



This Is Your Life Podcast

Season 4, Episode 12

Published: July 22, 2015

Michael Hyatt

Stu McLaren: Welcome to *This Is Your Life* with Michael Hyatt, where our goal is to help you win at work and succeed at life. My name is Stu McLaren, and I am filling in for our regular host, Michele Cushatt. She is at home, and she is beating cancer up. She is going to be right back in the studio before we know it because she is making progress a lot faster than doctors predicted, which we are very grateful for. Right, Michael?

Michael Hyatt: We're thrilled about that.

Stu: Yes.

Michael: Hey, Stu!

Stu: Good to have you!

Michael: How are you doing? It's good to be had.

Stu: I was saying I'm still getting used to the voice up in the sky being in the studio. It's like the producers are in another room, and all we hear is their voices.

Michael: We hear their voices telling us what to do.

Stu: It's crazy because we're about to go live and then we hear their voices, and it kind of spooks me every time.

Michael: I think of them as the puppet masters.

Stu: Truly.

Michael: We're the sock puppets.

Stu: Exactly. We're just puppets in their show. Okay, I don't want you to hold back in today's episode.

Michael: Okay.

Stu: In fact (good transition, Stu), that's what we're going to be talking about: nonexistent barriers that tend to hold us back. I think we can all relate to this. We've all experienced this at some point in time.

Michael: We have. Oh, you're pausing and waiting for me to say something clever.

Stu: No. It's okay.

Michael: Well, I have this limiting belief. No, absolutely. I find that most of the things that hold us back are not things that are in there; they're things that are in here, inside of our heads. It's the thoughts that become the invisible barriers that become the obstacles that keep us from making the progress we want in our lives. All you have to do is talk to somebody and just listen to their conversation, their narration of what's happening in their life, to realize they're stuck not because there's something holding them back but because of the way they're thinking about the problem they're trying to solve.

Stu: Well, I'm excited to dig into this, because I know I've experienced this myself.

Michael: Me too.

Stu: On your blog, you wrote something about this. You talked about the topic of invisible and sometimes nonexistent barriers. You said, "How many of my own barriers are like this? In other words, they only exist in my mind, but I treat them as though they were out there, part of the real world. Beliefs are not the culprit. They can be a good thing when they are rooted in reality, but we have to learn to distinguish between reality and excuses." Now I know you had a wonderful dog, and this whole concept of invisible barriers was really prevalent in his life. Can you talk about that?

Michael: Yeah. I had this dog. His name was Nelson, and he was an English Setter. He was a beautiful, absolutely gorgeous, dog. When we got him, he was just a little more than a puppy, and he was very obedient except when we opened the front door. Like a convict drunk on freedom, he would bolt through that door. A couple of times, he almost got hit by the oncoming traffic in the street in front of the house. At that particular time, we didn't have a fence around the yard.

It really wasn't practical to do a fence at that time. There was some other building stuff we needed to do first. We were just kind of resigned to it. Then we discovered this wonderful

technological advance called the invisible fence. Now the way an invisible fence works is that the invisible fence people come out and bury this wire around the perimeter of your yard.

Stu: So it's buried in the ground.

Michael: It's buried in the ground. Then you put this collar on the dog, and it's not what you think. It's very humane, but when the dog begins to approach that barrier (which to him is invisible), he'll hear just a little beep. If he continues to progress toward the barrier, he'll get a little static shock. It's not a big deal. Actually, I think he gets a vibration first and then finally a shock. So they go through a whole protocol where they train you and the dog by having him approach that. I'll tell you that once he was trained, he would get up to that, and he wouldn't get anywhere close.

Stu: He knew.

Michael: He knew. I tried all kinds of things with him to get him to break that barrier. I would throw a ball up toward the barrier, and he wouldn't chase it. I would get on the other side of the barrier and call him. He wouldn't come. I would get on the other side with a ball or dog food and call him. He wouldn't come, because he had just gotten trained to believe that barrier was real.

Stu: In his mind, he knew, "If I go beyond this point, it's not going to be a good thing."

Michael: That's right. You have to ask yourself the question at some point, "Where is the barrier? Is it out there, or is it in his head?" I promise you, Stu, that if we were to have turned off the electricity to that perimeter, it wouldn't have made a bit of difference.

Stu: Right, because at that point it had been ingrained in him.

Michael: It had just been ingrained in him.

Stu: Right.

