

Interpretations and Evaluations – Telling the Difference

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When identifying beliefs, there are two levels of thinking to look for:

- How you are interpreting the situation
- How you are evaluating it.

This exercise will help you distinguish between the two types.

Interpretations

Interpretations represent your views about the situation itself (what you think is “really going on”). – Irrational interpretations are usually distortions of reality. black-and-white thinking, overgeneralizing, filtering, mind-reading, fortune-telling, emotional reasoning, and personalizing.

Evaluations

Evaluations refer to the way you evaluate the situation in terms of what it means to you or about you. Irrational evaluations consist of catastrophizing (“It’s awful, I can’t stand it”), demanding (“It should or shouldn’t be happening”), and self- or other-rating (“This proves that I [or someone else] is no good”).

Go through the list below. Put an “I” next to the ones that are interpretations, and an “E” next to those that represent evaluations.

- ___ 1. It’s terrible to be treated like this.
- ___ 2. She was trying to hurt me.
- ___ 3. I’m satisfied that things have turned out for the best.
- ___ 4. He should consider my feelings more than he does.
- ___ 5. It will be hard to find another job.
- ___ 6. It’s not fair that he was promoted ahead of me.
- ___ 7. If I can’t handle this, maybe I really am stupid.

___ 8. There are too many people leeching off the system.

___ 9. They were obviously planning to attack me.

___ 10. I prefer to be punctual whenever I can.

___ 11. I'm heading toward another breakdown.

___ 12. Why shouldn't I be angry!?

___ 13. I'll never be happy again.

___ 14. She's probably planning to leave me.

___ 15. Without her love I'm nothing.

___ 16. He was really angry.

___ 17. I have no way of getting these debts paid off.