

# Life. Fun. Purpose.

With Purpose Coach Fawn Miller

Module 3.4

## *Exposing Your Gremlins*

Uncovering Limiting Identities,  
Beliefs, and Stories

***“Gremlins are like toddlers, if you ignore them they just get louder.”***

- Brene Brown



Ok My Dear! We're about to adventure into some seriously transformative and life-changing territory! This is a part of the Program that I've been eagerly looking forward to sharing with you, because in this section you'll be building on what you've already learned so far about the importance of being aware of your thoughts – and now you'll be taking the next steps in shining a flashlight on your inner world so that you can have a deep understanding of *how* you create your reality and the results in your life (for good or for bad). Said another way, you're about to embark on the next amazing phase of consciously building your Dream Life!

In order to change your life, create better results, and/or overcome a problem or challenge that you find yourself continually facing, you must first expose the “Gremlins” that are at the root of these things! Said another way, it's time to find out which thoughts, beliefs, and stories are working AGAINST you so that you can slay them, replace them, and start living your “Hell YES!” Life!

**Alright, let's dive in!**

## **PART ONE:**

### **What are “Gremlins”?**

**“Gremlins” are...**

- **Negative, pessimistic thoughts about Self, life, Other**
- **Disempowering thoughts, beliefs, identities**
- **Limiting beliefs**
- **Fears**
- **Shame**
- **Guilt**
- **Self-Sabotage**
- **Comparison**
- **Jealousy**
- **Self-Judgment**
- **Scarcity**

**Common examples of “Gremlins”:**

- *“I can’t”*
- *“I’m not worthy”*
- *“I’m not strong/smart/sociable/etc. enough to do \_\_\_\_”*
- *“I couldn’t do that”*
- *“I can’t create a life that I love”*
- *“I haven’t been able to \_\_\_\_ in the past so I never will”*
- *“I can’t trust myself”, or “Other people can \_\_\_\_ but not me”*
- *“I’m uniquely flawed”*
- *“I failed before so I’ll fail again”*
- *“I’m too \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_”,*
- *Etc.*

## **Exposing YOUR Gremlins**

**It's time to shine a flashlight on your "Gremlins" – aka the negative/disempowering thoughts, limiting beliefs, fears, and/or stories that you have about yourself, your outlook on life, or interpretation of the world around you!**

**For the next several days/weeks, in your journal or in the space provided, list anything and everything that comes up for you in response to the questions below. *NOTE: I recommend also keeping a list in your phone's notepad to track limiting beliefs as they come up in your everyday life. Write them down, and transfer them to the list below or to the place in your journal where you are "capturing" your gremlins.***

**1. What negative, disempowering thoughts, limiting beliefs, fears, and/or stories do you have about yourself (sometimes, kind of often, all the time)?**

## **2. What *Disempowering Identities* do you currently have?**

*For example: "I'm a social misfit" or "I'm boring" or "I'm an idiot with money" or "I'm a procrastinator" or "I'm a heavy drinker" or "I'm a terrible mother" or "I'm a pushover" etc.*

## **3. What *Disempowering Identities* have you had in the past?**

*For example: "I was a slow learner" or "I was the bullied girl" or "I was a party animal" or "I was a loner", etc.*

**4. What disempowering *Roles* do you currently play? \*Note: A "Role" is a label that you wear, function that you serve, regular duty that you perform, and/or position that you hold within a social or cultural context. *For example "I am the caretaker in my marriage" or "I am the overworked employee" or "I am a starving musician", "I'm the sidekick", "I'm the black sheet", etc.***

**5. When you were growing up, what “Gremlin” *Roles, Identities, and Behaviors* and *Stories* did you see modeled by your parents, caretakers, cultural group, educators, society, peers, the media, and those around you? List extensively below.**

*For example: “Hard-working Dad who was always stressed” or “Alcoholic Uncle who caused problems”, or “Strict 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher”, or “Rich friends who were all ‘white’ and snobby”, or “Timid Mom who never spoke up”, or “Outgoing Mom who was a socialite and also an alcoholic”, or “The popular kids were good looking jocks”, or “Disney princesses were helpless”, or “Soccer coach was verbally abusive”, or “My brother constantly teased me”, etc...*

