



UNCOVER YOUR OWN 'ARCHEOLOGY OF BELIEFS'

By Christina L. Merkley
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As part of my pre-writing ritual, I've made myself a nice pot of tea. Quite unknowingly I found myself drawn to my top shelf, where I keep a small collection of pretty china cups and saucers that I inherited from my grandmother, Margaret Duncan. I don't use these cups very often, but today I felt compelled to.

Now as I sit down to write, it strikes me that my unconscious knew exactly what it was doing in getting me to select one of my Grandma's cups to drink out of today, of all days --- as this article is all about the power and presence of the past upon our present day lives. Particularly how our ancestors, lineages and cultural backgrounds can subtly (and not so subtly!) impact how we create our lives.

Inherited Beliefs:

We inherit much more than genes and china cups from our ancestors; we also inherit their beliefs, attitudes and worldviews about a multitude of subjects. They pass along messages about everything: work, money, men and women, leisure time, relationships, food, other people, the meaning of life, death ... you name it. These messages get communicated directly and indirectly. And we all do a whole lot of interpreting and 'applying of meaning' to them as well. All of this is vitally important, especially to coaching, as what we believe, at a very deep level, creates our reality. And, what we believe, at deep levels, is often very influenced by what we grew up in and around. We often need to consciously SHIFT the beliefs that influence us – in order to break through to a higher level of accomplishment and satisfaction.

Do Your Own Archeological Scan:

People enter coaching when they want to shift or improve certain areas in life. The Big Four that appear over and over again in my practice are: business/career, money/prosperity, relationships and health/balance. In my SHIFT-IT process, one of the first exercises that we do (after determining which areas of life you want to focus your coaching on) is an archeological scan --- to more clearly SEE the 'belief environment' that you were 'cooked' in. What you are doing well in, and what you aren't doing well in, are often impacted by how these particular things were viewed or treated in your early environment.

If you are focusing your coaching on increasing your business or shifting into a more satisfying career --- what did your parents (and your early community) communicate about business? About career? About work? What were the messages they imparted to you? What were their favorite sayings about the

subject? What did their personal example communicate to you? How did you view them in the area of work?

If money and prosperity are your focus --- what did your caretakers and community members have to say about money? About having it? Not having it? How one goes about creating it? Whether it is desirable or not? What about gender roles around money ... particular messages about money, prosperity or abundance that apply specifically to men or women? Take it back a generation. And a generation beyond that if you can (you don't need to know the complete specifics, but what is your guess about what they felt and communicated on this subject --- if not directly, then in how they lived their lives).

If you want to shift the nature or state of your relationships, what programming and messaging did you receive about relationships? Marriage? The specific roles that men and women are expected to play? Looking at your parent's relationship(s), what meaning did you apply to what you saw? What did you tell yourself? Did you make any promises or commitments to yourself --- to be the same, to be different, to do it 'better'?

Consider The Larger, Deeper Cultural Influences:

And, in whatever subject area you are focusing on, take it even one step further -- back to the larger cultural background(s) that you are connected to. What do these cultures tend to think, say, believe about this subject? If religion is involved, what are the messages that the religion communicates about your subject area? What is this culture specifically know for? Stereotypical assumptions? How do you, at this point in time, interpret or think about the cultural background(s) that you are a part of?

See Your Influences:

We are all programmed by our backgrounds – some of these programs serve us (or have served us) and some of them don't (or no longer do). When you are on a journey of development and 'improvement', it can be very helpful to contemplate and appreciate the many influences that go into making you --- that may be impacting your ability and inability to create the kind of life you desire.



Sketch out the influences from the generations before you. Keep the beliefs, attitudes and assumptions that serve you and discard, flip or shift the ones that don't. While we can be grateful and appreciative for the generations that have

come before us, we don't need to be hampered by old ways of thinking of being, if they are no longer serving us.

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P.S. If you'd like help creating your own Archeology of Beliefs, Christina has created a self-coach, step-by-step manual and visual map to help you. See [SHIFT-IT Mini Manuals](#), for more information.

WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR E-ZINE OR WEB SITE? You can, as long as you include this blurb with it: Christina Merkley, "The SHIFT-IT Coach" is creator of the SHIFT-IT Graphic Coaching Process. To learn more about SHIFT-IT, Graphic Coaching and Personal Visioning and Planning, visit <http://www.shift-it-coach.com>