



# Vitae Compass

Mindset Coaching



# Above & Below The Line

## Introduction

At any given moment, you're either living above the line or below the line. This is also referred to as "cause versus effect" thinking.

The question to ask yourself is "which side of the line are you living?" Are you living Above the line, or at Cause? Or are you living Below the line, also known as living at Effect of things that happen to you?

Before you answer that question, let's take a look at each side.

Created by Your Coach



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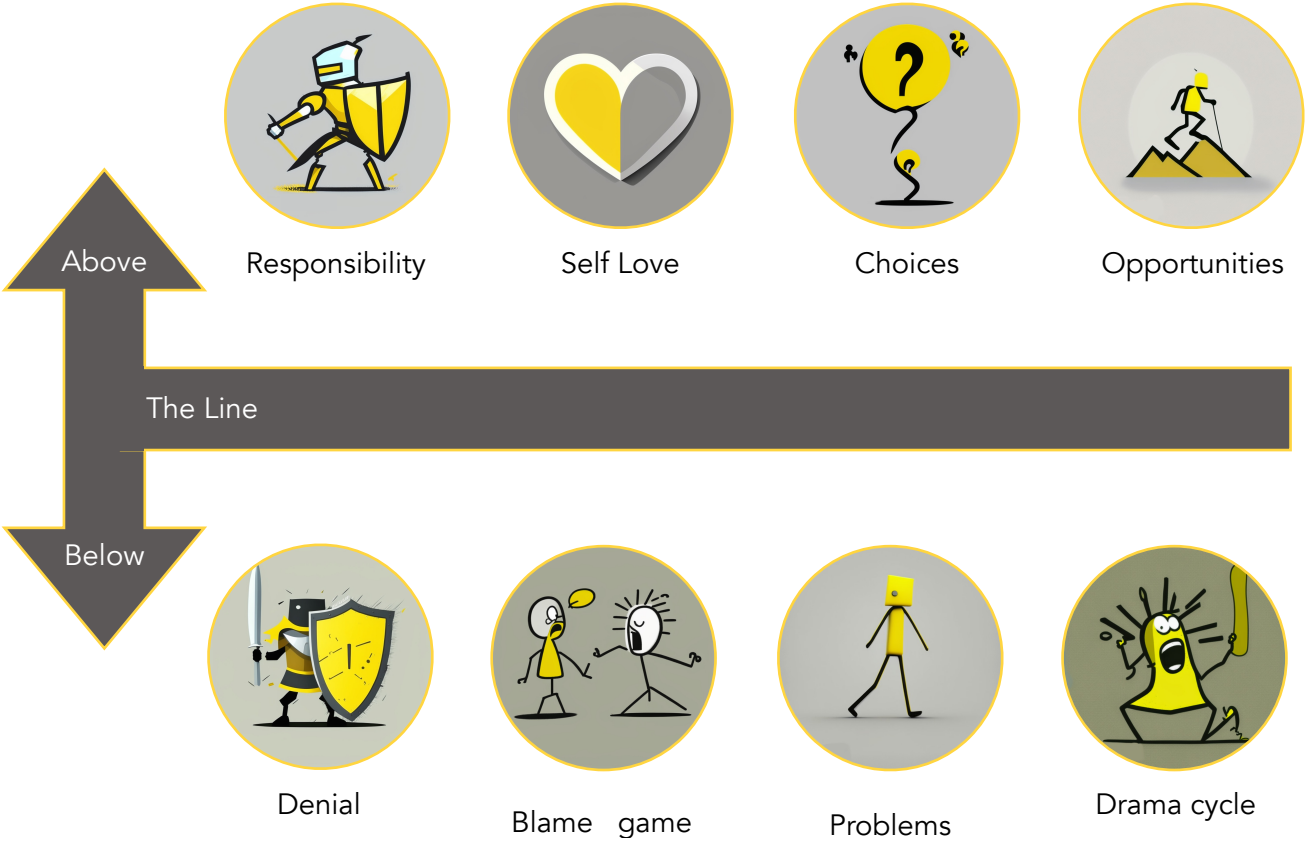
*We cannot solve our problems with  
the same way of thinking that  
created them*

*- Albert Einstein*

# Above, or Below?

To identify whether someone is living below the line, listen to their words carefully. Do they often play the blame-game? Are their moods influenced heavily by their circumstances?

Ask yourself, which side of the line are you living?



# Below the Line Thinking

Here are some common traits of below the line thinking:

## Blaming others:

This is one of the most damaging ways to live below the line. Your life is full of drama that originates from blaming others and playing the victim. In relationships, blaming is a form of emotional abuse, and reduces intimacy between two people.

But it doesn't stop there – far too many times, we indulge in self-blame as adults. This is usually rooted in turning-point events during childhood. For example, children may blame themselves for their parents' divorce. "If only I was a better kid... my dad would not leave me." "If only I got better grades, my parents would still be together".

## Justification:

This is actually a classic example of shifting responsibility. Someone who wants to avoid responsibility will usually try to justify the reasons they failed to perform a certain task. It's based on the lines of "it's not me, it's them" (or circumstances, technology, others and so on).

## Denying:

Similar to justification, denial is an attitude rooted in escaping responsibility. It's the mindset of "I didn't do it", which means the result was an "effect" of some external circumstance or another person's doing. Again, it is living below the line, or at the effect side of things.



# Above the Line Thinking

In this case, 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?

Even if you don't believe it's true yet, act as if it is. Pretend. In coaching and Meta Dynamics™ we call this the "as if" frame.

We act as if until it is. Your beliefs are only possibility filters and determine what we allow ourselves to experience in our lives.

In short, all beliefs are hallucinations – so why not make up the ones that serve us the best? People who go through life on the effect side of the equation can produce "reasons" (aka excuses). They can tell you why they were not successful. "My ex-wife held me back..." or "My parents never supported me..."

As a result, they are always angry, and hold resentment against these people. They believe they are victims who have no choice.

And maybe it is all true.

What's your preference?

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

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

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.

