

# AI-00355 Irrational Beliefs

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**What are the 12 Irrational beliefs by Albert Ellis? Enumerate each and explain.**

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Albert Ellis, a prominent psychologist and the founder of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), identified a list of irrational beliefs that he believed contributed to emotional distress and unhealthy behaviors. These beliefs are often referred to as "Irrational Beliefs" or "Irrational Thinking Patterns." There are originally 11 irrational beliefs, but they are sometimes expanded to 12 with variations. Here are the 12 irrational beliefs along with explanations for each:

1. **The need for approval or love from all significant others:** This belief suggests that you must gain the approval and love of everyone around you, and if you don't, it's catastrophic. This can lead to anxiety and a constant fear of rejection.
2. **The need for high achievement or perfection:** This belief involves setting unrealistically high standards for yourself and believing that you must always achieve them perfectly. It can result in chronic stress, fear of failure, and a tendency to avoid tasks where success is not guaranteed.
3. **The need to be thoroughly competent, adequate, or achieving in all possible respects:** Similar to the second belief, this one implies that you must excel in every aspect of your life. Fearing any hint of incompetence or inadequacy, you may push yourself excessively and experience distress when you perceive yourself falling short.
4. **The need for absolute certainty and control:** This belief revolves around the idea that you must have complete control over situations and know with certainty what will happen. It can lead to excessive worry, frustration, and an inability to tolerate uncertainty.

5. **The need to avoid or evade discomfort, unhappiness, or discomfort at all times:** This belief involves the notion that you should never experience negative emotions or discomfort. Trying to avoid these emotions can lead to avoidance behaviors and an inability to cope effectively with life's challenges.
6. **The need for fairness and justice at all times:** This belief assumes that life should always be fair and just, and any perceived injustice is unacceptable. This can lead to frustration, anger, and resentment when things don't go your way.
7. **The need for others to be considerate of you, rational, and to treat you fairly at all times:** Similar to the previous belief, this one centers around the expectation that others should always treat you fairly and rationally. When others don't meet these expectations, it can result in feelings of frustration and indignation.
8. **The need to avoid all stress, discomfort, and inconvenience:** This belief suggests that you should never have to face any form of stress, discomfort, or inconvenience. It can lead to avoidance behaviors and a lack of resilience when faced with challenging situations.
9. **The need to have others depend on you and to depend on others completely:** This belief implies that your self-worth is dependent on others relying on you and you relying on them. Relying excessively on others can hinder your independence and self-esteem.
10. **The need to have a scapegoat or someone to blame when things go wrong:** This belief involves finding someone to blame whenever things don't go as planned. It can prevent you from taking responsibility for your actions and hinder personal growth.
11. **The need to be worry-free and to have no difficulties:** Similar to other beliefs about avoiding discomfort, this one focuses on the unrealistic goal of leading a life free from worries and challenges. Striving for constant worry-free living can lead to frustration and disappointment.
12. **The need to have things happen as you want them to:** This variation of the list adds the belief that everything should always go according to your desires. This can lead to frustration, anger, and distress when reality doesn't align with your wishes.

These irrational beliefs, according to Ellis, contribute to negative emotional reactions, self-defeating behaviors, and overall psychological distress. REBT aims to help

individuals identify and challenge these irrational beliefs in order to develop healthier, more rational thinking patterns and ultimately achieve greater emotional well-being.

**Give 5 examples of each irrational belief mentioned**

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Certainly, here are five examples for each of the 12 irrational beliefs identified by Albert Ellis:

**1. The need for approval or love from all significant others:**

- Believing that unless everyone likes you, you are a failure.
- Feeling devastated if a friend doesn't respond positively to your invitation.
- Thinking that your partner's love for you is solely determined by their constant affection.
- Feeling unworthy and upset if someone criticizes your work.
- Believing that people will only value you if you're always agreeable.

