

# 4WRD Core Beliefs



Discover how to identify core beliefs that are holding us back and turn them around once and for all.



# Today's **Session**

## Transforming Negative Core Beliefs

- Core Beliefs – What they are and what they aren't
- Core Beliefs that are holding you back
- Identifying & challenging Core Beliefs
- Learn to become more aware of your beliefs
- Wrap up



# What beliefs do you have about yourself?



Are these thoughts helping you?  
How do you think these thoughts are hurting you?



“

Core beliefs are our most  
deeply held assumptions  
about ourselves, the  
world, and others.

# Core beliefs shape everything you think, do, and feel and can impact our:

 Relationships	 Health	 Happiness	 Mindset
 Career	 Finances	 Outlook	 Reputation
 Self-Esteem	 Safety	 Future	 Well-Being



**It's important to remember...**

# **Beliefs aren't facts**

Core beliefs are just that –beliefs. Thus, they aren't always based or founded in fact.

## **Core beliefs are often self-perpetuating**

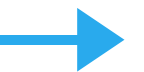
This means they literally attract “evidence” that supports them. That's one big reason why we often FEEL they are factual—even if they're not.

## **They can be changed**

The good news about this is that - if our core beliefs aren't serving us— we can make efforts to change them so that they work for us instead of against us.

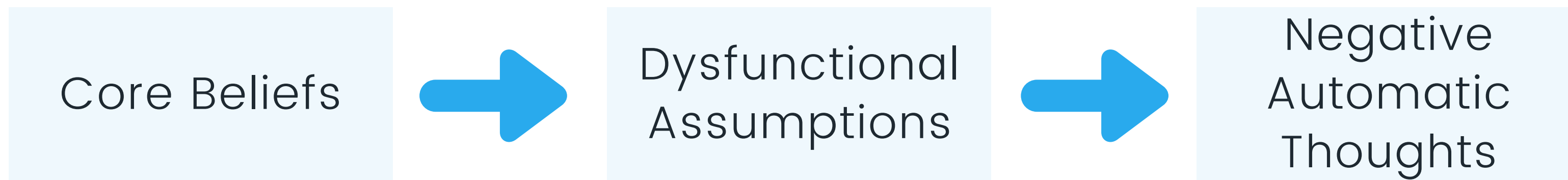


**If we aren't living authentically, we are going to always have issues with our well-being and happiness.**



# 3 Levels of Cognition

Aaron Beck (1979) outlined three interrelated levels of cognition:



Core beliefs were first theorized in the context of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). They are also known as schemas, which shape how we process and interpret new information.





# Absolutist Core Beliefs

Core beliefs are formed early in life and shaped by our upbringing and our experiences. Because they are so deep-seated and embedded, they are very difficult to change.

Harmful statements usually come in the form of absolutist:

**"I AM"**

▶ We are bad, not good enough, a loser, or even unlovable

**"PEOPLE ARE..."**

▶ People are bad, untrustworthy, exploitative, or manipulative conscientiousness

**"THE WORLD IS..."**

▶ The world a dangerous place – unsafe, or hostile enemy territory that has only bad things in store for us.



# Core Beliefs About Self

Judith Beck (Beck, J.S, 2005 & 2011) proposes there are three main categories of negative core beliefs about the self:



Helplessness



Unlovability



Worthlessness



**We find what  
we're looking  
for and expect**

## **Say no to negativity bias**

If our core beliefs are positive and helpful, we need to take no further action. But very FEW people can say that ALL their core beliefs are positive and helpful.

If and when they're not, we must seek to transform negative core beliefs since they are the root causes of many issues - from poor performance at work to low-self-esteem, weight issues, and eventually, poor wellbeing and unhappiness. They shape how we treat ourselves, others, and even how others may treat us. They set the rules by which we live and the tone of our self-talk.



# Identifying Negative Core Beliefs



Our negative core beliefs drive our dysfunctional immediate beliefs in the forms of attitudes & rules.

To identify our negative core beliefs then, we look at our recurring ANTs and try to detect patterns and themes in our experiences AND how we interpret them.

## Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs)

### Rules

If we believe we are unlovable, for example, this could translate into rules such as “I must be thin, because if only I were thin, I would become loveable.”

### Attitude

We may think we have to be rich, or always agreeable, or overly helpful, or constantly self-deprecating, or that we must never say no to anyone, to be worthy of other people’s love.

