FROM MY CONVERSATION WITH DR BRUCE LIPTON

Begin to notice an old pattern

a gentle place to start

Dr Bruce Lipton is a cell biologist and the author of The Biology of Belief. When he came on my show, he told a story that he says makes every audience laugh, because everyone recognises it.

> *You probably had a friend growing up whose behaviour you knew very well, and you happened to know their parent too. And one day you say: hey, Bill, you're just like your dad. And Bill says: how can you compare me to my dad?*
>
> BRUCE

"Everyone else can see that Bill behaves like his dad," Bruce said. "The only one who doesn't see it is Bill." Bill learned those ways of being by watching his dad when he was small, and he plays them when he isn't paying attention, which, Bruce says, is most of the day.

> *Here's the most important point. We are all Bill.*
>
> BRUCE

Why knowing isn't the same as changing

So I asked him the question I think most of us are asking: how do we go about making that change?

His answer explains something many of us have felt. "The conscious mind is creative. I can watch a video, read a self-help book, go to a lecture, and educate my conscious mind. So most of our conscious minds are super educated." And then: "But my life doesn't match that."

That's because, as Bruce explains, the deeper, habitual part of the mind doesn't learn the same way. It's designed to resist change, for good reason: "You learn how to walk. I don't want to have to relearn how to walk every day."

> *You want to change the program? You have to create new habits. This is my new behaviour, and I have to be mindful and watch that I'm maintaining it. If I keep repeating a new behaviour, that's how the mind learns.*
>
> BRUCE

It's how you learned your ABCs: one letter, then the next, again and again, until you never had to think about it.

A gentle way to begin

Patterns like these were built over years, often before we could choose them. So they don't disappear in a few weeks. Change starts with seeing them, without blame, and then choosing again, many times.

1 Name the pattern

What do I do, think or feel when I'm not paying attention?

Describe it the way you'd describe a friend's habit: kindly, and with some curiosity.

2 Where did I learn it?

Whose voice or way of being does it remind me of?

This isn't about blame. Bill's dad was playing his own programs too. It's about understanding.

3 What is it protecting?

Every pattern made sense once.

What was it trying to keep me safe from, when I first learned it?

4 The new choice

What would I like to do instead?

Make it the smallest possible version, so it can be repeated.

5 Notice, then choose again

Catching the old pattern is the progress.

Each time you catch it, pause and try the new choice. Repeat it, and repeat it, as Bruce says.

Where most of us get stuck

The hardest patterns to change are the ones we can't see. We are all Bill. We can understand a pattern perfectly in our heads and still find ourselves in the middle of it, because the part of us that holds it hasn't been understood yet. And that's not a lack of willpower.

> To help with exactly that, we made the Inner Map: a free, in-depth reflection of 75 questions. Your personalised report shows the protective patterns you may rely on and what they may be trying to do for you, which is exactly what step 3 asks. Take it before step 3, then come back with your report beside you.

Take the Inner Map (free, with your own report) ›

Your page

The pattern, described kindly:

Where I might have learned it:

What it may have been protecting:

My small new choice:

Times I caught it this week (each one counts):