**6. What thoughts, beliefs or stories did/do you have about those Gremlin Roles and Identities?**

**7. In what ways do you play out those Gremlin Roles and Identities the same way in your life?**

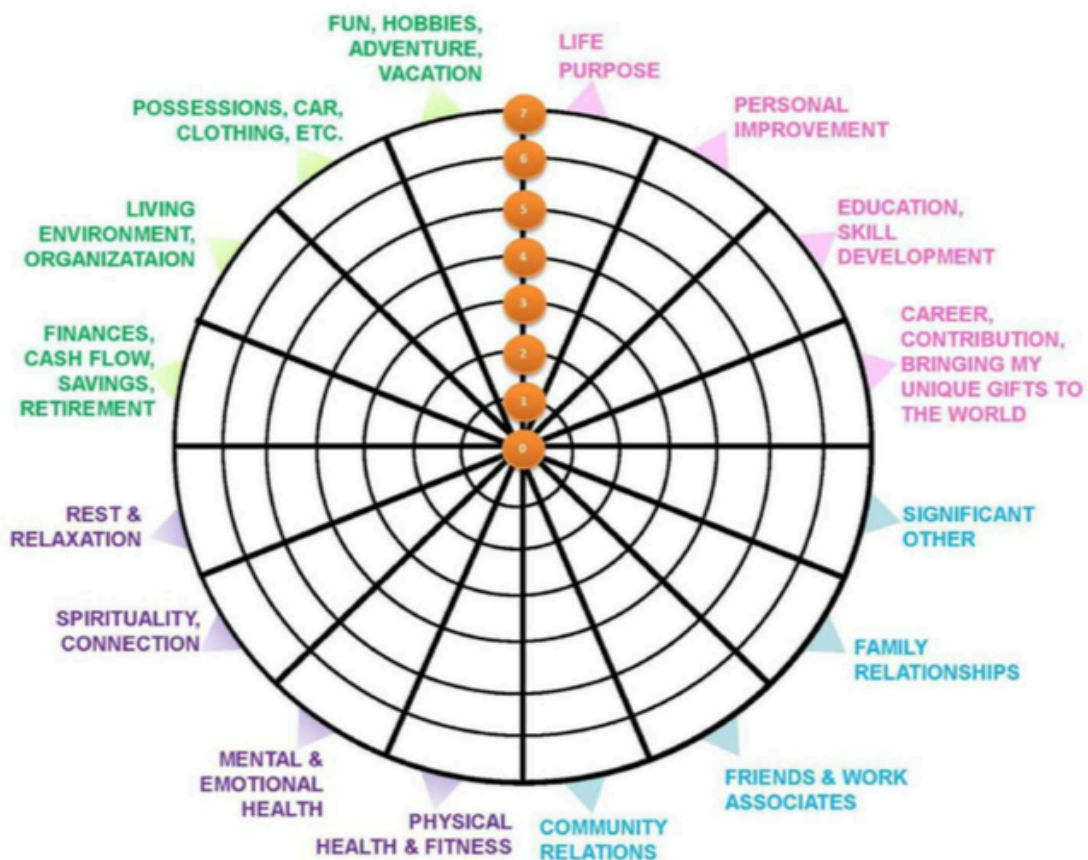
**8. In what ways do you play out those Gremlin Roles and Identities differently in your life?**

## **PART TWO:**

### **Thoughts Create Behaviors Create Results**

Refer to your responses in the “Wheel of Life” exercise from Module 1.2 as you go through the following questions.

Think about the areas of your life that are *not* how you would like them to be. A term for these less-than-YAY parts of our life can also be referred to as “Discontentments” aka things you are not content with or at a “YES” level with. These Discontentments, or “Growth Areas” are the areas on the Wheel of Life that are at a 5 (out of 7) or below. They are usually related to the results or outcomes in your life that you are not happy or satisfied with, or the ways in which you wish your life was different.





**9. List your Discontentments, Growth Areas, and/or areas on the Wheel of Life that are at a 5 or below, and *describe the current situation/status of each.***

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**etc.**

## Thoughts Create Behaviors Create Results

Thought/Belief/Identity/Story --> Behavior --> Result

(or inversely)

Result<-- Behavior <-- Thought/Belief/Identity/Story

Now, for each Discontentment or Growth Area on the “Wheel of Life”, let’s reverse engineer and connect all three elements (thoughts, behaviors, and results) so that you can see HOW and WHY things are manifesting in your life the way are.

First, let’s look at a couple of examples:

### Example #1 (Reverse engineered)

**(Result)** *On the Wheel of Life, my fitness is a 4. I am out of shape and can’t fit into my clothes from last year <-- (Behavior) I eat 5000 calories a day and don’t exercise <-- (Thought/Belief/Identity/Story) I believe that I can’t lose weight, and that diet and exercise don’t matter.*

## Example #2 (Linear)

**(Thought/Belief/Identity/Story):** *I don't believe that I can create the life of my dreams. Other people can do it, but I can't. Something's wrong with me. --> **(Behavior):** I stay in this stupid job that I hate, I say 'no' to invites to personal development workshops, I'm just going through the motions of day to day life, I psychologically beat myself up a lot, I'm jealous of my friends who are happy --> **(Result)** I'm unhappy, unfulfilled, stressed out, and have a limited lifestyle because I'm so tired and can't afford to really do much, I make just enough to pay the bills, and I hang around with 'so-so' people on occasion.*

Are you beginning to see the pattern here? Hopefully these examples are helpful in illustrating that ***our thoughts create our inner and outer reality!***

Which is why we are digging so deeply into the Gremlins – so that we can shed the light of awareness on *why* we are *where* we are on the Wheel of Life, and in life overall. This will prepare you for slaying and replacing the Gremlins with powerful new Allies in Module 5!

**Ok, let's move on to the next part of Gremlin excavation!**

## **Connecting the Dots**

**Now, for each Discontentment or Growth Area on the Wheel of Life, ask yourself “*What are the disempowering thoughts, beliefs, and/or stories that might be giving rise to this result or outcome?*”**

For Example: If I am out of shape and can't fit into my clothes from a year ago – and I *want* to be in shape and fit into my clothes again – I need to ask myself why I'm getting these results, aka, what the disempowering thoughts, beliefs, and stories are that have led me to my present situation. They may be something along the lines of “*I can't lose weight*” or “*eating 5 full meals a day is fine even though I don't exercise*” or “*junk food doesn't have a negative effect on my health*” or “*exercise is overrated*” etc. **Record your answers below.**

**10. What are the disempowering *thoughts, beliefs, and/or stories* that might be giving rise to each result or outcome that you are not happy with?**

**Now that you have identified the thoughts, beliefs, and stories that give rise to your Discontentments, go through and ask yourself “What **behaviors** are these disempowering thoughts leading to?”** For Example: laying on the couch all day, eating potato chips with every lunch, taking in 5000 calories and only burning 1400, avoidance or lack of caring about eating healthy and exercising, etc. (which are behaviors that contribute to me not being able to fit into my clothes from a year ago). **Record your answers below.**

**11. What *behaviors* do these disempowering thoughts, beliefs, and stories (listed in the previous question) lead to?**

## **PART 3:**

### **The 3 Detrimental Identities: *Illness, Victim, Scarcity***

**A common reason that many people resist or avoid change - even if it will improve their life - is because the issue they are trying to address is rooted in a disempowering belief and has become interwoven with their self-identity.** This is the case especially if the issue at hand is *painful* on any level, because – as surprising as it sounds - people become attached to their pain/painful situation. It becomes part of their story - what has gone wrong, what has been done to them, how they've been hurt - so much so that they *think it is who they are and that they are “stuck” this way (victim)*. Three of the most detrimental Identities are illness, victimhood, and poverty, especially when there is a 'woe is me' attitude associated.

***But in order to be intentional creators of our lives, we must give up these detrimental ways of thinking.***



## Examples:

- If you hate your job, but you believe you are someone who will never like what you do for a living, or don't deserve a better job, you may find it difficult to find a new, more enjoyable job. *You would have to give up your belief that you don't like work, or that you can't find work that you enjoy.*
- If you are mistreated or abused by your significant other, but you believe you are someone who has no power or choice to change the situation, you may find it difficult to remove yourself from the relationship because *you would have to give up your belief that you are powerless and can't leave.*

**Please take a look at where the 3 Detrimental Identities might be showing up in your life:**

### **12. In what ways do you consider a problem, pain, limitation, discontentment or disempowering story to be part of your identity?**

Ex: "My divorce ruined me. I'll always be lonely" or "I'm just too timid, I can't speak in front of a group and share my story" or "my insomnia drains my energy and I can't exercise" or "I'm not interesting, why bother?" etc.

## **PART 4:**

### **The “False Benefit”: A Gremlin’s Favorite Partner in Crime**

You might be wondering why anyone (yourself included) would hold on to disempowering stories, detrimental identities, or unhealthy behaviors. Great question! In addition to becoming interwoven with Self Identity, these detrimental identities, attitudes, or behaviors often provide **“False Benefits”**.

**Here’s MY definition:**

*A “False Benefit” is a wolf in sheep’s clothing. It is a seemingly beneficial, yet actually counterproductive RESULT of an action, belief, identity, or behavior. A short-term “reward” that is, in reality, the opposite of positive, desired effects.*

**Said another way:**

*“False Benefits are the shitty payouts of all excuses.  
The snake oil salesmen of bad habits.  
The loan sharks of slacking off.  
The looming hangover of settling.”*

*- Yours Truly:)*





## HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF “FALSE BENEFITS”

### Example #1:

*“I’m going to skip yoga today because I don’t have time...”*

**False Benefit Catch:** Bullshit. I *could* fit in 10 minutes of yoga at home if I can’t make it to class, but *really* I’m just feeling lazy and I’m making “seemingly real” excuses.

**The False Benefit** is that I “have more time to do stuff” because I’m not exercising, which really means that I get to avoid exercising: in the short term feels good because I’m not physically pushing myself (aka staying in my comfort zone) but in the long term this False Benefit is working against my **actual goals of being fit, limber, tension-free, healthy, and sexy** which are some of the Real Benefits of yoga.

### Example #2:

*“I talk about how much I hate my job all the time because it’s such a crappy place to work and Roger is such a tyrant of a manager and people should know how unfair my situation is and why I’m always broke”...*

**False Benefit Catch:** Bullshit meter goes into the red again! I talk about how much I hate my job all the time because it helps me make excuses and (falsely) justify why I’m still there, when the truth is that I don’t think I have the guts to start leveling-up and putting myself out there to find another job...I’m letting fear control me...plus I kind of don’t believe that I could get another good job with the competition being what it is, and why would anyone hire me when I’m horrible at interviews anyway?...”

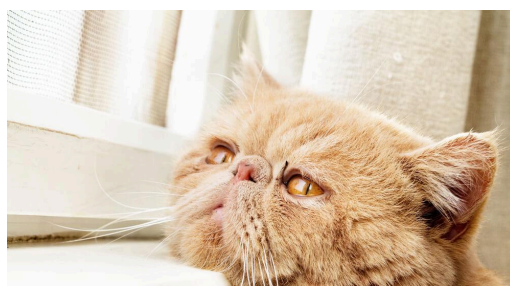
**False Benefit:** I get to play the “victim” and dodge accountability for my life and my results = I get to stay in my comfort zone, which is *easier* and feels ‘better’ ...but in REALITY, this is working against me because I’m miserable, underpaid, unfulfilled, and going against my dream to get paid well doing what I *love*. I’m keeping myself from leaving my current situation and finding a job that lights me up. By allowing these False Benefits to win me over, I’m sacrificing the Real Benefits of feeling happy, confident, passionate, stress-free, motivated, and free.

### **Example #3:**

***“I don’t go to social events because I’m not interesting, and even if I did go I wouldn’t have anything to say and people would think I’m weird...”***

**False Benefit Catch:** Bullshit *once again!* I Don’t go to social events because it would require me to get out of my comfort zone and get vulnerable and honest with people, and maybe be put on the spot and not know what to say which is *so uncomfortable* and I hate being uncomfortable. I mean, what if I blow it? Or, what if they actually do like me but then they find out something about the *real* me and they reject me?

**False Benefit:** I stay home or do things by myself all the time, which reduces the possibility of me getting hurt or feeling insecure or uncomfortable or being made fun of. I get to be ‘safe’ and in control. I get to stay home and watch Netflix and hang out with my cat Pumpkin who I love very much. But in REALITY, these False Benefits keeps me from the Real Benefits that I secretly dream about having in my life: fun friends, inspiring colleagues, a support network, exciting and adventurous experiences with awesome people.



