Sheila Love IMPACT-ology Mastermind

“Sheila Love — Where Everything Is Possible”

LESSON 11

The Belief Ladder

Position	Lesson 11 of 20
Duration	40–50 minutes
Age Group	12–18 years, Liberia, West Africa
Core Idea	You never go further than what you believe you can. Belief is built one small, believable step at a time, not in a single leap.

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Define belief as seeing something as real before it has happened
2. Explain why belief must be built gradually, one step at a time
3. Build a personal belief ladder from a limiting belief to an empowering one
4. Identify the habit of doing hard things as the real driver of success

2. OPENING HOOK (5 minutes)

Ask: “Can someone believe something is possible for other people, but not for themselves?”

Let a few students answer. Most will say yes immediately, and often personally.

> “Today we build a way to change that, one small step at a time.”

3. CORE CONTENT

Seeing It Before It's Real

Belief means seeing something as real before it's actually happened yet.

Not hoping. Not wishing. Seeing it as already true, the way a builder sees the finished house in an empty plot of land.

The Ceiling You Carry

You will never go further than what you currently believe you can. That ceiling moves only when belief moves first.

Your beliefs come from how you've judged a situation, not necessarily from what's actually true. Re-evaluate the situation honestly, and the belief underneath it can change too.

One Rung at a Time

Nobody jumps from 'I can't do this' to 'I am excellent at this' in a single step. That gap is too wide to be believable.

A belief ladder moves in small steps, each one just barely believable, until the top no longer feels impossible.

The Habit Underneath It

Success isn't about being smarter than everyone else. It is the habit of doing the things that failures avoid doing.

And nobody is ready to acquire something until their state of mind is genuine belief, not mere hope.

4. STORY: ‘SIX STEPS TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM’

SIX STEPS TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM

Garmai had never spoken in front of the whole school, not once in four years, and had arranged her entire school life around avoiding it.

When her class was told the top student in each form would give a short speech at the end-of-term assembly, and Garmai's exam results put her at the top of her form, she felt something close to panic.

“Let someone else do it,” she told her teacher, Madam Kroma. “I can't stand in front of that many people.”

“Can't, or believe you can't?” Madam Kroma asked.

Garmai didn't see the difference, at first.

...

Madam Kroma didn't argue with her. She just asked a strange question. “Could you say two sentences, out loud, to me alone, right now?”

Garmai could. She did.

“Could you say the same two sentences to three friends, tomorrow?”

That felt harder, but not impossible. Garmai agreed to try.

...

Over the following two weeks, Madam Kroma kept building the steps, each one only slightly harder than the last. Three friends. Then her small study group. Then her whole class, seated, with Garmai standing at the front for just her opening line before sitting back down.

Each step felt believable when it arrived, even though the whole staircase, seen from the bottom, had felt impossible.

...

On the day of the assembly, Garmai stood in front of the entire school, notes shaking slightly in her hand.

She was not fearless. Her voice wavered on the second sentence.

But she had already stood in front of three friends, and a study group, and a full classroom, and each of those had been believable when she tried it.

She finished the speech. She did not remember most of it afterward, only the moment she sat back down and realized her hands had stopped shaking somewhere around the fourth sentence.

Madam Kroma, watching from the back, did not say anything to her that day. She just nodded once, the way you nod at someone who has climbed something real.

5. ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Materials: any paper, any pen or pencil.

1. Write down a belief that's currently limiting you, starting with “I can't...” or “I'm not the kind of person who...”

2. Write down the opposite, empowering belief you'd like to hold instead.

3. Between the two, write five small steps, each one only slightly harder than the last, the way Madam Kroma built Garmai's steps.

4. Check each step honestly: does it feel believable? If not, make it smaller.

5. Circle the very first step. That's the only one you need to take this week.

6. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is something you believe is possible for others but not for yourself?

2. Where have you already climbed a belief ladder without knowing that's what it was called?

3. Why do you think jumping straight to the top rung usually fails?

4. What is the first, smallest step on your own ladder?

7. FACILITATOR NOTES

The ladder must stay personal to each student. Do not let students copy each other's rungs; what's believable to one may be too easy or too hard for another.

If a student's first rung still feels unbelievable, help them make it smaller rather than pushing them to attempt it anyway.

This activity connects directly to the terror barrier named last lesson. Encourage students to build a ladder toward that specific fear if it fits.

Keep today's ladder. It can be revisited at the course review in Lesson 20.

8. BRIDGE TO LESSON 12

Before students leave, ask:

“Once you've climbed past an old belief, does the old one disappear completely, or does something else happen to it?”

Let them guess.

“We find out next time.”