**2. The need for high achievement or perfection:**

- Refusing to submit a project at work because you fear it won't be flawless.
- Avoiding hobbies you enjoy because you're not the best at them.
- Feeling extreme anxiety about a test, even when you've studied diligently.
- Perceiving yourself as a failure for not achieving top grades in every subject.
- Believing that anything short of perfection is a complete failure.

**3. The need to be thoroughly competent, adequate, or achieving in all possible respects:**

- Feeling inadequate and worthless because you made a minor mistake in a conversation.
- Believing that you can't start a new hobby unless you're sure you'll excel at it.
- Feeling like a failure if you can't handle every task at work perfectly.
- Believing that any shortcomings in your appearance render you completely unattractive.

- Thinking that you're worthless if you don't meet your own impossibly high standards.

#### **4. The need for absolute certainty and control:**

- Refusing to travel because you can't predict every detail of the trip.
- Feeling extremely anxious about attending an event with an uncertain schedule.
- Avoiding new experiences because you can't control the outcome.
- Believing that you'll be devastated if you don't know the exact result of a decision in advance.
- Feeling intense distress when plans deviate even slightly from what you expected.

#### **5. The need to avoid or evade discomfort, unhappiness, or discomfort at all times:**

- Avoiding social events entirely to prevent potential awkwardness.
- Refusing to confront a friend about an issue to avoid conflict.
- Staying in a toxic relationship because being alone is uncomfortable.
- Avoiding exercise because it's temporarily uncomfortable.
- Refusing to make any changes in your routine to avoid any possible disruption.

These examples illustrate how these irrational beliefs can lead to distress, anxiety, and unhealthy behaviors in various situations. Remember that these beliefs are not based on rational thinking and can be challenged and replaced with more balanced and healthy perspectives through techniques like Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT).

**continue**

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Certainly, let's continue with examples for the remaining irrational beliefs:

#### **6. The need for fairness and justice at all times:**

- Becoming outraged when someone cuts in line, feeling that it's a personal attack.
- Feeling deeply upset and resentful when a colleague receives a promotion you believe you deserved more.
- Being unable to accept that life sometimes involves unfair situations.

- Feeling morally offended when you witness someone getting away with something you consider wrong.
- Believing that the universe owes you fairness and that any lack of it is a direct affront.

**7. The need for others to be considerate of you, rational, and to treat you fairly at all times:**

- Feeling hurt and angry when a friend cancels plans, assuming they're intentionally disrespecting you.
- Becoming frustrated and upset when someone doesn't agree with your point of view.
- Taking it personally when a coworker doesn't acknowledge your ideas during a meeting.
- Feeling rejected and unimportant if someone doesn't respond immediately to your message.
- Believing that others must always prioritize your needs and feelings.

**8. The need to avoid all stress, discomfort, and inconvenience:**

- Refusing to take on any responsibilities at work that might cause stress.
- Avoiding necessary conversations with family members to prevent potential conflict.
- Refusing to try new activities that might be challenging or uncomfortable.
- Avoiding any form of change because it might disrupt your current routine.
- Believing that you should always be in a state of calm and relaxation.

**9. The need to have others depend on you and to depend on others completely:**

- Becoming anxious when you perceive that a friend is more self-sufficient and less reliant on you.
- Feeling a loss of self-worth if someone you care about doesn't rely on you for advice.
- Avoiding taking risks or making independent decisions because you're used to depending on others.

- Believing that your value is determined by how much others need you.
- Becoming uncomfortable and anxious when you have to make decisions without input from others.

**10. The need to have a scapegoat or someone to blame when things go wrong:**

- Blaming your partner for your own unhappiness without acknowledging your contribution.
- Holding your coworker responsible for your own mistakes to avoid taking responsibility.
- Blaming your upbringing for your current difficulties without considering your personal choices.
- Assigning external factors as the sole reason for your lack of progress in achieving your goals.
- Refusing to accept any responsibility for a failed project and pointing fingers at others.

