



Albert Ellis, psychotherapist, and Aaron Beck, psychiatrist, are pioneers in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). CBT helps people identify limiting thoughts and beliefs which negatively impact personal and relational health.

Certain thinking patterns can have a negative effect on emotions, outlook, and relationships. Below are some common thinking errors that may hinder one's ability to be open to self and others, move forward in positive directions, and achieve positive relational connection. How many of these beliefs do you consider true?

1. You must put forth 100% effort or not participate at all.
2. It is important to be loved and approved of by everyone.
3. Competence at all times is very important; mistakes are a sign of weakness.
4. If things don't seem to go your way, you must have done something wrong.
5. You must have perfect control over your life.
6. It is easier to avoid or delay difficulties; problems might go away.
7. Life should/must be fair.
8. Your ability to change things is almost always a matter of effort.
9. When there is a problem or some kind of difficulty, someone is always at fault.
10. If you give an individual an inch, he or she will likely take a mile.

If you answered yes to any of the above, consider:

- Where does your belief originate?
- Does this belief stem from your upbringing, culture, education, or early role models?
- Choose one of the beliefs above and ask: How might this belief interfere with my well-being or relationships?
- For example, using item #1: June has high expectations of herself and others. June would like to help a friend, but hesitates because she cannot help with all of the needs the friend experiences. She cannot be satisfied with a small gesture of support.