

# INTER<>DEPENDENCE

## DO YOU THINK YOU CAN'T?

**YOU ARE  
INCAPABLE OF  
SOMETHING IF  
YOU ARE  
PHYSICALLY  
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If you were hired to do something your mind just can't comprehend, you are incapable of doing these duties.

If you want to walk up a stairway but you don't have legs, you are incapable of that activity.

Being incapable is about physical impossibility. It's not just a matter of believing

you can't.

### **I CAN'T**

People often say they can't do something when they just don't want to do it.

If they are lying to others, that's a relationship problem.

If they are lying to themselves, that's a therapy problem.

### **I THINK I CAN'T I THINK I CAN'T**

Let's talk about a boy, Leo, who was told to tie his shoes when he was three years old.

He did his best, spent a lot of time on it, and found that his little fingers just couldn't handle the job.

Things like that happen a lot to kids.

But let's say Leo grew up to be one of the people who claim they can't do a whole

lot of things.

How did he get that way? How will he get over it?

### **HOW IT HAPPENED**

Leo now says he can't do many things he actually can do.

He does this because he made one of these decisions long ago.

1. That he was incapable of doing some things.
2. That he was incapable of most things.
3. That he had to rebel against some expectations.
4. That he had to rebel against all expectations.
5. That he was incapable of most things and he also had to keep rebelling.

### **INCAPABLE OF SOME THINGS**

If the frustration over tying his shoes was extremely strong, Leo could have decided that this is just something he will never be able to do.

He's wrong, of course, but it's no big deal if he can find a way to get over the problem. (slippers, boots and Velcro come to mind...)

### **INCAPABLE OF MOST THINGS**

If Leo was often expected to do things he was physically unable to do, he might have decided that he was unable to do almost everything.

He might come to therapy saying he has self-esteem issues, but he got that way by

believing he's incapable.

Leo could learn in therapy that:

1. Too much was expected of him in the past.
2. He can do whatever anyone else with his physical makeup can do.
3. He can make his own choices about what he will and won't do.

**NEED TO REBEL AGAINST SOME EXPECTATIONS**

Maybe Leo's mother was an athlete who wanted her son to become one too.

**MAYBE SHE PUT A LOT OF PRESSURE ON HIM TO DEVELOPE HIS PHYSICAL SKILLS.**

If so, Leo might have needed to rebel against all such demands by pretending he couldn't do any athletic things.

If his mother eventually got off his back about these things, good for Leo!!

But as an adult, he still needs to learn to say "yes" or "no" instead of "I can't."

**NEED TO REBEL AGAINST ALL EXPECTATIONS**

If the adults were never satisfied with what he did as a child, Leo might grow up to be angry whenever anyone wants anything at all from him.

He might be bitter against the world because he decided long ago that everyone will always

be dissatisfied, even with his best efforts.

So he says: "I can't " almost without thinking.

He tells his boss he can't get that report in on time.

He tells his friends he can't make it to their party.

He tells his lover he can't have sex tonight, and almost every night.

Eventually he will have to face how sad he is about losing all of the things he could have done so far in his life.

He needs to face his sadness about these losses before he'll have his motivation to acknowledge his real capabilities.

**INCAPABLE OF MOST THINGS AND REBELLIOUS**

If Leo's family was physically cruel as well as constantly dissatisfied with him, he might end up thinking both that he's incapable and that he needs to continually rebel.

If so, he will hold on very strongly to these ideas because he thinks they keep him safe.

Like all of us, Leo would love to know how capable he really is.

Once he gets relief from all his sadness and fear, he will finally realize he **CAN!**

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