Michael: The problem with most of us is we have those kinds of invisible barriers we experience. They're not out there; they're in here. It's just a way of thinking. We've been trained on it over and over again, and it becomes a limiting belief, something that's holding us back from having the kinds of relationships we want, the kind of health we want, the kinds of careers we want, the kind of financial success we want. But it's all inside of our thinking. It's not out there...not really.

Stu: Well, I'm excited to talk about this, because you've written about *three major areas where we all harbor limiting beliefs*. Let's start with the first one. I'd love for you to share that, and then let's discuss that.

Michael: Yeah. These are *beliefs about myself*. There's probably nothing more fundamental than our self-esteem, our self-perception and how we think about ourselves, but I often talk to people who get stuck in their lives. They're stuck in their money or their relationships, and it comes back to beliefs they have about themselves. For example, I had a friend who was laid off from his job in his mid-50's.

He had a really difficult time getting re-employed during the Great Recession. It literally went on for about three years. I started seeing this story taking root in his thinking. He would say, "Well, I'm just too old." He also had two graduate degrees. Then the story became, "I'm overeducated."

Stu: Right. "They don't want somebody with my qualifications."

Michael: Yeah. Exactly. But I also think about the time when I was young in my career and I kept thinking, "Well, I can't succeed, because I'm too young." Well, here's the reality. Your age has very little to do with your success. You and I were talking about a mutual friend who has multimillion-dollar online properties and now owns scores (maybe around 100) of convenience stores and gas stations. He is 24 years old.

Stu: Yeah. It's amazing.

Michael: He's an immigrant who came to this country with nothing, okay? But isn't he too young to succeed? I mean, isn't there a rule somewhere? No, that's just a limiting belief people have. Then you hear about people like Colonel Sanders, who founded Kentucky Fried Chicken. I think he was like 65 years old when he started that company, and it ended up going public. He made a gazillion dollars. You know, there's one story like that after another, but age has very little to do with it. Yet if we think it's a problem, it often is.

Stu: It's also funny because when I think about age, I think there's a time when you are young and the limiting belief or story is, "Oh, I'm too young." Then there's like a point in time when it flips and becomes, "Well, I'm too old." But it doesn't matter. There's usually that limiting belief, and it's about paying attention to the limiting beliefs we have about ourselves. Age is one example, but do you have any other examples of limiting beliefs we may hold?

Michael: Yeah. Here's one I often hear, especially for people who are trying to build online platforms. People will say, "Well, I'm just not technologically inclined." Really? I mean, can

you operate an iPhone? Can you do basic things on your computer? Yeah, you may not be able to program, but honestly, who needs to program today? Not very many people. But it's a limiting belief, and when you repeat it to yourself often enough, you stay stuck. Because you don't think you have the capability, you don't even attempt it, and you never develop the capability.

Stu: Yeah. You never even take a step forward, because it's just like, "Well, why bother?"

Michael: That's exactly right. Here's another one. I hear this with people who are trying to get physically fit. It goes like this. "Well, I can't help that I'm overweight. I'm just big-boned." I mean, really? Is that even a condition? Maybe it is. I'll probably get e-mails on this. I'm just saying that sometimes, again, we think that's out there but it's inside our heads. Or we say, "Well, I just have a low metabolism." Well, guess what? You can change your metabolism. You really can.

Stu: I actually had the opposite problem in the sense that I've always been a very small guy.

Michael: Small-boned.

Stu: Small-boned, I guess. I always weighed 145 pounds from grade 11 onward. It was not until a few months ago when I started working with a trainer and explained that to him... I was going to him because I wanted to get strong, and he said, "Well, I really think you should probably add some weight." I said, "Well, we can try. It won't happen. I've always been the same weight since grade 11. It doesn't matter what I do. I've just always been the same weight." He said, "I think we can change that." Within four weeks, I had put on 12 pounds.

Michael: Wow!

Stu: Yeah, and it really opened my eyes to, again, the limiting belief that I was always saying to myself. "I can't gain weight. I won't be able to put on muscle or anything of that nature, because I'm a small guy." That was just a limiting belief. It pops out. You don't even realize it half the time.

Michael: Well, it points out the fact that a lot of these limiting beliefs come out of experience. It's not that what we've experienced is false. It's just that we've generalized it and made it global. We think it applies all the time. I used to have this limiting belief that said, "I'm not very good with money." Now I'll tell you that came from a legitimate experience. I grew up in a fairly poor family, a lower-middle class family. We just never had much money.

