

# What Else Am I Leaving Out?

*Becoming a Scotoma Buster*



## OVERVIEW

The question we must all ask ourselves is, “Am I seeing all there is to see?” Most of us don’t realize that we don’t see everything because of the *way* we were raised, *where* we were raised and *how* we were taught. We spent our lives listening to others tell us “the way it is,” and we believed them. The good news is that we *can see* more than we have seen in the past, and this will open up a new future for us in our education, and our lives.

## OBJECTIVES

*By the end of this unit, I will understand:*

- scotomas and how they can limit me in school, at home, and in all parts of my life.
- by locking on to the way things have always been done, I am blind to new possibilities.
- I need to be mindful of the “truths” that are given to me, even from teachers and loved ones, as they may not be my truths.

*When my mind is fixed, I do not allow myself  
to live the life I am capable of living.*

*Louise*

## KEY CONCEPTS

**Conditioning:** a predisposition to a mode of behavior given the appropriate stimulus.

**Potential:** having the strong possibility for development into a state of actuality; latent.

**Scotoma:** Greek for “blind spot” or blindness; blind spots in our awareness as a result of preconceived ideas and conditioning. For example, if we believe that everything about a person or situation is bad, it will be difficult or impossible for us to see the good.

NOTES

*Write down your ideas, observations and insights as you work through this unit. Date your entries.*

Dotted lines for writing notes.

## REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

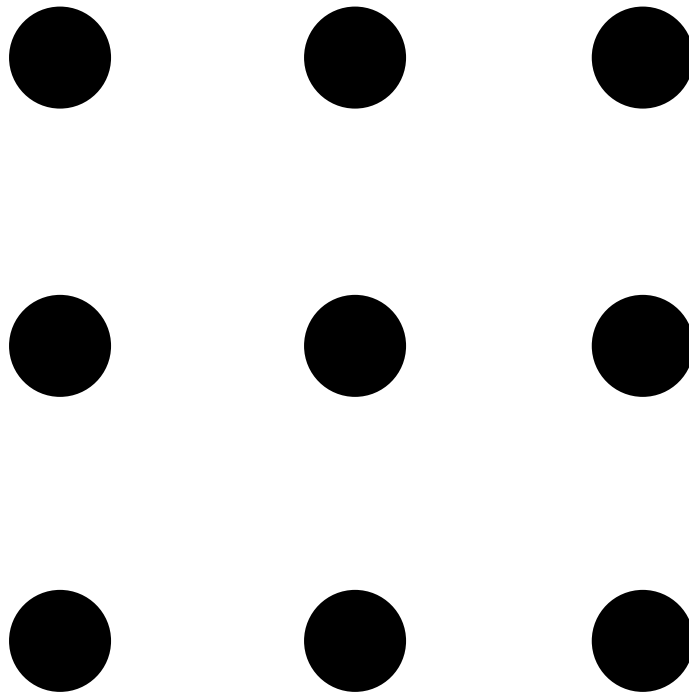
1. Up until today, who has helped me make up my mind about my education and career possibilities?

2. Do I believe that I am worthy of higher education? Why?

3. Here is why I believe I am capable of achieving both the education and the career I want:

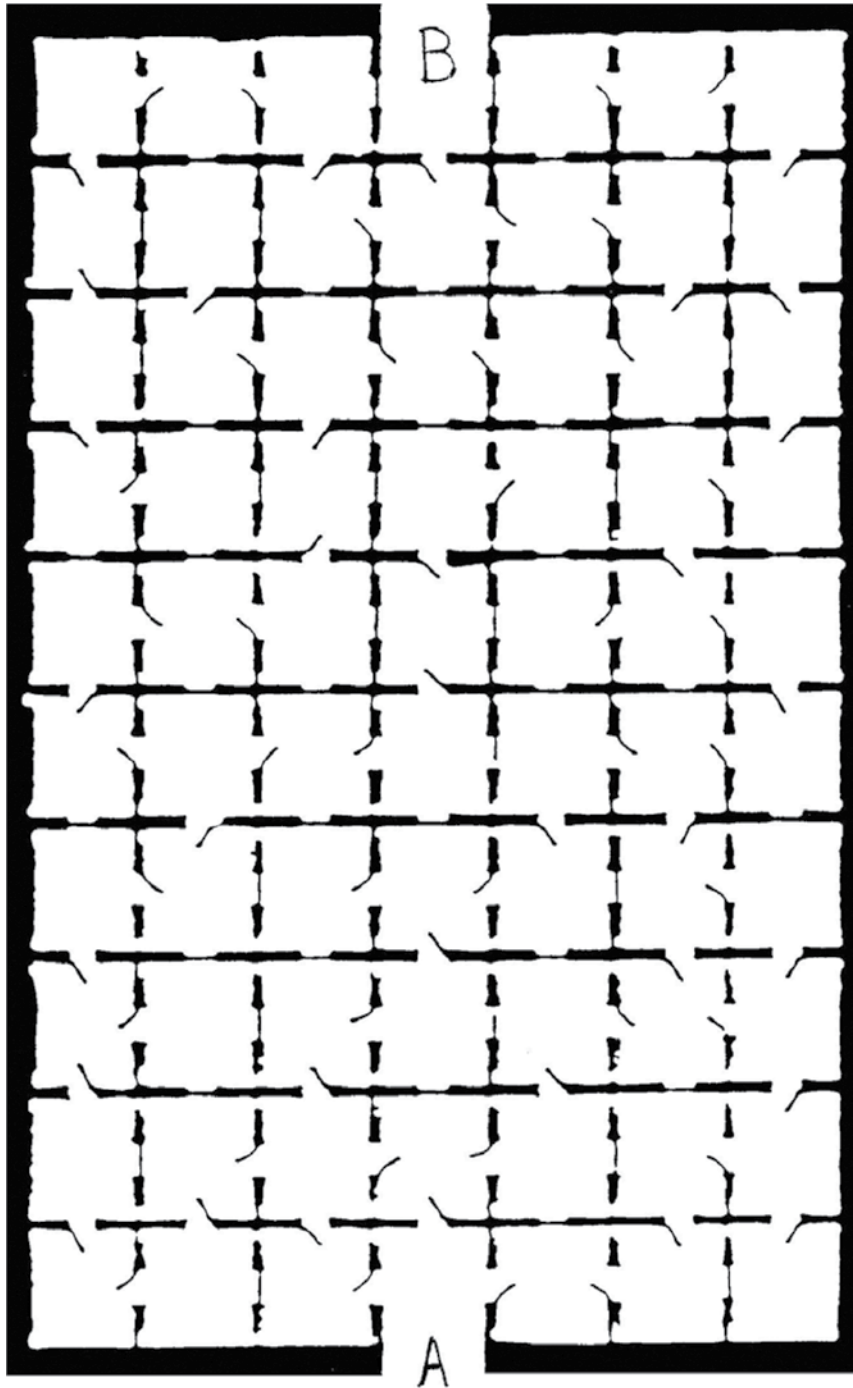
### EXERCISE: 9 Dots

Connect the nine dots using ONLY four straight lines, WITHOUT lifting your pen.

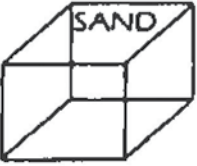
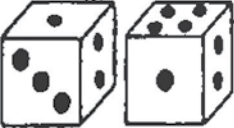



### EXERCISE: Maze

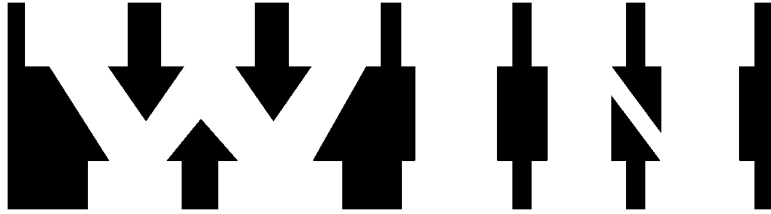
The objective is to get from gate A to gate B, without crossing any lines, in the quickest time.



EXERCISE: Do You Have a Scotoma?

 <p>1</p>	<p>MAN BOARD</p> <p>2</p>	<p>STAND I</p> <p>3</p>	<p>R E A D I N G</p> <p>4</p>
<p>WEAR LONG</p> <p>5</p>	<p>R ROAD A D</p> <p>6</p>	<p>T O W N V</p> <p>7</p>	<p>CYCLE CYCLE CYCLE</p> <p>8</p>
<p>LE VEL</p> <p>9</p>	<p>0 — M.D. B.A. PH.D.</p> <p>10</p>	<p>KNEE — LIGHT</p> <p>11</p>	<p>ii OO OO OO OO</p> <p>12</p>
<p>CHAIR</p> <p>13</p>	 <p>14</p>	<p>T O U C H V</p> <p>15</p>	<p>GROUND</p>  <p>16</p>
<p>MIND MATTER</p> <p>17</p>	<p>HE'S/HIMSELF</p> <p>18</p>	<p>ECNALG</p> <p>19</p>	<p>DEATH LIFE</p> <p>20</p>

EXERCISE: Be Careful What We Lock On To



*“What is it?”*

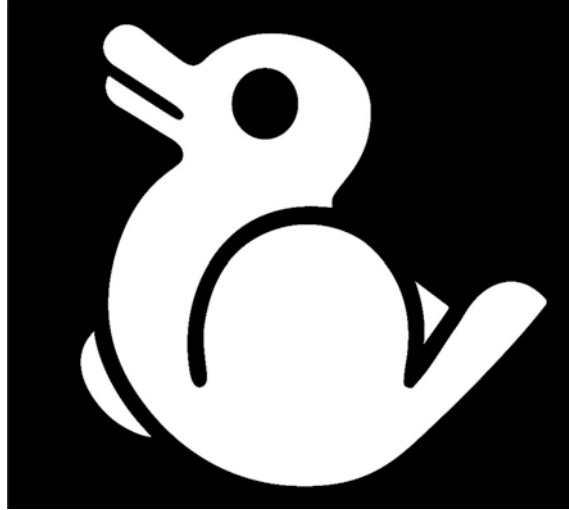


*“What is it?”*

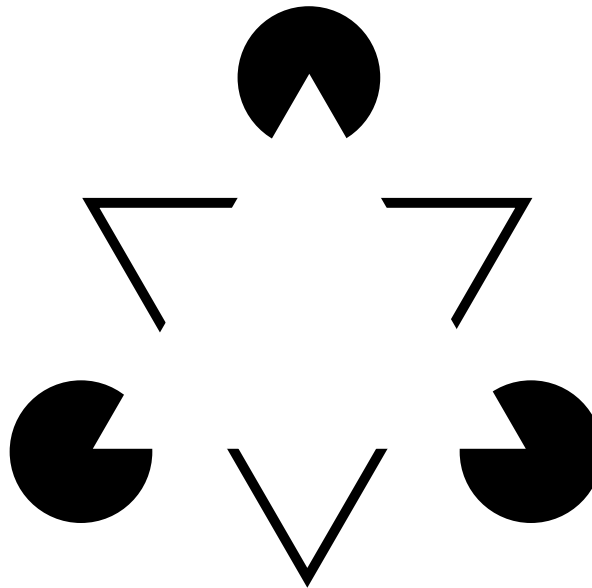




EXERCISE: Be Careful What We Lock On To



*“What is it?”*



Please count the number of triangles in the diagram. Count carefully! After you have carefully counted the triangles, answer the questions on the following page.

## EXERCISE: Be Careful What We Lock On To

1. Because of the instruction under the diagram, did you happen to lock on to the idea that there were actually triangles there?
2. When thinking about your upcoming courses, what truths about yourself have you locked onto? (For example: I have always been good at math, but please don't make me give a presentation in front of others!)
3. Who convinced you of this? Is it possible that they (and you) are wrong about your potential?

### EXERCISE: Opinions, Beliefs and the Truth

For each of your current beliefs in column 1, fill in what others have said to you in column 2, and then whether those opinions have shaped your belief in a positive or negative manner.

1	2	3
What are some of my current beliefs with regard to...	What are some of the opinions that others have shared with me regarding their view of my potential?	How have the opinions of others shaped my belief: Positively or Negatively?
Completing my Education		
Starting the career I want		
Getting the salary I want		
Setting Goals		
Creating the future I want		

## SUMMARY: Fundamentals

Now, since you are taking this course through a school, we started you off with a test. It wasn't difficult, but what we learned was fascinating. First we got locked on to Roman numerals, which are different from what we use every day, so that pattern affected our perception. Then, because most of the Roman numerals involve bold, straight lines, we locked on to straight lines. So, when it came time to come up with the solution, we were locked into a perception "box" that favored straight lines.

How often have we created our own perception boxes, based upon what we hear or see? And how have those limited perceptions helped make up our minds about how we would think in the future?

Ever since we were little, we have been absorbing – like huge sponges – everything that has gone on around us. Everything! Now because some things we didn't understand, like foreign languages, we learned to ignore them. Because something over here caught our eyes, we didn't see what was going on over there. This is natural, because our minds can really only concentrate on one thing at a time – despite what the "multi-taskers" say.

When we block information coming in from our senses, we build what is called a "scotoma." S-C-O-T-O-M-A. "Scotoma" is Greek for blindness or blind spot. We can build scotomas to information coming from all of our senses. When we concentrate while reading, we block out sounds and smells. Are you wearing a watch or a ring? Did you feel it before I asked about it? Probably not.

The problem with scotomas is that we don't know we have them. We always think we are seeing the truth. In fact, our minds conspire to help us believe we are seeing the truth, even when our minds know better.

For example, have you ever lost the keys to your car or home. You are running around your house or apartment, searching for the keys you have told yourself you lost. Then, a friend or relative stops you, points to the table right in front of you, and says, "There they are." And what is your first reaction? "Who moved them?!? They weren't there a minute ago!" Of course, they were there. They've been there all along. Because you told yourself you had "lost" your keys, your mind made sure you wouldn't see them. It built a scotoma for you! You locked on to "I lost my keys," so your mind locked the keys out of your visual field.

