



Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry

Comprehensive care. Transformative outcomes.

Week 9: Core Beliefs

Digging Deeper

What are Core Beliefs? While automatic thoughts are fleeting, core beliefs are the deep-seated, absolute "truths" we hold about ourselves, others, and the world. They usually form in childhood and act like a lens through which we see everything.

Examples: "I am unlovable," "The world is dangerous," "I am incompetent."

The Downward Arrow Technique

To find a core belief, we start with an automatic thought and keep asking: "If that were true, what would it mean about me?"

Automatic Thought:

"I forgot to send that email. My boss will be mad."



If that's true, what does it mean?

"It means I'm unreliable."



If I'm unreliable, what does that mean?

"It means I can't do anything right."



CORE BELIEF:

"I am a failure."

Week 9 Homework: Downward Arrow

Pick one strong negative thought from this week and use the Downward Arrow technique to uncover the core belief underneath it.

Write your chain here...