Then I had one of my first businesses not go bankrupt but go broke. There's a distinction. We didn't have enough assets to really go bankrupt and distribute them to anybody, but we went broke. That was an incredibly painful experience, so I went from that particular experience, generalized it and made it global in my life, and said, "Well, I guess I'm not very good with money."

Stu: It's amazing how those experiences really shape the projection of your life, especially if you don't recognize it early on.

Michael: That's so true. Another belief people have is, "Well, I guess I'm just not that creative." Now get this. You're going to laugh when you hear this. My wife, Gail, said this to me for almost our entire married life until three years ago.

Stu: What happened?

Michael: She took an art class.

Stu: Just out of the blue?

Michael: Just out of the blue. She did it for social reasons, because some ladies she knows and loves invited her into this group. She started to paint, and now she's selling her paintings.

Stu: I have to tell you I was talking to Gail this morning, and I asked her, "When are you going to release your next painting? Because there's a group of us who are now waiting on edge to see when we have the chance to get your next painting." The first one she sold ended up selling so quickly.

Michael: Oh, it took like 10 minutes.

Stu: Yeah.

Michael: Well, no. Maybe it was about an hour, but it was fast.

Stu: I wasn't online at the time she posted it, so I totally missed out. I was like, "Dang!" So I've been waiting for her next one. It's amazing, though, to see how that has blossomed in her life and what a joy it has become.

Michael: Well, what she has discovered is that not only is she creative, but this creativity is growing. The more she thinks of herself as creative, the more her thinking nurtures that, and that expands her capacity and her capability. So now she's taking drawing classes and

painting classes, and she's reading painting books all the time. She's one of the most creative people I know.

But that limiting belief (I don't know where it came from; I'd love to have that conversation with her) kept her stuck for years and years. Here's one last one. I hear this from people sometimes too, and it's like, "I'm a quitter. I never finish what I start." I say, "Well, you probably had an experience where you quit something, but the truth is quitting is not always bad. There are some things we need to quit, and sometimes we hold on for too long. But we don't have to universalize, globalize, that particular experience and make it true of everything."

Stu: As we move forward, when we talk about these different areas where we are all harboring limiting beliefs... You gave a ton of great examples, and that was really the first area, which is our beliefs about ourselves. I think that's the most powerful one because those are the stories we tell ourselves internally, and we don't even realize it.

I know one simple exercise I did with my wife was to ask her to help me recognize where my limiting beliefs were, because I was having a hard time identifying them myself. I said, "Just tell me when you notice me talking about certain limiting beliefs, and just point it out to me so I'll be aware of it." Because just being aware of it is the first step.

Michael: Yeah, it so is. Gail and I will often catch one another. We've given each other permission to do a very similar thing where if one of us states a limiting belief out loud... Usually it's unconscious, right? So we'll just challenge it. "Is that really true, or is that just in your head?" Most of the time, it's just in our heads. We go, "Wow. Okay." We do it for a variety of reasons. Maybe it's an excuse we're offering because we don't really want to take the risk or have to tap into courage or confront a situation we don't want to confront, but it just limits us. It holds us back.

Stu: Another simple one is, "I'm not very good with hard conversations." I mean, again, that's another limiting belief that's going to prevent you from having those challenging conversations. It's going to prevent you from having those challenging conversations. They're going to help you make that progress.

Michael: Yep. Absolutely. It could be anything.

Stu: Well, we are talking about major areas where we all harbor limiting beliefs, and the first one was beliefs about ourselves. We're going to talk about two more major areas in just a few minutes. We'll be right back.

*If you're like most members of my audience, you're committed to winning at work and succeeding in life, but the truth is you struggle with finding enough time to do it all. That's exactly why I wrote my new e-book, *Shave 10 Hours Off Your Workweek: 4 Proven Strategies for Creating More Margin for the Things That Matter Most*. You can't buy *Shave 10 Hours Off Your Workweek*, but you can get it for free by subscribing to my free e-mail newsletter.*

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Stu: We are back. Thank you again, Michael. We are digging into areas where we all harbor limiting beliefs. The first area was beliefs about ourselves. I want to dive into the second area. What is that?