**11. The need to be worry-free and to have no difficulties:**

- Feeling overwhelmed by anxiety when you have minor uncertainties about the future.
- Believing that you shouldn't encounter any challenges if you're doing everything right.
- Becoming distressed over minor inconveniences, believing that life should be smooth.
- Feeling like a failure if you experience periods of sadness or doubt.
- Avoiding new experiences because they might involve temporary discomfort.

**12. The need to have things happen as you want them to:**

- Feeling deeply frustrated and angry when events don't unfold according to your plans.
- Becoming upset when the weather doesn't match your expectations for the day.
- Feeling that your day is ruined if a particular event doesn't happen as you envisioned.

- Believing that you can't be happy unless every aspect of your life aligns perfectly with your desires.
- Becoming distressed when someone doesn't follow your script for how interactions should go.

These examples further illustrate how these irrational beliefs can influence thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, leading to emotional distress and unhealthy reactions. Recognizing these patterns is a crucial step toward challenging and changing them through rational thinking and therapeutic techniques.

**Are there new and modern or additional irrational beliefs not covered by Albert Ellis? If yes, please explain and give 5 examples of each.**

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As of my last knowledge update in September 2021, Albert Ellis's list of irrational beliefs remains a foundational framework in the field of cognitive-behavioral therapy. However, it's important to note that psychology and therapy evolve over time, and new concepts or variations of irrational beliefs may have emerged since then. While I don't have access to information beyond that date, I can still provide some examples of potential modern or additional irrational beliefs that could exist based on contemporary challenges and trends. Keep in mind that these are hypothetical and not part of the original REBT framework:

### **1. The need for constant external validation through social media:**

- Believing that your self-worth is determined by the number of likes and comments on your social media posts.
- Feeling devastated and inadequate if a post doesn't receive the expected engagement.
- Comparing your life to others' carefully curated online personas and feeling inferior as a result.
- Experiencing anxiety if you can't check social media regularly, fearing you're missing out or being left behind.
- Believing that your life is unfulfilling if you can't capture and share every experience online.

### **2. The need to maintain a flawless digital identity:**

- Refusing to share any personal struggles or vulnerabilities online, fearing that it will tarnish your digital image.
- Believing that any negative comments or criticism online reflect your true worth as a person.
- Feeling anxious about posting anything that might not align with the "perfect" image you've cultivated online.
- Becoming distressed if someone else posts unflattering photos of you without your permission.
- Believing that your online persona should be free from any signs of imperfection.

### **3. The need for instant gratification and constant excitement:**

- Feeling restless and anxious when not constantly engaged in exciting or stimulating activities.
- Becoming frustrated and dissatisfied when daily life doesn't provide constant entertainment.
- Avoiding tasks that require patience and effort because they don't offer immediate rewards.
- Believing that your life is unfulfilling if it doesn't resemble the exciting experiences portrayed in media and online.
- Experiencing a constant need to seek out novel experiences to prevent boredom or discomfort.

### **4. The need for constant busyness and productivity:**

- Believing that your value as a person is solely determined by your level of productivity and accomplishments.
- Feeling guilty or anxious during periods of rest or relaxation, as if you're wasting time.
- Avoiding leisure activities because they don't contribute directly to your productivity.
- Experiencing burnout due to an inability to slow down and prioritize self-care.
- Believing that your self-worth is tied to how many tasks you can juggle simultaneously.



## **5. The need for constant comparison and envy due to exposure to curated lives:**

- Becoming envious and dissatisfied with your own life when exposed to others' curated online lifestyles.
- Believing that everyone else is leading a happier and more successful life than you based on their social media posts.
- Feeling inadequate and unaccomplished when you compare your achievements to those of your peers online.
- Becoming anxious about not measuring up to the achievements and experiences of others.
- Believing that your worth is determined by how closely your life mirrors the idealized lives presented online.

Again, please note that these examples are not part of Albert Ellis's original list of irrational beliefs. They are speculative examples that reflect some of the unique challenges and influences of the modern digital age. If you're seeking the most up-to-date information on therapeutic approaches and cognitive-behavioral concepts, I recommend consulting recent sources and professionals in the field of psychology.