

INTERPRETATIONS AND EVALUATIONS: TELLING THE DIFFERENCE

When identifying beliefs, there are two levels of thinking to look for:

- How you are *interpreting* the situation
- How you are *evaluating* it.

This exercise will help you distinguish between the two types.

Remember:

·**Interpretations** represent your views about the situation itself (what you think is “really going on”). Irrational interpretations are usually *distortions of reality*. black-and-white thinking, overgeneralizing, filtering, mind-reading, fortune-telling, emotional reasoning, and personalizing.

·**Evaluations** refer to the way you evaluate the situation in terms of what it means to you or about you. Irrational evaluations consist of *catastrophizing* (“It’s awful, I can’t stand it”), *demanding* (“It should or shouldn’t be happening”), and *self- or other-rating* (“This proves that I [or someone else] is no good”).

Go through the list below. Put an “I” next to the ones that are interpretations, and an “E” next to those that represent evaluations.

- 1.It’s terrible to be treated like this.
- 2.She was trying to hurt me.
- 3.I’m satisfied that things have turned out for the best.
- 4.He should consider my feelings more than he does.
- 5.It will be hard to find another job.
- 6.It’s not fair that he was promoted ahead of me.
- 7.If I can’t handle this, maybe I really am stupid.
- 8.There are too many people leeching off the system.
- 9.They were obviously planning to attack me.
- 10.I prefer to be punctual whenever I can.
- 11.I’m heading toward another breakdown.
- 12.Why shouldn’t I be angry!?
- 13.I’ll never be happy again.
- 14.She’s probably planning to leave me.
- 15.Without her love I’m nothing.
- 16.He was really angry.
- 17.I have no way of getting these debts paid off.