Michael: It's *beliefs about other people*. I worked for a man one time who, when he would come into the office, would go immediately to his office and shut the door. We would hardly see him. I mean, he very rarely came out. This was our boss. He was leading our division. He would rarely come out, and even when he was in meetings, he was just quiet. He kind of seemed to have a scowl on his face.

The story that circulated in the office was that he was just arrogant. He thought he was above everybody else. He didn't want to associate with anybody else. I went in and finally had a talk with him about it. I said, "I just have to know. I feel like our team is lacking this leadership. You come in the morning..." Well, as it turns out, he was just incredibly shy.

Stu: Wow.

Michael: It had nothing to do with anybody else. It just had to do with the fact that he didn't have a lot of self-confidence. He was the boss.

Stu: It was the complete opposite end of the scale of what you guys thought.

Michael: It was at the complete opposite end of the scale. There's this wonderful story that Dr. Stephen Covey tells in *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. I don't know if you've heard this story or read the book.

Stu: I've read the book. It's an amazing book.

Michael: Well, do you remember the story...? I think it might have been under the second habit. I can't remember exactly. But he tells this story (I don't know if it was him or not, but I'll tell it as if it was him) where he was on a train. There was this father with a couple of kids, and it was late at night. He was tired. The father was clearly tired. The kids were running around, screaming, kind of out of control. Dr. Covey was becoming irritated, and he was thinking, "Why doesn't this man take control of his kids?"

Stu: "Get control of the kids!" Yeah.

Michael: "Get control of the kids! They're out of control! Can't you see it's irritating everybody else?" Well, then the man, in kind of just a startle, kind of took his face out of his hands. He said to Dr. Covey, "I just have to apologize. I'm so sorry. My wife just died. We just had the funeral. The kids don't know what to do with themselves."

Stu: Wow.

Michael: Suddenly Dr. Covey's heart turned from judging these people (because he had a limiting belief about them) to finding empathy and compassion.

Stu: It's amazing how immediately that changes the whole perspective, feeling, and emotion surrounding those circumstances.

Michael: That's right. So things are not always what they seem with other people, and I think this is one huge reason to give other people the benefit of the doubt. I don't know who it was who first said something like, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." It's true.

Stu: I think it's hard too because in our own lives, there's what appears on the front stage and what happens backstage. In social media, it can be very challenging because all we typically see is the front stage of people's lives, all of the happy, glorious moments. But we don't see the challenges, the struggles, the fights you were talking about that are really happening in their lives as well. Sometimes it's hard to be able to judge somebody, because we're seeing one side of their life when really there's a whole other side.

Michael: That's right. We can conclude that something is wrong with us when, in fact, it isn't. Yeah. I have several examples here of limiting beliefs we might have about others. For example, we might think to ourselves, "Well, there's no use asking; he's too busy to meet with me." Maybe it's somebody who I want to meet with. Maybe it's the boss. Maybe it's a colleague. Maybe it's a prospective employer.

We just tell ourselves a story without any facts, without asking. We've just created an entire narrative in our minds that doesn't exist in reality. That's one. Another one... I've seen this in the corporate world. This is just one characteristic, but we may think, "Well, he's just a bean counter. What does he know?" We just diminish somebody or dismiss them because of their role and just decide they don't have anything to contribute.

Stu: Well, we have a good example of somebody who works on our team. Andrew, your web developer, is very skilled technically when it comes to development and all of that kind of stuff. But one of the other things I've learned to love and appreciate about Andrew is just his insight from a marketing perspective.

Michael: I know, right?

Stu: He's very intuitive in terms of being able to dial a message in here and there and add input. Typically, my limiting belief would be that a developer wouldn't really have the insight from a marketing perspective, thinking they're two different brains. But there it is. Andrew is a great example of somebody who can do both. It adds great contribution to the team.

Michael: Yeah, and we would miss all of that and miss a huge repository of insight that informs the way we do our marketing if we just wrote him off as a developer.

Stu: Right. Exactly.

Michael: Thankfully, we don't have that limiting belief now. Here's another one. Maybe some young man has this limiting belief about himself. "Someone like her would never go out with a guy like me."

Stu: I definitely experienced that in my early days.

Michael: I did too. I mean, just think of how many times... I mean, one of the most frightful things any young man does (or, probably, any old man does) in dating is make that phone call (or maybe text message or Facebook post today) asking somebody else out.

Stu: Well, I have a funny story about that. When I met my wife, we were in college. I was just smitten with her. I just fell in love with her right from day one, but I had that limiting belief. I was thinking to myself, “Why would a girl like her ever want to be with somebody like me?” But somehow I summoned the courage to ask her out on a date.