# ANTs That Drive Negative Core Beliefs

Our negative core beliefs drive our dysfunctional immediate beliefs in the forms of attitudes and rules.

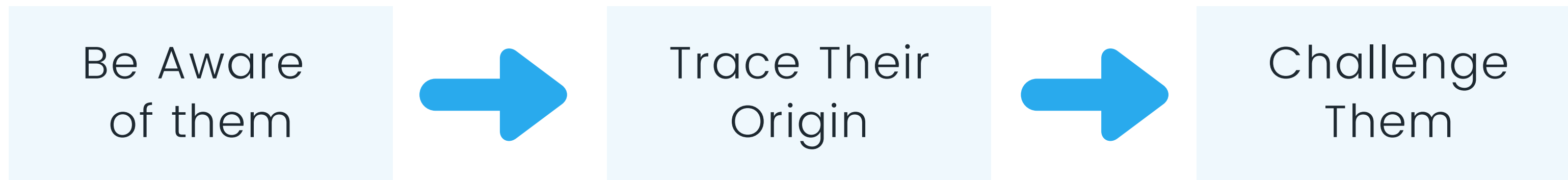
- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  I am incompetent    |  I am not lovable   |
|  I am incompetent    |  I am inferior      |
|  I feel vulnerable |  I am not likable |
|  I am unworthy     |  I am bad         |
|  I am stupid       |  I am a burden    |

-  I need to 'earn' happiness
-  I need to control my environment to manage my feelings
-  The world is a dangerous place
-  Even my best efforts are not good enough
-  Once someone knows me, they'll lose interest



# Identifying Negative Core Beliefs

So, once we realize what our core beliefs are that are limiting us, what do we do?



Challenging negative core beliefs includes a deliberate attempt at cognitive restructuring—identifying the cognitive distortions that are at work in our ANTs, and patiently amassing evidence that contradicts our beliefs until we can accept they no longer serve us and let them go.



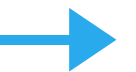
# Challenging ANTs

Increase Awareness  
of Cognitive  
Distortions

Identify False  
Beliefs About  
Emotions

Identify Limiting  
Beliefs about  
Strengths

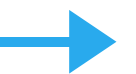
Address Unhelpful  
Beliefs about  
Relationships



# Activity Time

## Reflection

Based on what we discussed, think about your core beliefs – negative and positive core beliefs. How do they impact your life? How many times have you let your limiting beliefs, or ANTs, hold you back from achieving your goals in life?

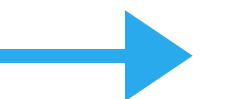




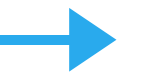
# Meaning and Valued Living Tools

One "simple" way we can start to re-shape our core beliefs is through living a life of gratitude and meaning.

- At the heart of this lies the idea that we need to break with our “typical self-centeredness” and re-orientate ourselves towards the meaning of our lives. (Frankl, 2004. p. 104)
- A focus on meaning that is located outside ourselves – be that in the form of creativity, service, or relationships – will help us more powerfully to overcome our psychological struggles, than problem-focused methods. Gratitude and social RELATIONSHIPS, including socially facilitative behavior.
- The true meaning of life, Frankl writes, is to be discovered in the world rather than within our own psyches.



Practice saying,  
“thank you,” when  
your thoughts get  
unhelpful.



# Worksheet

Let's analyze your core beliefs



Question 1: What are your core beliefs? Identify both negative & positive beliefs about yourself including your strengths, emotions, and relationships.

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Question 2: How will you transform your beliefs so that your productivity, happiness, and well-being become more positive and fulfilling?

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Question 3: Imagining your own funeral service - what would you like people to say about you?

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# Summary

## **Core beliefs mold and shape the world we create for ourselves**

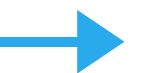
They shape everything you think, do and feel, but remember core beliefs aren't facts - they can be changed.

## **Challenge Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs)**

The best ways to challenge ANTs are to increase awareness of cognitive distortion, identify false beliefs about emotion, identify limiting beliefs about strengths, and address unhelpful beliefs about relationships.

## **Practice Gratitude**

One simple way to re-shape our core beliefs to live a life of gratitude and meaning.



# Thank you for joining!

if you have any questions or feedback,  
please reach out to us at  
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[WWW.GO4WRD.COM](http://WWW.GO4WRD.COM)

