

Changing core beliefs

Core beliefs are the underlying rules and stories we hold about ourselves, often formed early in life to help us make sense of our experiences. Take your time here. Updating a core belief is a gradual practice, so plan to return to this sheet over time rather than rushing to complete it in one sitting.

1 Identify the core belief

Core beliefs are usually short, absolute statements about who you are at your core.
(e.g., "I am not enough," "I am unlovable," "I am unsafe," or "I am a failure")

My core belief

How much do you believe it right now? (0–10)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2 Where it may have come from

Beliefs don't develop in a vacuum; they often start as protective responses to early environments, relationships, or painful events. Identifying where a belief came from builds self-compassion, not self-blame.

What past experiences, early messages, or environments may have shaped this belief?
(Examples: Growing up in a critical household, severe academic pressure, experienced rejection)

3 Evidence

When a core belief takes root, the brain naturally acts like a filter by letting in evidence that confirms the belief while ignoring evidence that contradicts it. Practice stepping back to look at both sides objectively.

Evidence that seems to support the belief. Focus on facts, not feelings.

Watch for distortions you may be adding.

Evidence against the belief (the part you usually discount)

Small wins, times you coped, people who value you, things you overlook.

4 A new, balanced belief

Given all of the evidence, what is a fairer belief about yourself? It should be believable, not a slogan.

New balanced belief

OLD:

"I am a failure."



BALANCED:

"I experience setbacks like everyone else, but I also have strengths and capacity to learn."

OLD:

"I am unlovable."



BALANCED:

"I am worthy of connection and care, even when I am imperfect."

How strongly do you believe this new belief right now? (0–10)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5 Build evidence for the new belief

Start a positive data log: small daily moments that fit the new belief, however minor.

Recent evidence for the new belief

For example: A coworker thanked me. I finished a task I was dreading.