I distinctly remember that I spent time brainstorming on how to make this first date the most creative, mind-blowing date she had ever been on, because my thought pattern was, “Well, if she doesn’t want to be with me after this date, the date will have been so great that she’ll be telling other girls and one of them will probably want to be with me.”

Michael: Awesome strategy.

Stu: Yeah. So I was trying to stack the odds in my favor. But it was a limiting belief. I’m just so grateful to have at least had the courage to push through that, but a lot of times when we have those limiting beliefs about others and ourselves, we don’t even try.

Michael: We don’t see them for what they are, and then they hold us back. They keep us from expressing our freedom and, again, keep us from reaching our potential. Another one: “She’s too introverted to be a good leader.” You know, there can be this misperception that every effective leader is extroverted, and that’s not true at all. I’m very introverted. Do you consider yourself an extrovert or an introvert?

Stu: We’ve talked about this. I feel like I’m an introverted extrovert.

Michael: Yeah. Well, they really have a technical term for that now.

Stu: You told me that before.

Michael: Yeah, it’s called an *ambivert*.

Stu: *Ambivert*.

Michael: That’s somebody who is kind of borderline between the two, and I’m kind of approaching that, but I’m a little more on the introverted side.

Stu: There are certain situations where I’m very introverted. If I were to go to a conference or seminar and not know anybody, I would sit at the back. I would be by myself, and I probably wouldn’t talk to anybody.

Michael: Really?

Stu: Yeah. But then when I'm speaking or I'm in a social setting with people I know, I would say I'm definitely more on the extroverted side. I know your daughter Megan would say I'm definitely an extrovert, so I feel like I share characteristics at both ends.

Michael: Yeah, so we could make a lot of assumptions about other people, what they can or can't do, based on how we perceive whether they're introverted or extroverted.

Stu: Yeah.

Michael: Another example... This just happened to me. "He hasn't responded. I guess he's upset with me." I sent an e-mail to somebody the other day, and I wanted to change the way we were relating to one another. I had a proposal, and it wasn't a big deal. It was just a little change in how we were working together, and I didn't hear from him that day. I didn't hear from him the next day. I didn't hear from him yesterday, so I said to Gail last night, "Man, I must have really upset him."

Stu: So immediately, because there was silence, you started drawing conclusions.

Michael: I had this limiting belief. Then I actually saw him this morning, and he just acted like nothing had happened. He said, "Oh yeah. I started to respond to your e-mail. I just got it last night. I've just been busy this week." So his silence had nothing to do with anything. But we create these stories, these whole narratives, and it's just a lot of wasted, sideways energy that could be better spent elsewhere. But it comes back to this idea of these limiting beliefs about other people.

Stu: Well, we have talked about two of them, and I want to get to the third limiting belief. What is that?

Michael: It's our *beliefs about the world*. These are more global beliefs. They could be about the economy. They could be about... All racism, frankly, comes from this. It's a limiting belief about people of certain ethnic backgrounds. I saw this recently when I was talking to a friend of mine in the book publishing industry. I asked him how it was going, and he said, "It's tough. With the economic downturn, the publishing industry just hasn't bounced back."

I remembered, having been in the publishing industry just four years ago, what that was like. That was the prevalent worldview. But I realized he hadn't moved past that. I'm not even sure the industry has moved past it, but I'm not experiencing an economic downturn. No one I work with is. You're not experiencing an economic downturn.

Stu: No.

Michael: Our businesses are flourishing. Now I'm not patting us on the back and saying, "It's good to be us." I'm just saying this is a perception.

Stu: Right.

Michael: How you perceive the world will influence how you operate your business, what risks you're willing take, and how aggressive you're willing to be. These global kinds of views can really influence the goals we set for ourselves. Because I speak in a lot of industries, I see this in a lot of different industries. I don't speak as much as I used to, but I used to speak quite a bit in the financial services industry. When it came to social media, almost to a person, they would come up to me and say, "Well, this is all fine and good, but we can't do social media, because we're too regulated."

Stu: Right. They were dismissing it right off the bat.

Michael: They were just dismissing it right off the bat. So whenever I would go to speak to the financial services industry, I would have several case studies of people in the financial services industry who were killing it on social media. I would do that just to bust through that belief. "This is a limiting view." The reason they weren't involved in social media, the reason they weren't generating the leads they needed for their business using social media, was not that it was tough or they couldn't do it. It was that they believed they were over-regulated and it just wasn't possible.

