

Common Core Beliefs

Recognising them, and finding a more balanced view

Core beliefs are deep, often early-learned ideas about ourselves. Most fall into three broad themes. They can feel like facts, especially when we're stressed, but each one leaves something out. The alternatives below keep what's true and add the fuller picture.

1 Notice the belief



2 Spot where it shows up



3 Try the balanced view



4 Put it in your own words



Helpless

About capability and control

"I'm incompetent."

CAN SHOW UP AS

Struggling with a new task at work. "I can't do anything right."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

I'm still learning this. I've learned hard things before, and finding something difficult isn't the same as being incompetent.



Unlovable

About connection and acceptance

"I'm unlovable."

CAN SHOW UP AS

A friend cancels plans. "No one really wants me around."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Some relationships have hurt me, and there are people who care about me. Plans get cancelled for many reasons.



Worthless

About value and worth

"I'm worthless."

CAN SHOW UP AS

No one comments on your work. "I don't matter."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

My worth doesn't depend on being noticed. I matter to people in ways they don't always say out loud.

"I'm weak."

CAN SHOW UP AS

Crying after difficult news. "I should be able to handle this."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Feeling overwhelmed by something hard is human. Resting, or asking for help, takes strength too.

"I'll be abandoned."

CAN SHOW UP AS

A partner seems quiet. "They're about to leave me."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Quiet moments happen in every relationship. I can check in rather than assume, and I've coped with change before.

"I'm bad."

CAN SHOW UP AS

A mistake that affected someone. "I'm a terrible person."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

I did something I regret, and I can take responsibility for it. Doing a bad thing isn't the same as being a bad person.

"I'm a failure."

CAN SHOW UP AS

Missing a goal you worked towards. "This proves I'll never succeed."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

I didn't reach this goal, and that's disappointing. One outcome doesn't define my life; I've done things I'm proud of too.

"I don't belong."

CAN SHOW UP AS

Standing alone at a social event. "Everyone fits in except me."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Many people feel out of place in groups. Belonging usually grows with time and shared experience, not instantly.

"I'm a burden."

CAN SHOW UP AS

Needing to ask for help. "I'm always bothering people."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Needing support is part of being human. People who care about me often want to help, just as I would for them.

"I'm powerless."

CAN SHOW UP AS

A situation that feels stuck. "Nothing I do will make a difference."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Some of this is out of my control. My next small step, and who I ask for support, are not.

"I'm not good enough for others."

CAN SHOW UP AS

A partner praises someone else. "They'll find someone better."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

Like everyone, I have my own mix of strengths and flaws. People value each other for many reasons, not a ranking.

"I'm defective."

CAN SHOW UP AS

Comparing yourself with others. "Something is fundamentally wrong with me."

A MORE BALANCED VIEW

I have struggles, as everyone does. Difficulties others can't see don't make me broken.

A GENTLE REMINDER

Balanced views often feel less "true" than the old belief at first. That's expected. They aren't meant to be positive slogans, but fairer summaries, and they grow stronger as you notice evidence that fits them.

MY OWN WORDS

The belief that fits me most:

A balanced view I could practise: