

## Limiting Thoughts Limit Our Lives

“I agree to requests to avoid conflict.”

“I could never be a/an \_\_\_\_\_.”

“I have to \_\_\_\_\_ or people won’t like me.”

“I keep to myself so I won’t get caught up in drama.”

These thoughts may be frequent for some and less so for others, but the fears and insecurities behind such thinking hold us back from fully owning and living our lives. Worries about not measuring up can keep us from:

- Speaking up and sharing our unique point of view
- Relaxing and enjoying personal relationships and interactions with others
- Being able to say “no” when necessary
- Accepting greater responsibilities that advance our skills and careers
- Trying our best in order to achieve success

Where do these thoughts come from? They are the result of past experiences or statements made to or about us that created pain. We learned to protect or numb ourselves by coming to conclusions that led to such thinking; they kept us from further hurt and helped make sense of chaos or relieved fears. At the time they were formulated, those thoughts had a purpose.

The question to answer in the present: Do these thoughts still serve us, or do we simply default to them because they are familiar? What would it feel like to change these thoughts and embrace all of life’s possibilities?

A first step to true contentment is greater awareness of choices we make, and what drives us to make them. Looking inward and assessing what we do gives the opportunity to consider what we might want to change. Living to our fullest potential happens when we open ourselves to alternative thoughts and move towards the changes we desire.