Stu: It's also amazing when I think about how the different beliefs of the world shape our own opinions. This is one of the reasons I've now just shut off news.

Michael: Oh, totally!

Stu: I almost like living in my own bubble. My wife jokes with me because she says I really don't find out about any news or what's happening until it's either a big deal on social media or somebody tells me directly. I just felt I was being pounded by negativity, limiting beliefs, and it was wearing on me. It was affecting my opinions and viewpoints, and I just didn't want to have that influence.

This morning when we were meeting for breakfast, I was noticing all of the material you surround yourself with, all of the positivity and great reading materials. What an impact that has on our beliefs about our world. It's important to be aware of that because the beliefs of the world really shape our own.

Michael: Yeah. It's kind of like we exist in a soup of thinking and opinions, and when you understand how the news media works (I'm sure there are really good journalists out there, so don't write me a nasty e-mail) and how the TV industry works... They have to notice the negative and create the drama to keep you glued to the television. That's why, here in Nashville where I happen to live, we get these bulletins every winter that say it's going to snow. There's going to be a blizzard. It's going to be the end of the world. This is the killer storm that's going to end everything.

Stu: By the way, all Canadians are saying, "Come on now."

Michael: I mean, really! "They're shutting the whole city down for an inch of snow?" But it's true. It happens. They make it so big, but they're trying to create the drama. But when that infects your thinking, it becomes a limiting belief. I mean, really. Even when it snows and we have bad weather (I still feel this way), I see that as an opportunity. I love nothing more than to be snowed in.

Stu: Well, you're more than welcome to come up to Canada and enjoy our winter.

Michael: Yeah, I know. That's where there's real snow.

Stu: You'll be snowed in on a regular basis.

Michael: Some other limiting beliefs about the world or more global beliefs about classes... This is where it sometimes comes in. People say, "Well, you know how women are. They're overly emotional." I occasionally see this in the corporate world. I was in a board meeting one time where one of the board members objected (women who are listening to this are going to be incredulous) to any women being on the board, and that was the argument he used.

Stu: Wow.

Michael: The rest of us were gaping at him.

Stu: In shock.

Michael: We were in shock, like, "Really? Unbelievable." Well, here's another one. "Everyone knows politicians will say anything to get elected." That's just a limiting belief. What it does is basically allow you to write off an entire class of people and never hear anyone on their own merit. Another one is, "I don't trust management. They're always trying to screw us." That's often fostered in industries where there's this labor management kind of drama, and it's a

vested interested of somebody to create this kind of class warfare. How about this one? “Rich people don’t care about anyone but themselves.”

Stu: I was telling you this morning that I was reading the book (based on your recommendation) *Thou Shall Prosper*. In that book, he makes a great case against this whole limiting belief. In media, in movies, and in television, they portray the successful businessperson as a bad guy.

Michael: Yeah, a crook.

Stu: A crook. The only reason they got to be successful was that they did harm to others along the way. He talked about how that is portrayed in different movies and media and how that influences our own beliefs. It’s crazy.

Michael: Yeah. That book is by Rabbi Daniel Lapin. I highly recommend it. Then he goes on to give several examples of how some of the world’s greatest philanthropists, people who have done tremendous amounts of good in the world, were people who were very successful and very rich. I mean, obviously you have to have the means to be able to do that.

Stu: Yeah, the more money you have, the more impact you can have with it.

Michael: Yep. There’s nothing wrong with that at all.

Stu: Yeah. Absolutely. We are talking today about limiting beliefs, and we just shared three major areas where we all harbor limiting beliefs. The first area is beliefs about ourselves. The second area is beliefs about others. The third area is beliefs about the world. As we conclude this episode, Michael, do you have any questions we can use to help challenge our own limiting beliefs when we feel stuck?

Michael: Yeah, one of the things we can do with this (like so many things we talk about) is just to become aware of it, to ask ourselves the question, “What beliefs do I have about this that are limiting my ability to move forward? Is the obstacle really out there, or is the belief what’s really keeping me stuck?” Now sometimes we do encounter obstacles that are out there.

