

## Step 5 (D): Changing Underlying Beliefs

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### Challenging Irrational Core Beliefs

Once you've used the processes in steps AB and C and identified a core irrational belief, you can dispute it. This part is ultimately what the entire process has been leading up to because identifying the root of the problem—the core belief, rule, or demand—and shifting it to a rational belief is the key that unlocks lasting change.

This is exciting news, but you also need to keep in mind you may have spent years nurturing this belief and convincing yourself it is true. Some limiting beliefs don't let you rip them out by the root easily. It takes practice and persistence to change a core belief and develop an empowering belief that will serve you long term.

The best way to accomplish a belief shift is to wear it down through repetition. That is why this activity is meant to be done EVERY DAY. We recommend committing to this process daily for 14 days.

Set aside 10 minutes every day to identify a core irrational belief and ask yourself these questions. You may have identified a number of core beliefs during your other activities. You can also reflect on your day and identify any problems that came up and identify the core belief that lead to your disturbance.

When doing the activity, make sure you write down your answers. You can even record yourself instead. The reason this is so important is because your mind will try to pull you back into believing the old limiting belief. It has a habit of thinking that way and it will be easy to fall back into it. By writing it down, you can re-read your answers to remind yourself that the belief is irrational in those moments of weakness when it's tempting to believe it again.

Here are the questions:

1. What self-defeating irrational thought do I want to let go from my life and dispute?

2. Is my belief logical? Why or why not?

3. Is there evidence that disproves or counters this belief system?

4. Is there any evidence that shows this belief system to be true?

5. Is this belief productive? Where or what is it getting me?

6. Is it harmful to me?

7. What is the worst-case scenario if I do NOT get what I think I must (or if I get what I do NOT want)?

8. What positive things might happen if I do NOT get what I think I must have (or if I get what I do NOT Want)?

9. What is a rational belief that can replace the irrational one?

If you continue to practice questioning your core beliefs consistently, they will lose their power. Not only will your brain start to truly believe the new, rational belief, it will get better at spotting irrational beliefs in your every day life. You'll get so good at questioning your beliefs that you'll notice your emotions and behaviors throughout the day and automatically identify the core belief and challenge it right on the spot! Imagine how much heartache and stress this could save you!?

The last step is to be accountable! In order to reinforce your habit of disputing the irrational beliefs, determine a way you can reward yourself. For instance, you can choose an activity you enjoy, such as a hobby, socializing, or anything else you enjoy. Every day, after you complete this exercise, do the enjoyable activity as a way of rewarding yourself. This will help you associate disputing your beliefs with a positive emotional response, which helps reinforce the behavior.

How will you reward yourself?