

Is Your Brain Thinking Small About You?

Here is a great article to share. *Minimizing Yourself: The Struggle to See Our Brilliance* by Carol Ellis of BrillianceMastery.com

As I read Carol's article I was reminded of not only how often I have been guilty of minimizing but also how often I have heard the same from friends.

I was also reminded of a client with cancer who had requested hypnosis for pain management. When working with pain clients, I often ask them to make crayon drawings, which can provide useful insights about how they perceive their self image and their pain.

In response to request to draw a self portrait, the woman drew a very small head with minimum detail and placed it in the far upper left hand corner of an empty page – not quite a postage stamp drawing. As I continued to work with her the drawing confirmed her attitude of “I don't think much of myself.” This had been a very competent professional woman who even in her illness minimized the value of her accomplishments.

This article is a wonderful reminder of how we are endowed with a magnificent brain and yet we often find ways to limit our potential by thinking small about who we really are, what we've done and what we are yet to do.

Here is Carol's article – *Minimizing Yourself: The Struggle to See Our Brilliance*

One thing women seem to be natural masters at is minimizing themselves. Time and time again, I'll meet a powerful and brilliant woman. From outward appearances, she looks like she's “got it going on” – confident, talented and

approachable. Yet within a few minutes what I call the “Ms. Minimizer” persona shows up.

I encountered my Ms. Minimizer self when I was attending a retreat and had brought a gift for my mentor. My teacher was delighted to receive my present yet, as I handed her the card, I started to feel uncomfortable. It was a spotlight moment of sorts. My thoughts of “Will she like my gift?” and “What does she really think of me?” started to come up. So Ms. Minimizer showed up to break my tension and cracked a joke that she hoped would strike a nice balance of self-deprecation and show what a fun gal I am. So as my mentor opened my card, I said “I hope you can read my handwriting. I know it can get kind of messy.”

My mentor stopped me and asked, “Why did you do that? This is a beautiful gift you’re giving me regardless of what the card says or what it is. So why did you just try to take away from the power of your message and this beautiful offering you’ve given me by criticizing yourself?” Ms. Minimizer was so busted! In that moment, I got clear how our brilliance is undermined by the insidious habit of minimizing ourselves. We get so trained to giving, it can feel uncomfortable to instead receive the acknowledgement, appreciation and recognition of others.

Here are some ways to send your Ms. Minimizer packing:

Train yourself to hear typical minimizing vocabulary such as “I only...” or “I didn’t really do all that much” as red flags that Ms. Minimizer may be in the vicinity.

Notice how you react when someone gives you a compliment or acknowledgement. If you get slightly uncomfortable and feel the need to deflect, instead just take a deep breath and say “Thank you so much!” and then stop talking.

Practice celebrating your accomplishments in tangible ways. You can write daily self-acknowledgements, or do a happy

dance. Give your receiving muscles a workout!

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being "Never" and 10 being "All the time," how would you rate yourself for minimizing your accomplishments or skills. If you give yourself a "1" – Congratulations. Your Ms. Minimizer must be on an extended leave of absence! If not, identify a specific situation you know that you tend to detract or minimize yourself and create one way you can stop that habit the next time you're in that situation.

[Carolyn Ellis](#) is a Success Strategist and Founder of [BrillianceMastery.com](#) and [ThrivePrinciples.com](#). "Bits of Brilliance" offers weekly inspiration, wisdom and support for the woman entrepreneur or business owner who is committed to living her brilliance. "Bits of Brilliance" is designed to nourish your soul, feed your mind and fuel your purpose so you can truly master and express your true brilliance with power, passion and profitability!