I’m not diminishing that. I’m just saying it’s easier to take care of the ones that are in our heads first. Then we’re better equipped and more resourceful to encounter the ones that are out there. So that’s where I think it begins: with awareness. Then from there, if we conclude it’s a limiting belief (this is so important), the next step is to replace that limiting belief with an enabling truth.

Stu: Give me an example.

Michael: Yeah. For example, if I say to myself, “I’m not very good with money,” an enabling truth might be, “I’m learning more about money every day,” or, “I’m growing in my capability around money.” I’m replacing it. I’m not trying to make up something like, “I’m a millionaire,” or, “I’m brilliant at this.” No. I’m just saying, “The truth is I’m growing in my awareness and my ability to use money.” That would be an example.

Stu: Perfect.

Michael: Age would be another good example. You might say to yourself, “Well, I’m too old to get hired,” but you might say to yourself, “I have lots of experience. I would be an incredibly valuable asset to any company that would hire me.”

Stu: I remember you telling a story about how age affected you early on in your career when you were young and then how you changed that limiting belief.

Michael: Yeah, it was the same thing. I was young. At 29 years old, I was the youngest vice president ever to be at Thomas Nelson. I felt terribly insecure about that. I thought, “I don’t really have anything to contribute. It’s only a matter of time before I’m found out. I don’t know what I’m doing. They’re going to throw me off of the bus.” But then I identified that.

I didn’t call it a limiting belief at the time, but I asked, “Well, what’s true about it? What’s the advantage of age? The truth is I’m coming in without any preconceptions. I’m able to see things from a fresh perspective. I’m able to add new and innovative ideas.” Whatever it is you think is a limitation, what if you could restructure that as your advantage? What if it were your superpower? Think of it that way.

Stu: Yeah. I had a similar personal experience. Back in the fall when I was looking to sell my business, I remember having all kinds of limiting beliefs as an entrepreneur. I was selling my software company. It’s really the first company I have ever sold, and I remember thinking to myself, “What if this is my only hit?” You know, it was a successful company, and I was thinking, “What if I’m a one-hit wonder? What if this is my only hit?”

That really stuck with me for a little bit until I had to shake myself out of that and say, “No, no, no. You’re creative. You’re resourceful. You’re an entrepreneur at heart. You seek opportunities. You find opportunities.” But man, it’s amazing how limiting beliefs can stop you in your tracks and prevent you from making that progress.

Michael: They can.

Stu: Yeah, that's just an example of how it played out in my life not too long ago.

Michael: I have another example similar to that. This was several years ago. We were trying to land a big author when I was in the publishing business, and we lost him to another publishing company. I remember Gail saying to me... I mean, she didn't take a nanosecond to say this. She just said, "Hey, look. There's more where that came from."

Stu: I love that.

Michael: It was a totally different perspective. It was not a limiting belief. It would have been easy for me to say, "Ugh, it was something with me, something I did, something my team did..."

Stu: "I'm never going to land a big client again."

Michael: Yeah. But she just put it right into the abundance perspective. "There's more where that came from."

Stu: That's awesome. These are some questions. Do you have any others?

Michael: Nope. That's it.

Stu: All right. Well, we have been talking about limiting beliefs and how they shape our future and hold us back. We talked about, specifically, the three areas where we typically have limiting beliefs. Those areas are beliefs about ourselves, beliefs about others, and beliefs about the world. If you've enjoyed today's episode, I want to recommend that you go to Michael's blog at michaelhyatt.com, where you'll find the full show notes and transcript for today's episode.

Plus, if you'd like to watch rather than listen, you can see the video as well over at Michael's blog at michaelhyatt.com. Also, would you be willing to take 30 seconds (that's it) and just rate the podcast for us? We want to attract more people like you to the show. The only way we can do that is by your rating the podcast, giving the show more visibility, and therefore getting it in front of more great people like you. Take 30 seconds. We would be greatly appreciative if you would rate the podcast. Michael, as we wind down for today, what are some final thoughts from you?

Michael: Well, belief is a wonderful thing, especially when it's rooted in reality, but when it's rooted in a falsehood, a lie, or a misconception, it can become very debilitating and keep us stuck. So I would just encourage people to test their beliefs. Make sure they're rooted in

reality. If you find a limiting belief, then adopt an enabling truth that will get you over the hump and get you moving forward in your life.

Stu: Awesome. Well, thank you, Michael. Thank you, listener, for listening or watching us today.

Until next time, remember: Your life, your one and only life, is a gift. Now go make it count.