

Living inside out



Making changes from the inside out

SHIFTING FROM AN 'OUTSIDE IN' PERSPECTIVE, TO LIVING 'INSIDE OUT'.

Let's start by understanding how most people make decisions, because you'll likely be doing this without even realising.

Most people make 'outside in' decisions.

What this means is they look outside of themselves for their views and values in most areas of their lives.

It starts young - we are conditioned by our parents or carers with their family values.

Great parenting is when these values are conscious and intentional and handed to us with good explanations and reasoning. Less good parenting is often unconscious - the values are there all the same, but they haven't been intentionally passed on to us.

For example...

Your initial views or values regarding family, or work, or education or God will have come from your earliest influences.

You developed your views on these topics from 'outside in'. It's like you breathed them in over time.

As we get older we start to breathe in the views of our friends, maybe teachers, people we admire, famous personalities.

Our values and views can change through adolescence but they are still breathed in from others.

They're still 'outside in'.

The beauty of adulthood is that we don't have to breathe in other people's values and views any longer.

Except most people still do!

the 'shoulds'

Not all external influences are bad, but they are unhelpful if we haven't developed an ability to use them from the 'inside out'.

This means that we take an idea, a value or a belief and filter it - deciding if it aligns with who we really are at our core, or not.

These external voices act like an old tribal elder, offering wisdom to us that we can choose to learn from, rather than telling us what we 'should' do - the old 'outside in' way of being.

This exercise underpins all of the coaching I do with people through the reform coaching curriculum.

This is designed to help you become aware of the things you have been unconsciously breathing in from all around you.

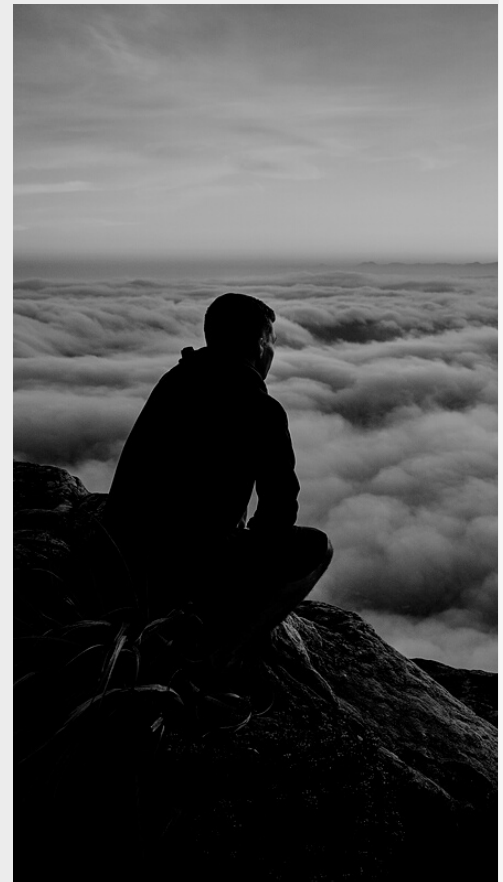
The first stage of reform is awareness, because no change can begin until we are aware of the things that impact us without us even realising.

You can do this exercise for any area of your life - whether it's at work, in a role or relationship, in your view of health or dieting or money or your body, in your faith or leadership. Or something else!

Choose one area now where you feel dissatisfied, unhappy or unfulfilled. This needs to be an area where you want to ask the question 'is there another way?'

I'll walk you through the exercise using an area that was deeply important to me, and which I needed to reform a few years ago - in my parenting.

Write which area you are going to focus on here:



naming the 'shoulds'

You are going to focus on all the 'shoulds' that you hold in this area. Remember that the 'shoulds' are the views and values we have been breathing in from others our whole life. Don't worry for now if they're 'good' or 'bad' - just list them all. You are simply gaining awareness. There will be both 'shoulds' and 'shouldn'ts', and maybe some 'can'ts' and 'mustn'ts' in there too.

My parenting list would have gone something like this:

- I should sacrifice for my kids.
- Mums should stay at home more than they work
- Of course this is hard, it's supposed to be
- Don't ask for too much help, you should be able to cope on your own
- You should enjoy being a mum, this is a privilege
- You shouldn't go away for breaks too often, that's poor parenting
- You should make sure your kids are offered lots of classes and groups - your job is to provide any opportunity at any cost
- You should put the children's needs before your own.
- You should know what you're doing.

Your turn! On the next blank page, simply list all the things that come to mind out when it comes to the 'shoulds' in your chosen area.

On the next page start to create your list. Maybe ask someone close to you what they see. Sometimes having others mirroring back to us can bring an extra level of awareness of things we can't see on our own.

Remember, this is for the purpose of AWARENESS.

naming the 'shoulds'

all change starts with awareness



WHAT NOW?

Once you are aware of the 'shoulds' you can start to filter through them. This is the move from 'outside in' thinking, to 'inside out'. Which 'shoulds' do you want to change? Which don't serve you well? Which are keeping you stuck? Which are toxic? Which do you want to keep? Which help you become the best you? What does your instinct tell you about them? If you could rewrite some of them, what would you write? If you had to write a script explaining how you hold this role or relationship or area of life - what would that look like, and would you be proud of it?

Spend some time journaling your answers to some of these questions to deepen your awareness.



learning to reform

Reform is the process of creating and choosing another way, of living inside out.

There is another way for you to live, to work, to have a relationship with your body or in your gender, your faith or family relationships. There is another way.

The 'shoulds' create a script we live by, and most of the scripts we have are pretty crappy. We need to tear up some old scripts in order to find the freedom to re-write them - from the inside out.

If you would like to discuss diving in deeper to this process, you can email me at hi@helencottee.com to get the ball rolling.

I help people like you to get out from underneath bad scripts and learn how to make the journey of discovering another more fulfilling and unique way to live, love, work and be in the world.