



Neutralizing the Circumstance

Circumstances, also known as facts, are not in our control. What we **think** about a circumstance is within our control.

Most people live by the belief that they are subject to circumstances, and that how they think and feel about circumstances in life is just the way it is. Thoughts that have been used repetitively for a long time become beliefs, which makes them feel like truth, or feel like a fact.

Anything outside of us; a tree, another person, a natural disaster, has no meaning until it is interpreted by a brain. The brain is so efficient at interpreting and giving meaning to circumstances that it can seem there is no other way to think about it. But the interpretations and meanings we give to sensory information entering our brains came from someone else. We were taught by parents, authorities, teachers, friends, media, etc. This is how wisdom is passed down, and how behavior is passed down.

In this exercise I challenge you to try and neutralize a circumstance. Once you develop the skill of being able to see all the definition and meaning your brain is giving to circumstance, you will be able to step outside of that definition, and make an informed decision as to whether it is serving you.

Here's a simple example. Say you have a dog, and it gets wet. You think "It's irritating when my dog gets wet." What are the facts in that sentence? The only fact is there's a wet dog. Your brain attached the word and feeling of irritation to define the circumstance. Not every human on the planet thinks a wet dog is irritating, but they can all agree that there is a wet dog. See the difference? Irritating is part of your personal definition, it's not circumstantial fact. It's a fact that you're feeling the irritation, but it's not a fact about the dog.

On the next page you'll find some questions to prompt you. Take your time to really think about this exercise, it takes practice. And if you have any questions or need help, email sarah@braincleanupcoach.com.

1. Name a problem that you have in your life right now.

2. Why is it a problem?

3. Now look at what you wrote. What is the neutral circumstance that your brain has built this narrative around? (What's the wet dog?)

4. What is the storyline, definition, or meaning your brain has given to this neutral circumstance?
