

# What Do I Believe About Myself? Where Did That Come From?

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## INTRODUCTION

The beliefs we hold about ourselves shape how we think, feel, and act. Many of these beliefs formed early in our lives, often before we could critically examine them. This worksheet will help you identify your core beliefs about yourself, understand where they came from, and begin to evaluate whether they still serve you.

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## IDENTIFYING MY CORE BELIEFS

**Instructions:** Core beliefs often appear as "I am..." statements. They feel like absolute truths rather than opinions. Check any beliefs that resonate with you, and add your own in the spaces provided.

### About My Worth

- I am not enough
- I am unlovable
- I am worthless
- I am valuable
- I deserve good things
- I am worthy of respect
- I am: \_\_\_\_\_
- I am: \_\_\_\_\_

### About My Capabilities

- I am incompetent
- I am a failure
- I can't do anything right
- I am capable
- I can learn and grow
- I have strengths
- I am: \_\_\_\_\_
- I am: \_\_\_\_\_

### About My Place in the World

- I am alone
- I don't belong anywhere
- I am a burden to others
- I am connected
- I have a place in this world
- I contribute value
- I am: \_\_\_\_\_
- I am: \_\_\_\_\_

### About My Safety

- I am always in danger
  - I can't trust anyone
  - I must always be on guard
  - I am secure
  - The world can be safe
  - I can protect myself
  - I am: \_\_\_\_\_
  - I am: \_\_\_\_\_
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## THE LOUDEST BELIEFS

**Instructions:** From the beliefs you checked or wrote above, identify the 3 that have the strongest influence on your life right now.

**Core Belief #1:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**How this belief affects my thoughts:**

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**How this belief affects my feelings:**

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**How this belief affects my behaviors:**

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**Core Belief #2:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**How this belief affects my thoughts:**

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**How this belief affects my feelings:**

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**How this belief affects my behaviors:**

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**Core Belief #3:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**How this belief affects my thoughts:**

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**How this belief affects my feelings:**

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**How this belief affects my behaviors:**

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## **TRACING THE ORIGINS**

**Instructions:** For each core belief you identified, explore where it might have come from.

**Core Belief #1:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**Early experiences that may have created this belief:**

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**Messages I received from important people:**

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**Life events that seemed to confirm this belief:**

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**Who first introduced this idea to me:**

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**Core Belief #2:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**Early experiences that may have created this belief:**

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**Messages I received from important people:**

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**Life events that seemed to confirm this belief:**

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**Who first introduced this idea to me:**

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**Core Belief #3:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**Early experiences that may have created this belief:**

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**Messages I received from important people:**

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**Life events that seemed to confirm this belief:**

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**Who first introduced this idea to me:**

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## **UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT**

**Instructions:** Consider the larger context in which these beliefs formed.

**What was happening in my life when these beliefs developed?**

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**What might have been the purpose of these beliefs at that time?**

- [ ] Protecting me from disappointment

- [ ] Helping me make sense of painful experiences
- [ ] Meeting others' expectations
- [ ] Keeping me safe in difficult situations
- [ ] Earning love or approval
- [ ] Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**How old was I when I first started believing these things?**

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**If I had been older or had more support, might I have interpreted those experiences differently?**

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## **EVALUATING MY BELIEFS**

**Instructions:** Examine each core belief critically.

**Core Belief:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence that seems to support this belief:**

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**Evidence that challenges this belief:**

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**How someone who cares about me would view this belief:**

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**A more balanced or helpful belief might be:**

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## **BEGINNING TO SHIFT**

**Instructions:** Choose one belief you'd like to work on changing.

**The belief I want to shift:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**A more accurate or helpful belief might be:** I am \_\_\_\_\_

**What makes it hard to believe the new statement:**

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**Small ways I could act as if the new belief were true:**

1.

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2.

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3.

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**People or resources that could help me with this shift:**

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## **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

- What do I notice about the timing of when these beliefs formed?
  - How might my life be different if I had developed different core beliefs?
  - Which beliefs feel most painful to hold onto?
  - Which beliefs feel most difficult to question or change?
  - What new belief would make the biggest positive difference in my life right now?
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## **REMEMBER**

- Core beliefs form early, often before we have the capacity to evaluate them
  - Beliefs that once protected us can limit us later in life
  - We don't choose our early experiences, but we can examine their impact
  - Changing core beliefs is a gradual process that takes time and support
  - You are not defined by what happened to you or what you were told about yourself
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