While we all have scotomas, they aren't always easy to find. If you find yourself working hard and not getting the results you want, look for a scotoma. Ask people you trust to help you by asking, "What am I not seeing?" Sometimes, looking at a problem from a different angle will help us find the scotomas.

*As you build your future, and build your life, if you don't know about scotomas, you give up quickly. You take the wrong solution. You think, "I can't get it through my thick head. "Everybody else seems to get it. I just don't get it. I must be stupid." Now, you don't want to do that, because then you start acting like you're stupid.*

*There's a principle I want you to remember: We behave and act, not in accordance with the truth, but the truth as we believe it to be. When we lock on to a belief, it won't let us see people, business opportunities, answers or solutions. Honest to goodness, our beliefs just don't let us see all there is to see.*

*Most people don't know they have scotomas. When you're stuck and you can't see the answers – to building your business, creating your future or you can't see the answer and can't hear what somebody is saying – don't give up. You are probably just full of scotomas.*

*Whenever I'm stuck and I want to build my business or I want to grow and don't know how, I don't care if I don't know how. I'll find the way. I persist, because I know the answers exist. Somebody sees them, even if I don't.*

*The most important thing to know is that you are so smart. You are so capable. You can build your future. You don't even need to know where the answers are coming from. I just want to encourage you that, as you approach your careers and school, don't be intimidated by them!*

For the best results, start with the premise that the answer exists, we just don't see it yet.

## SUMMARY: Application

It was the 5th grade. After being out of school for several days with some kind of illness I returned. On my first day back, Miss Z asked everyone in class to line up in front of the room. We were going to participate in a spelling bee. Now, historical memory up to that point in 5th grade was that I had always been a good speller. I had always done well in spelling bees, being one of the last couple of kids left standing. I was definitely never the first to sit or get teased by the other kids because I misspelled a word.

However, on this occasion, I hadn't even seen the words in the unit because I had been out of school. But rather than being intimidated or worrying about the fact that I hadn't seen the words, I was confident. I was actually looking forward to the challenge of spelling words from a list that I hadn't even seen. I was full of high self-efficacy or high causative power. I knew I was going to shine.

Miss Z starts working her way through the first couple of kids, giving them words, which I am spelling in my own mind. I'm feeling even more confident since I knew how to spell every word. Then she comes to me. She looks up from the list and says, "Your word is OREO." Instantly, my heart started beating through my chest. My face turned red. My mouth dried, and my mind went blank – well, mostly blank.

Now, I am 11 years old, and completely flabbergasted. So, rather than ask Miss Z for a definition, or possibly asking her to use the word in a sentence, I was consumed with only one thought: How is the cookie in our spelling book?

After what seemed to be an eternity of everyone staring at me, I spelled the only OREO in my world: O-R-E-O. As soon as the last O left my mouth, the entire class, including Miss Z, erupted in laughter. Completely embarrassed and frankly confused, I headed for my seat, the first to sit.

Paul Brainard, the next kid in line, spelled the bird, ORIOLE. As it turns out, Miss Z was not from western Pennsylvania, so as I and most others from western Pennsylvania would have pronounced the word “oriole” (emphasizing the L), she pronounced it “oreo.” I somehow got the label “cookie boy” from my classmates who persisted with the teasing.

The next day in health class, Miss Z had decided (while I was out sick I’m sure – conspiracy theory) that we were going to pronounce and spell our health words. Each child would pronounce the word, then look up from the book, and spell the word out loud. Fresh off the devastating experience from the day before, I was already feeling panicky over what my word was going to be, and if I was going to be able to pronounce and spell it in front of my classmates. So as we started going around the room, I was completely oblivious to anything the other kids were doing. The only thing I could focus on was counting the kids, counting the words, counting the kids and counting the words, until I came to my word. I looked at my word and if I could have given up school for the rest of my life at that moment in order to get out of there, I would have. Not only couldn’t I spell, but now I can’t even pronounce the word in front of me!

I looked at the word for what seemed an eternity and finally looked up. Again, everyone was staring at me. And in front of those same 11 year olds who had been teasing me since the day before, I pronounced, “es o PHA’ gus.” Once again, I brought down the house, the laughter from the other kids deafening. This is your “e SOPH’ a gus.” It is my “es o PHA’ gus.”

My spelling and health grades took a dive. It wasn’t that I didn’t have the potential. I had always gotten good grades in both prior to that fatal week. But it all got locked under negative, embarrassing, and debilitating emotions. Future decisions with regard to my ability to do well in either subject were heavily affected by that horrible week.

Where might you have locked onto a similar fate? Where have you locked onto, built a huge scotoma to, your actual ability in certain subjects or course content? Now that ability is locked under negative experiences from the past. You can change it if you choose to, and that’s what this curriculum and process is all about.