

**Beliefs and Values**  
**By**  
**Dr. Darlene Treese**

*"Men stumble over the truth from time to time, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened"*  
*-Sir Winston Churchill*

It has been said that life is what happens while we are planning the future. I believe that very often that is true if we rely on others to make our decisions, if we look to others to tell us what to think, believe or value. However, life can also be a beautiful event that we are actively involved in and an adventure we can be proud of.

Beliefs are what we hold to be true, in the absence of fact. A belief is not a fact. It is what we hope or think is true. Commonly held beliefs are frequently found to be false. Hundreds of years ago, it was widely held that the earth was flat. Less than a century ago, it was believed that women were the inferior sex and were unable to handle responsibility. Even today, it's believed by some that one group of people is superior or inferior to another. We need to be constantly challenging our beliefs. Many, if not most of our beliefs, come from our parents and their beliefs from their parents and were based on the information that they had available to them at that point in time. You must think for yourself and most importantly, you must decide for yourself what you believe to be true for you today.

Values, on the other hand, are very special beliefs. Do we value human life over prosperity? Do we value honesty over success? Do we value caring for others over achievement? Values are the worth we place on a principle, standard or a quality we hold dear. Values are not only learned from our parents, but are achieved through our interaction with the world.

If we are fortunate enough to see an act of kindness, we might decide that trait is one we want to possess. If our parents respect our thoughts and feelings, we might decide that empathy is a valuable trait. Similarly, if we are told that "winning is everything" we might hold that superior to fairness.

According to Jewish custom, a person should write two wills: one to give away property and the other to pass on his or her values. They spent a great deal of time deciding what values they held, what beliefs they hold dear. They believed that their values, their "moral code" are what defined who they were and they used that code in their everyday life. They had very few moral dilemmas, (what should I do in this situation), because they had already decided what was important to them.

I think we can learn a great deal from that old custom. If we decide, in advance, what is important to us, how we want to be, who we want to be; when we get in that crucial place of decision, we will know what to do. We will not have to react out of fear or worry what others will think, we will know what we believe and can act from that place of insight. We will not have to feel guilt or shame, we will not have to vow to do it differently next time, and we will be able to act from a place of strength.

Our values and beliefs should not be lofty goals, words that we know how to parrot. They should be how we live our lives and how we make our decisions. Your values will be different from mine, and that is how it should be. Your life is different from mine. Your needs and goals are different as well. However, know what your values are, think about them, and decide what is important to you.

Our admiration usually is given to those who have accomplished great things, and not much positive thought is given to our own lives and purpose. Spend a few moments today deciding what you want to be, what you believe, how you want to be remembered and watch your life take on new meaning in everyday circumstances.

**Dr. Darlene Treese** has been in private practice in hypnosis and counseling since 1983. She is a Diplomate in Counseling with the National Institute of Sports, Past President of the American Psychotherapy and Medical Hypnosis Association and Vice President of the Rotary eClub of Southwest, USA. Darlene has been internationally acknowledged for her positive action and solution-based therapies and work with corporations. "A person for the people", Dr. Dar is always available to help with your questions and dilemmas through office visits, email or telephone consultations. Call her at: **850-201-0073** or visit **[www.AskDrTreese.com](http://www.AskDrTreese.com)**