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# Beliefs and Happiness go Hand-in-Hand

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## BELIEFS AND HAPPINESS GO HAND-IN-HAND

by Kathleen Gage

**Y**ears ago I had the opportunity to meet a woman who reinforced my view of the power of beliefs. I met Chris in 1986 while taking a public speaking course.

Chris was not in class the first week of training; she showed up during the second week. Class had already begun for the evening when Chris walked into the room. Chris didn't really walk into the room. She had a pair of metal crutches used to support her body as she dragged her legs behind her. Chris has Cerebral Palsy, which she has lived with all her life.

Chris had an extremely difficult time communicating with others. Not because she didn't have the desire to communicate, but because for most of her twenty-one years of life she had been kept in a room with only Elvis records and tapes to entertain her. No one had taken the time to assist Chris in developing the ability to talk, no one except her current caretaker, Bonnie. It was Bonnie who knew there was so much more to Chris than anyone ever gave her credit for.

When asked by the instructor what her goal for the twelve-week course was, Chris struggled to respond and became frustrated in the process. Chris had a very short fuse when it came to frustration because for most of her life no one would listen to her. Her goal was to be able to stand, by herself, in front of forty-five people and tell us about herself. Bonnie conveyed this desire to us after Chris could not.

To the amazement of everyone in the class, on the twelfth week of the course Chris stood in front of the room and shared with us, in her own words, what her life had been like. It was one of the most beautiful and enlightening experiences I have ever witnessed. Here was a woman who had, in many ways, been thrown away. And yet, she had a determination, commitment and belief that she could accomplish more in her life and she did.

Life is created moment by moment based on our beliefs. Our belief system is programmed on both a conscious and subconscious level. As our beliefs change our experiences change. And as our experiences change, so do our beliefs.

We create our experiences according to our belief system. Initially, many of our beliefs are formed because of our upbringing. What were the influences we had in our childhood? Where we taught that we had limitations because we were either a girl or a boy? Because we were members of a certain religion or race? We lived in a particular area of town? Went to a good school or a bad school? Did our parents encourage us to be free thinkers or were we expected to conform with their beliefs? Take a moment to think about some beliefs your parents passed on to you which may be limiting you in your life. Do those beliefs serve you? If not, are you ready to release them? It is up to you.

We base the reality of our beliefs on the ability to create a fullness in life. Reality is limited merely by ones imagination and desire to allow love and light to flow freely in the imagination. The purpose of this journey we are all experiencing is to share knowledge that is a culmination of experiences.

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