

CHANGING

YOUR LIFE SCRIPTS, MENTAL FILTERS,
AND LIMITING

CORE BELIEFS

MOVE OUT OF SURVIVAL MODE INTO
GROWTH MODE WITH PRECISION CBT

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What are Core Beliefs/Mental Filters?

Core beliefs or Mental Filters are a person's most central ideas about themselves, others, and the world. These beliefs act like a lens through which every situation and life experience is seen. As a result, people with different beliefs/filters might be in the same situation, but think, feel, and behave very differently.

Even if a core belief is inaccurate, it still shapes how a person sees the world. Harmful core beliefs lead to negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, whereas rational core beliefs lead to balanced reactions.

Situation: Two people with different core beliefs/mental filters receive a bad grade on a test.		
Person	Core Belief/Mental Filter	Reaction
A	➡ "I am a failure."	➡ Thought: Of course I failed... why bother? Feeling: Depressed Behavior: Makes no changes.
B	➡ "I am perfectly capable, when I give my best effort."	➡ Thought: I did poorly because I didn't prepare. Feeling: Disappointed Behavior: Plans to study before the next test.

Common Harmful Core Beliefs/Mental Filters

Core beliefs/mental filters are often hidden beneath surface-level beliefs. For example, the core belief "no one likes me" might underlie the surface belief "my friends only spend time with me out of pity".

Helpless	Unlovable	Worthless	External Danger
"I am weak"	"I am unlovable"	"I am bad"	"The world is dangerous"
"I am a loser"	"I will end up alone"	"I don't deserve to live"	"People can't be trusted"
"I am trapped"	"No one likes me"	"I am worthless"	"Nothing ever goes right"

Consequences of Harmful Core Beliefs/Mental Filters

Interpersonal Problems	Mental Health Problems
difficulty trusting others	depression
feelings of inadequacy in relationships	anxiety
excessive jealousy	substance abuse
overly confrontational or aggressive	difficulty handling stress
putting others' needs above one's own needs	low self-esteem

Facts About Core Beliefs/Mental Filters

- People are not born with core beliefs/mental filters—they are learned.
- Core beliefs usually develop in childhood, or during stressful or traumatic periods in adulthood.
- Information that contradicts core belief/mental filters is often ignored.
- Negative core beliefs/mental filters are not necessarily true, even if they *feel* true.
- Core beliefs tend to be rigid and long-standing. However, they can be changed.

Negative Core Beliefs

RESPONSIBILITY

(I am defective)
I don't deserve love
I am a bad person
I am terrible
I am worthless (inadequate)
I am shameful
I am not lovable
I am not good enough
I deserve only bad things
I am permanently damaged
I am ugly (my body is hateful)
I do not deserve
I am stupid (not smart enough)
I am insignificant
(unimportant)
I am a disappointment
I deserve to die
I deserve to be miserable
I am different (don't belong)

RESPONSIBILITY (My Fault)

I should have done something"
I did something wrong"
I should have known better"
*What does this say about you?
(e.g., does it make you feel: I am
shameful/ I am stupid/I am a
bad person)

SAFETY/ VULNERABILITY

I cannot be trusted
I cannot trust myself
I cannot trust my judgment
I cannot trust anyone
I cannot protect myself
I am in danger
It's not OK to feel (show) my
emotions

CONTROL/CHOICES

I am not in control
I am powerless (helpless)
I am weak
I'll never get what I want
I'm a failure (will fail)
I have to be perfect (please
everyone)
I can't stand it
I am inadequate
I cannot trust anyone

Positive Core Beliefs

RESPONSIBILITY

I deserve love
I can have love
I am a good (loving) person
I am fine as I am
I am worthy
I am worthwhile
I am honorable
I am lovable
I'm deserving (I'm fine/OK)
I deserve good things
I am (can be) healthy
I am fine (attractive/lovable)
can have (deserve)
I am intelligent (able to learn)
I am significant (important)
I am OK just the way I am
I deserve to live
I deserve to be happy
I am OK as I am

RESPONSIBILITY

I did the best I could
I learned (can learn) from it
I do the best I can (I can learn)

SAFETY/ VULNERABILITY

I can be trusted
I can (learn to) trust myself
I can trust my judgment
I can choose whom to trust
I can (learn to) take care of
myself.
It's over; I am safe now
I can safely feel (show) my
emotions

CONTROL/CHOICES

I can make my needs known
I am now in control
I now have choices
I am strong
I can get what I want
I can succeed
I can be myself
I can handle it
I am capable

Magical Thinking aka Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs)

