

IDENTIFYING AND MODIFYING BASIC BELIEFS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Early Memory	Present Fear	Underlying Belief	Rational Response
At age 4, feeling like a burden to my parents	Fear of being a nuisance to my boss or spouse	People will invalidate my needs/requests so why bother asking?	My parents were burdened by their own life choices. I am a valuable employee/partner. If I use good communication skills, I have a good chance of being heard and given consideration.
Being ridiculed by my first grade teacher	My spouse will think I'm stupid.	I will be humiliated by people important to me, so why share my thoughts, feelings, and ideas?	My first grade teacher had issues of her own. Her behavior wasn't an accurate reflection of my intelligence. I believe in my own worth and have faith that those close to me do as well.
At age 6, being severely punished by my father because I didn't live up to his expectations	My boss or spouse will retaliate if I don't perform perfectly.	If I'm not perfect, I will be punished or rejected, so I might as well push people away before it happens.	My father was a perfectionist and took out his frustration on me. I don't have to be perfect to be loved. If you shoot for the stars, you may just make it to the moon, and that's good enough.
At age 5, my dog died while I was enjoying a vacation.	If I enjoy myself, I will lose someone important to me.	Taking time for relaxation is dangerous.	That was a painful coincidence. There are a lot of times when I had fun and no one got hurt.

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<p>At age 7, my father left my mother after a fight</p>	<p>If I am assertive with my partner, I will be abandoned.</p>	<p>Differences of opinion are dangerous. I have to hide my true self to maintain relationships.</p>	<p>I don't know the details of my parents' relationship. My partner and I have communication tools to handle our differences. Differences can complement each other.</p>
<p>At age 9, my father left and I felt responsible for my mother's health and financial problems. It was beyond my capabilities and I felt overwhelmed and inadequate.</p>	<p>My partner will expect more from me than I can handle right now and I will feel like a failure if I can't meet his/her needs.</p>	<p>Others expect me to take care of them regardless of how much I have on my plate. I'm destined to fail.</p>	<p>Expecting a child to care for a parent was inappropriate. If my partner asks me to do something, he/she will understand if I say I am feeling too overwhelmed right now.</p>

