



Are You Living Above or Below the Line?

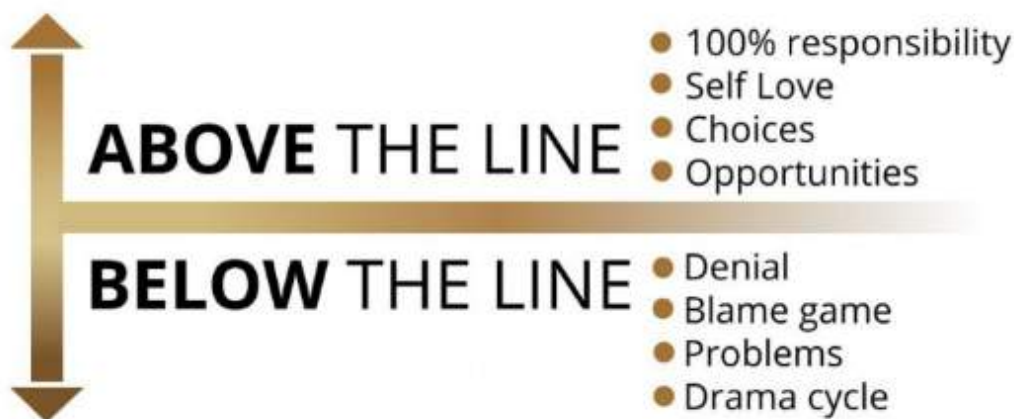
By Lyn Carman

Are you the type of person who is the cause of the things that happen in your life, or are you at the effect of things that happen to you?

We are either at the effect side of the equation or at the cause side. We are either causing something to happen or we are experiencing the effects. Even doing nothing is an action.

The question is which side of the line are you living? Are you living above the line, at cause, or below the line, at effect? At any given moment you are either living above the line or below the line

CAUSE



EFFECT

This is also known as Results versus Reasons. What I mean by this is, if someone believes they are **not at cause** for anything in their life, even though they haven't looked for a job and they spend all their time blaming others for their "bad luck" they are going to experience a certain type of world.

Compare this experience to someone who believes that they **are at cause**. They will find a way to work. They won't blame, they will take responsibility. They will be proactive in changing the circumstance of their life.

There is no right or wrong here, though which side is more empowering?

People who go through life on the effect side of the equation have reasons. They will be able to tell you why they are not successful. "It was my ex, my parents held me back, I didn't get the breaks I deserved, the market, the school I went to, bad timing, my boss..." There is constant blame, justifications and denial.

As a result, they are always angry, and hold resentment against these people. They believe they are victims who have no choice. And maybe all of that is true.... though the question I care about is how satisfying is living a life like this able to be? How much joy, courage, love, empowerment or resourcefulness can someone feel if they live with their stories ... with their reasons why they can't.

But here's the thing: You can be either right or happy.

What's your preference?

The first step is to 'calibrate' your understanding of above and below the line reactions by drawing on your own experiences.

Start by remembering a situation for example, when you are in the car, driving along happily, when from out of nowhere someone cuts dangerously in front of you. You are forced to brake quickly to avoid an accident. How would you react? Like most people you would probably react in one of the traditional ways: a heavy hand on the horn, a tirade of abuse, the flashing of headlights, or all three of the above.

This typical reaction to a typical situation is a classic example of what we call an automatic response. It's a 'default' behaviour: we don't consciously think about honking, swearing or flashing headlights – we just do it.

Every day we face similar situations where we simply react, and our response to being challenged or criticised is defensiveness, denial, blame or justification. It is possible to change your 'automatic below the line' responses to situations.

This is the 'line of choice' between the default, 'automatic at effect' responses, to challenging situations and the more emotionally healthy option of a thoughtful and constructive response to them, 'at cause'. We say that automatic responses are 'below the line' while constructive responses are 'above the line'. Notice that I use the word 'choice' here. For ultimately there is a personal choice to be made between operating above or below the line, even though it may not feel like it as our hand hits the horn or the excuses start flowing.

The second step in training yourself to operate 'above the line' is to become more aware of your emotions as things are unfolding around you, rather than after the event. In other words, your aim is to be increasingly 'present', or 'in the moment'.

The acid test – When someone cuts you off in heavy traffic and instead of hitting the horn you are able to silently let the situation slide with no more than a wry grin. Once you can do this, you are on your way to increased emotional health and better working relationships.

The only thing preventing you from achieving what you want are the beliefs you form and the stories you tell yourself.

Living below the line, the grass is indeed greener on the other side. By choosing to live above the line, we embrace 100% responsibility. It's a simple yet powerful belief that we create everything that happens in our life.

Successful people have this "crazy" belief – you are the cause of all effects in your life.

That statement can cause people to push back or react with emotional intensity – again whatever you choose, when you live above the line, it's your own creating.

Here's the thing – perhaps this whole idea of living at cause isn't true. Perhaps some things are out of our control.

Even in that case, the only question you should care about is this: Does believing in this theory empower me?

Does believing in above the line thinking improve the quality of my life?

People who go through life on the cause side of equation have results that speak. You embrace ownership and responsibility, which gives you the maximum power to create the life you want.

EVER HAD A BAD DAY?

ONE SURPRISINGLY SIMPLE
MINDSET SHIFT TO KEEP YOU UP!

(EVEN WHEN LIFE BRINGS YOU DOWN)



HERE'S THE THING...

At any given moment, you're either living
above the line or below the line.

YOU HAVE A **CHOICE!**

EVENT + YOUR RESPONSE = **OUTCOME!**

