for action that will get you where you want to be.

You'll find more information at www.expatedit.com or book a free chat.

Meet With Me

**I look forward to
the conversation!**

Lynne

