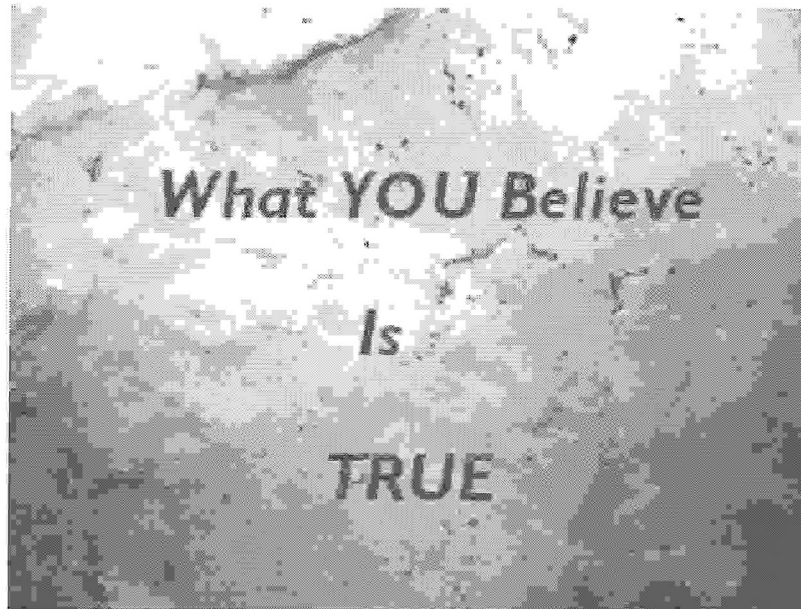


Sound Familiar? 9 Core Beliefs That Can Control Your Life

Last reviewed by Sheri Jacobson February 7, 2017 Cognitive therapy, Counselling



By: Iqbal Osman

Core beliefs are assumptions about ourselves, others, and the world that we mistake for fact.

Unless we take the time to dig out and question our negative core beliefs they control every life decision we make.

Read on for common examples of core beliefs and just how they might be running your life.

[Want more info on how core beliefs determine your perspective? Read our connected piece, "Identifying Your Core Beliefs".]

9 Examples of Core Beliefs That Hold You Back

1. There is something wrong with me.

It can also sound like: *I'm defective, I'm fatally flawed, I'm no good, I'm stupid, I'm worthless, everyone else is better than me, I don't matter, I'm a bad person who can't be fixed. I am a total failure, everything I do is wrong.*

If you have this core belief you will suffer from low self-esteem. Often this sort of belief also causes fear of intimacy. It feels easier to not let anyone really get to know you than to get close to someone and have them see that you are flawed.

2. I am unlovable.

Nobody wants me, I'm better off alone, nobody understands me. I bore others, people hate me, I don't need other people anyway.

You might find that you avoid relationships altogether to avoid proving yet again that you can't be loved. Or, you'll choose codependent relationships where you have to 'earn' love.

Another pattern believing you are unloveable can trigger is always choosing to be with others who fall treat you badly and emotionally abuse you, such as those with narcissistic traits.

3. If I love someone, they will leave me.



By: Flavio~

Everyone abandons me, it's dangerous to love someone, if you love someone you just get hurt, I have to deserve love, I can't be happy unless I am with someone, everyone rejects me.

This core belief often means you leave relationships prematurely, so scared of rejection you pre-emptively abandon others first. Of course this means you are left feeling alone and awful.

This core belief is common in those who suffer from borderline personality disorder (BPD).

4. The world is a dangerous place.

You can never trust anyone or anything, others are out to get me, I'm powerless, I'm helpless, I'm weak, you have to be in control to survive, never let your guard down, you should never be vulnerable, don't ever reveal who you really are.

This belief leads to ongoing anxiety and fear of change. You will make choices based on what is 'safe' over what you truly want. Suffering from a constant sense you that you 'missing out' on life, you will not living up to your potential. Another side effect of this belief can be that you are a control freak, always trying to monitor everything and everyone around you.

5. I am not good enough.

I am a failure, I can't change, I will never succeed, I can't, I'm a loser, everyone else is better than me, I'm always second best, there is no point in trying in life.

This belief also leaves you mired in low self-esteem and often leads to depression. You might, however, hide your low self-esteem and sadness behind perfectionism.

Or, you might give up on even trying to feel worthy and instead let others manipulate you, even allowing abusive or dependent relationships.

6. I'm different/ an outsider.



By: Tommaso Meli

I don't belong, it's like I'm from another planet, nobody understands me, I don't fit in, there is something wrong with me, I have to hide who I am to be liked.

If this is you, you might suffer from extreme loneliness even when in a crowd, or struggle to understand yourself.

7. You have to be happy to be liked.

If you do bad things you are a bad person, I can't have bad thoughts, if I am angry I am unloveable, nobody likes a sad person, feelings are dangerous.

This sort of core belief often comes from a childhood where you were only loved if you were 'good' or 'quiet', etc. You will likely have attachment issues in relationships, identity issues, and struggle to have authentic relationships.

8. Everything is my fault.

I always get it wrong, I need to try harder, if I love people hard enough I can fix them, I have to help everyone, I am selfish to think about myself, I have to be perfect, you shouldn't hurt others.

If this is your way of thinking, you will probably have codependent relationships, lack personal boundaries, have trouble saying no to others, and be passive aggressive.

9. I'm special.

I'm entitled to better, I deserve attention. If people criticise me they are bad. I'm superior. I have to excel, I am above rules, people can't understand me, I can't go wrong.

This sort of core belief leads right to grandiosity or narcissism. It can mean you manipulate others, have anger management issues, and never experience true love and intimacy.

THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT CORE BELIEFS

The good news about core beliefs is that, with work and commitment, they are indeed changeable.