

DO Therapy

What Am I Believing?

Our beliefs influence how we interpret experiences, anticipate what will happen, and decide how to respond. Some beliefs are intentional and useful. Others operate quietly in the background. This exercise helps you identify **one belief influencing a current situation and practice responding with greater awareness and choice.**

NOTICE

Choose a situation where you had a noticeable emotional reaction, felt stuck, or found yourself responding in a familiar way.

Ask:

- What happened?
- What did I immediately think about the situation?
- What did I expect would happen?
- What did the situation seem to say about **me, another person, or the situation itself?**

Try completing: **“For my reaction to make sense, I must be believing that _____.”**

Examples:

- I have to get this right.
- If someone is disappointed in me, I've done something wrong.
- I should be able to handle this myself.
- If I say no, I'm being selfish.
- People can't be trusted.
- Conflict means something is wrong.
- If I fail, people will think less of me.
- I need to know what is going to happen.

Identify **one belief** to work with.

REVIEW THE GAME TAPE

Get curious about the belief rather than immediately deciding whether it is right or wrong.

Ask:

- Where might I have learned this?
- When has this belief been useful?
- How does it influence what I feel or do?
- What does this belief encourage me to **do or not do?**
- Does it fit this situation as well as I initially assumed?

Then ask: **“Is this something I intentionally believe—or something I've become accustomed to believing?”**

You don't have to prove the belief wrong. You are deciding whether it deserves to make the decision for you.

PRACTICE

Choose a response that creates a little more flexibility around the belief.

For example:

- **Belief:** If someone is disappointed in me, I've done something wrong.
- **Practice:** Allow someone to be disappointed without immediately changing your decision.
- **Belief:** I should be able to handle this myself.
- **Practice:** Ask someone for one specific form of help.
- **Belief:** Conflict means something is wrong.
- **Practice:** Stay engaged long enough to understand the disagreement rather than immediately trying to end it.
- **Belief:** I have to get this right.
- **Practice:** Make a reasonable decision with the information available rather than continuing to search for certainty.

Ask: **“If I didn't automatically organize my behavior around this belief, what could I do differently?”**

Choose **one small behavior** to practice.

BUILD REPS

Notice when the same belief appears in other situations. You don't need to argue with it or make it disappear.

Practice recognizing: **“There's that belief again.”**

Then try your different response.

After several reps, consider:

- Does the belief show up in particular situations?
- What happens when I don't automatically follow it?
- What new information am I gathering?
- Does the belief still fit?
- Does it need to be updated, expanded, or used more selectively?
- What would I keep practicing?

The goal isn't necessarily to replace an “incorrect” belief with a “correct” one.

It is to develop enough awareness and flexibility to recognize: **“I can have a belief without automatically letting it choose my behavior.”**