## **Thoughts, Beliefs, Behaviors, and Results Commonly Associated with “False Benefits”**

- **Sleeping in**
- **Procrastination**
- **Complaining**
- **Placing blame**
- **Avoiding responsibilities**
- **Vices**
- **Over-eating/drinking/partying/spending**
- **Binge watching**
- **Surrendering to Fear**
- **Staying comfortable**
- **Tolerating**
- **Feeling guilty**
- **Lying or being dishonest**
- **Giving in to peer pressure**
- **Not being true and honest to SELF**
- **Jealousy**
- **Canceling plans**
- **Pessimism**
- **Saying “yes” when it’s a “no” or vice-versa**
- **Making excuses**
- **Gossip**
- **Drama**
- **Needing to be “right”**
- **Justifications**
- **Shoulds**
- **Comparison**

## **Now, Uncover YOUR False Benefits!**

**13. What “False Benefits” are YOU getting from your Gremlins, thoughts, limiting beliefs, identities, roles, stories, or behaviors?**

### **Things to consider when exploring “False Benefits”**

**14. Do you talk about your problems, pains, limitations, discontentments or disempowering stories inwardly and/or outwardly? How often?**

*Example: “Yeah, I guess I do complain about work a lot” or “I have vented to \_\_\_\_ about the same problems in my relationship during our past several conversations...” or “Being broke because I don’t get paid enough is almost always the reason I give my friends when I can’t join them...”*

## **15. Do you get attention because of your problems, pains, limitations, discontentments or disempowering stories?**

*Example: "Because I seem to always be sick, my friends usually ask how I'm doing and if I need anything" or "Sara can't stand being broke either, we usually vent about it for a long time together" or "Everyone knows that \_\_\_ cheated on me last year so of course it makes sense that I'm always talking about how there are no good guys out there – am I right girls?!" etc....*

## **15. Do your problems, pains, limitations, discontentments or disempowering stories give you a sense of purpose?**

*Example. "Because I am overweight I'm usually talking about how hard it is to get up the stairs, or how expensive healthy food is, or how anorexic looking those athletes are on TV" or "Being single gives me something to gossip and talk about" or "I'm always sick, how am I supposed to not expect my partner to pay the bills?" or "I turn bright red when I talk to strangers, that's why I can't interview and I have to stay at this stupid job"...etc.*

**For each of your problems, pains, limitations, discontentments or disempowering stories are part of your identity, ask yourself, “is this who/how I want to be?” Notice whether a part of you resists letting go of the things that make you unhappy and the compulsion you have to think and talk about it. Does a part of you get a peculiar pleasure out of your pain? Be honest in your answer. Oftentimes you may consciously say “No, this isn’t who I want to be!” but...the fact of the matter is that you *are* being that way...so there is likely a part of you that thinks that there’s a payoff or (False) benefit to being that way...like staying “safe” or comfortable.**

*Example: “Ok, I don’t want to admit that I like being overweight, I mean I really don’t like how I look in the mirror, but it just seems like there’s no way I could get in shape, that would be so much effort and I hate going to the gym and what if it didn’t make a difference? I may as well just live like this and try to accept it”...(This allows for the “False Benefits” of laziness, pity parties, feeling like a victim, and a lack of exercise/effort)*

**16. So... For each of your problems, pains, limitations, discontentments or disempowering stories are part of your identity, ask yourself, “*Is this who/how I want to be?*” Again, be honest about this, only through honesty can you get to the core of WHY you’re getting the results that you’re getting in your life.**

## **“Gremlins” Workbook Wrap Out!**

I have three more SUPER IMPORTANT, deep, honest questions for you before we finish up this section. As you answer them, take your time to reflect on the answers that came up for you throughout this workbook.

**Wrap Q1:** Go through what you have written down in the workbook so far. Which Gremlins - *disempowering* thoughts, beliefs, identities, and stories - REALLY STAND OUT and/or have had significantly negative or far-reaching effects? (highlight, circle, etc)

**Wrap Q2:** Can you see how you would be happier, more fulfilled, living a better life with different thoughts, beliefs, identities, and stories? How would your life be different?

**Wrap Q3:** Which “Gremlins” would you REALLY like to let go of, release, and replace?

**Hooray Warrior Princess!**

**You have made it to the end of the “Gremlins” Workbook!**



**Please give yourself a HUGE hug and do something *fun* this week to reward and celebrate yourself!**

I totally get that the process that I just led you through is SUPER stretchy, nerve-racking, triggering, and immensely vulnerable. I want to validate and honor you for doing all of that deep digging – and I promise it will pay off in incredible ways as long as you keep moving forward!

**Now that you have shined a light on those Gremlins that have been working *against* you, it's time to move on to the fun part! It's time to begin exploring your “Allies” – aka *empowering* thoughts, beliefs, identities, and stories – the ones that are working **FOR** you!**

Take some time to let this workbook sink in and digest, and then move on to the “Acknowledging Your Allies” Workbook in 3.4!



## “Exposing Your Gremlins” Journal

# “Exposing Your Gremlins” Journal