



Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry

Comprehensive care. Transformative outcomes.

Week 8: Intermediate Beliefs

Rules, Assumptions, and Attitudes

Digging Deeper

Beneath our automatic thoughts lie deeper beliefs. These are often unarticulated rules or assumptions we hold about ourselves, others, and the world. They act as a filter through which we interpret our experiences.

Types of Intermediate Beliefs

ATTITUDES

Evaluative statements about situations.

- "It's terrible to be incompetent."
- "Being alone is unbearable."

RULES

Instructions or commands we give ourselves (often using "should" or "must").

- "I must always do my best."
- "I should never show weakness."
- "People must always treat me fairly."

ASSUMPTIONS

Conditional statements (If... then...) that predict outcomes.

- "If I ask for help, people will think I'm weak."
- "If I don't worry, something bad will happen."
- "If I'm not perfect, I'm a failure."

Identifying Your Rules

Think of a recent situation where you felt a strong negative emotion. What rule might you have been trying to follow? Complete the sentences below:

If I... then...

I must always... or else...

It is terrible if...

Advantages and Disadvantages

Pick one rule you identified above. What are the pros and cons of holding this rule?

Advantages (How does this rule help me?)

Disadvantages (What is the cost?)