

Figure 6.1: Flipping Our Own Scripts

What personal scripts (beliefs that influence how we perceive the world and operate within it) do you have that might be getting in the way of connecting with and engaging your students, that prevent you from being fully present with them, and that cause you to make assumptions about their behavior?

Here are some helpful hints for identifying a script.

- A script will be a belief you think is *the one right way to be* (for example, prepared for class) and that tends to make you frustrated with students when they don't do that.
- A script may cause you to make negative assumptions about why students behave the way they do.
- A script may cause you to judge others.
- A script may be a replication of something you saw or heard a caregiver do or say when you were younger.
- A script will limit you from being able to be fully present and see your students without assumptions or biases.
- A script may limit you from being the full essence of who you are.
- When you are caught up in a script, your body may feel tense or uneasy; you think you are right and feel less open to alternate perspectives; your actions and words may not align with your intentions and values; and you may shut down, leave the room, or raise your voice.

Step 1:

Identify an external script you have that may create barriers to building relationships with your students. To identify a script, you can think about the preceding bulleted list, think about what assumptions you tend to make about a specific student behavior that is challenging for you, and then think about what belief might be leading you to make that assumption and to respond in the ways mentioned in the previous list.

1. Describe that belief here. What is the script? What does it cause you to think? What does it cause you to feel? What does it cause you to assume about other people?

2. How did you develop that script? Where did it come from?
3. How does that script tie in with your identity (what you believe about yourself)?
4. How does that script influence what you believe about others and the world?

Step 2:

Create a list from your experience that shows you evidence that this belief is not always accurate. The following is an example:

Your script	Evidence that this script is not always accurate
<i>Example: Students who don't bring a pencil to class don't care about learning.</i>	<i>Johnny did not bring his pencil yesterday but asked very good questions during the lesson, which showed that he wanted to learn.</i>

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Your script

Evidence that this script is not always accurate

Example: Students who don't bring a pencil to class don't care about learning.

Johnny did not bring his pencil yesterday but asked very good questions during the lesson, which showed that he wanted to learn.

Step 3:

As you go through your days over the next few weeks, notice when you find yourself caught in that script, and then ask yourself, “Is this true?” Feel the answer from the deepest part of yourself.

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