

## IRRATIONAL VS. RATIONAL BELIEFS

### **IRRATIONAL BELIEFS THAT LEAD TO SELF-DEFEATING FEELINGS AND BEHAVIORS**

1. I must not be thought badly of by other people or be rejected by them.
2. Certain acts are awful and wicked; and those who perform them should be severely punished.
3. It is horrible when things are not the way I would like them to be.
4. Human misery is externally caused — by outside events and by other people.
5. If something is dangerous and fearsome, I must be terribly upset about it.

### **RATIONAL BELIEFS THAT HELP OVERCOME SELF-DEFEATING FEELINGS AND BEHAVIORS**

It would be more advisable for me to concentrate on self- acceptance, on getting approval for practical purposes (rather than ego purposes), and on loving instead of being loved.

Certain acts are inappropriate or antisocial; and those who perform them are behaving stupidly or neurotically (and, if possible, would better be helped to change).

It's too bad when things are not the way I'd like them to be, and it would be advisable to try to change them (and if that isn't possible, to accept their existence with as little upset ness as possible).

People can be utterly miserable — or only frustrated, sad or disappointed — depending on the view they take of events and people.

I would better face the danger or fear and render it non-dangerous; and when that isn't possible, I'd better accept the inevitable.

*(continued)*

## **IRRATIONAL VS. RATIONAL BELIEFS**, *Continued*

6. It is easier to avoid than to face difficult and uncomfortable situations.

It may seem easier in the short run to avoid things, but in the long run it really turns out to create more difficulties and discomfort.

7. I need something or someone stronger than I on whom to depend.

It is better for me in the long run to take the risks of acting and thinking independently.

8. I must be thoroughly competent, intelligent, and achieving in all possible respects, or it's awful (and I'm awful).

I'm far better off accepting myself as a quite imperfect creature with general human limitations and fallibilities. Needing to do well frequently leads to not doing very much at all.

9. Because something once strongly affected my life (e.g., my childhood), it must indefinitely affect it.

I can learn from past experiences, and try my darnedest to have things go differently in the future.

10. I must have certainty and perfect control over things (right away and forever!).

Our world is full of probability and chance; but life can be enjoyed despite this. Being desperate to have perfect control actually leads to loss of control.

11. Happiness can be achieved by inertia and inaction or self-absorption.

People tend to be happiest when they're vitally absorbed in people or projects outside themselves.

12. I really can't control my feelings and behavior.

I can achieve enormous control over my destructive emotions and self-defeating behavior if I choose to work at changing the old rigid and nutty beliefs which create the disturbed feelings and behaviors.