



Behavior Transitions

Sample Disputations of Ellis' Twelve Limiting Beliefs

These are only samples. There are many other statements you could make to dispute each belief. It is important that a dispute statement resonates for you. Use these examples as a starting point but create your own. You can mix and match ideas from any of the examples provided.

1.	I absolutely need love and approval from all those significant to me, and I must avoid disapproval from any source.	As long as the people who are most important to me love me, I don't need anyone else's approval.
		It is impossible for everyone to approve and love me. As long as I know I put my best effort in the things I do, that is enough.
2.	To be a worthwhile person, I must be thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving in all respects.	Everyone starts as a beginner and it's okay to make mistakes because that is part of getting better.
		If I never fail, I'm choosing safety over growing and that is the biggest failure of all.
3.	Some people are bad, wicked, or villainous and they should be blamed and punished for their villainy.	Life is complicated and I can't always know all the reasons why people do the things they do so I should reserve judgment.
		People still have value as a human being. Their bad behavior does not necessarily make them a bad person.
4.	Things must be the way I want them to be, otherwise life will be intolerable.	Things don't always turn out the way I want them to but I have survived disappointments and frustrations in the past and I can do so now.
		I can choose to accept the new situation and if I look for it, I might find something good.
5.	My unhappiness is caused by things which are outside of my control, so there is little I can do to feel better.	I am only miserable if I allow myself to be miserable. What I say to myself matters.
		I can choose my thoughts and what I say to myself. I can challenge negative thoughts and replace them with positive thoughts.
6.	If something is, or might be, dangerous or fearsome, I should be terribly concerned about the possibility of it happening.	Worrying about things that haven't happened yet just robs me of the joy that is present now.
		Most of what I worry about never actually happens so I can let it go and let the future take care of itself.
7.	I can be happier by avoiding life's difficulties, unpleasantness, and responsibilities.	Life isn't meant to be easy. Overcoming challenges is what makes life sweet.
		Avoiding responsibilities just makes things harder in the long run.



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8.	I must depend on others and rely on someone stronger than myself.	I won't know just how strong I am until I try. It feels good to solve issues and accomplish things on my own.
		I can accept help from others, but I don't need it. I know that I am enough and when I choose, I can do things on my own.
9.	My past determines my present behavior. Because something once strongly affected my life, it will continue to influence my feelings and behaviors.	I can learn from past experiences but I am the captain of my own ship. I can create my own future.
		The past is gone and cannot be changed. My future depends on the choices I make today.
10.	I should become upset when other people have problems and feel unhappy when they're sad.	Challenges and problems are a part of life and I can't take on the everyone's problems.
		Caring about others does not mean that I need to take responsibility for their happiness.
11.	I shouldn't have to feel discomfort and pain and I should avoid them at all costs.	Pain and discomfort are part of living. Hiding out from them takes too much energy and robs me of opportunities to enjoy life.
		I can feel pain and discomfort but they do not need to cause suffering. I can be happy now, even if life is not perfect.
12.	There is a right, precise, and perfect solution to human problems and it is awful if this perfect solution is not found.	There can be many right answers to any situation. I don't have to find the right choice, I can make a choice right.
		Sometimes the best outcomes are achieved by living with ambiguity long enough for opportunities to emerge.

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