1. **Black-and-white thinking** – Thinking in words like always, never, no one, everyone, every time, everything, etc.
2. **Focusing on the negative** – Filtering out the good, seeing only the bad in a situation, and magnifying it
3. **Fortune telling** – Predicting the worst possible outcome to a situation. “Doing your pain in advance”.
4. **Mind reading** – Believing that you know what others are thinking and feeling, even though they haven’t told you.
5. **Thinking with your feelings** – Believing negative feelings without ever questioning them... “I feel it, so it must be true”. “If I *feel* stupid, I must *be* stupid.”
6. **Should thinking** – Thinking in words like should, must, ought, or have to... “Everyone should do things my way.” “I ought to be able to control my feelings better.”
7. **Generalizing** – Labeling one or two qualities into a negative global judgment such as always, every time, never, etc.
8. **Personalizing** – Investing generic events with personal meaning. Thinking that things other people do or say is some kind of a reaction toward you.
9. **Blaming** – Blaming someone else for your own pain/problems or go the other way and blame yourself for everyone else’s problems.
10. **Over-generalizing** – Coming to a general conclusion based upon a single event or incident. Thinking that when one bad thing happens it is going to happen over and over again.
11. **Catastrophizing** – Expecting disaster, going through all the negative “what if’s” in a situation.
12. **Control Fallacies** – If you feel externally controlled, you see yourself as a helpless victim of fate. If you feel internally controlled, you see yourself as responsible for the pain and happiness of everyone around you.
13. **Excessive need to be right** – continually on trial to prove that your actions and opinions are correct. Being wrong is unthinkable and you would go to any length to demonstrate your rightness.

Psychological Mind Games (Examples)

Drama Triangle

Victim
Persecutor
Rescuer

Distance & Pursuit

Distancer
Pursuer

Punishment & Forgiveness Cycle

Relapser
Punisher/Forgiver

Our Family Dance

Hero (Flashy One, Responsible One)
Rebel
Lost Child
Mascot

Codependency

Chief Enabler
Caretaker
Rescuer
Fixer
Controller

Perfectionism

Demanding Inner Critic
Punitive Inner Critic
Taskmaster
Guilt Tripper
Destroyer
Underminer
Moulder

Self-Protection Modes

Compliant Surrender
Detached Protector
Detached Self-Soother
Avoidant Protector
Angry Protector
Approval Seeker
Over-Controller (Perfectionist, Suspicious, or Scolder)

Kick Me - Now I've Got You!

Victim
Persecutor

My Self-Preservation System (SPS)

Take data from the pages above and your LSPMi Profile (Excel Spreadsheet)

My Primary Coping Modes (Actors)

My Primary Life Scripts

My Primary Family Survival Roles:

My Primary Drivers:

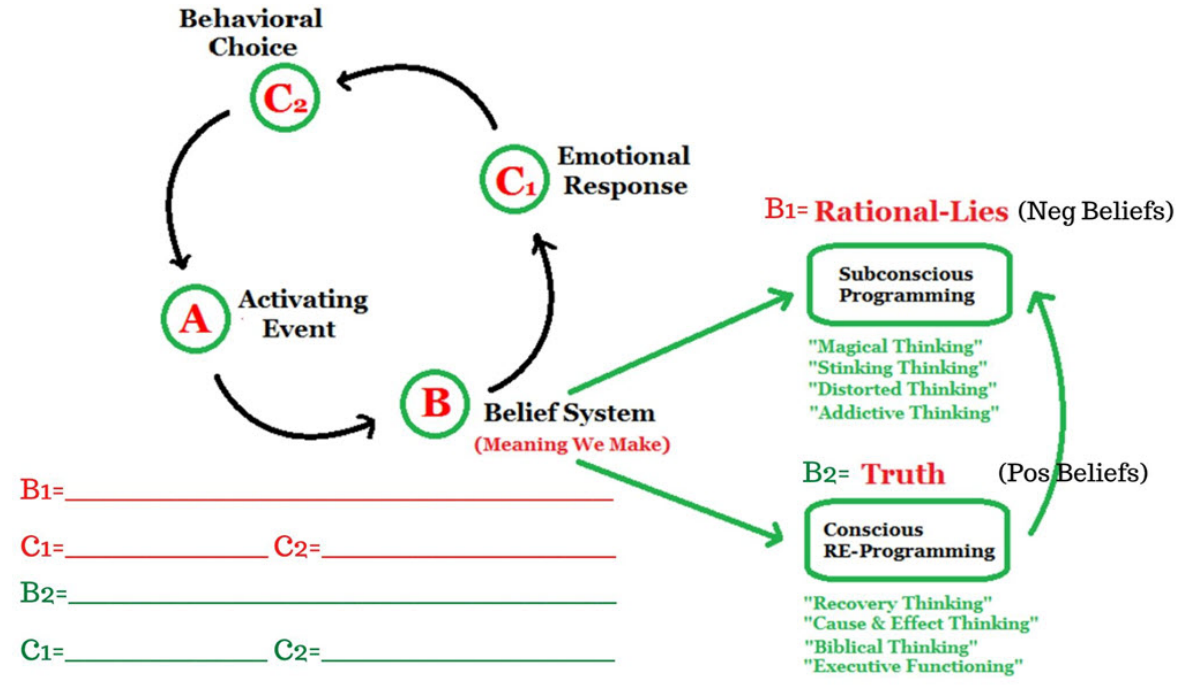
My Core Injunctions:

My Limiting Core Beliefs:

My “Favorite” Magical Thoughts (ANTs)

My “Favorite” Games, Roles, and Partners:

SPS to SAS Cue Card Template



Activating Event **(A)** _____

Right now I feel **(C1)** _____ and I want to **(C2)** _____

However, I realize that my _____ **Life Script(s)**, my _____ **Psychological Driver(s)**, and my

_____ **Injunction(s)** have been triggered

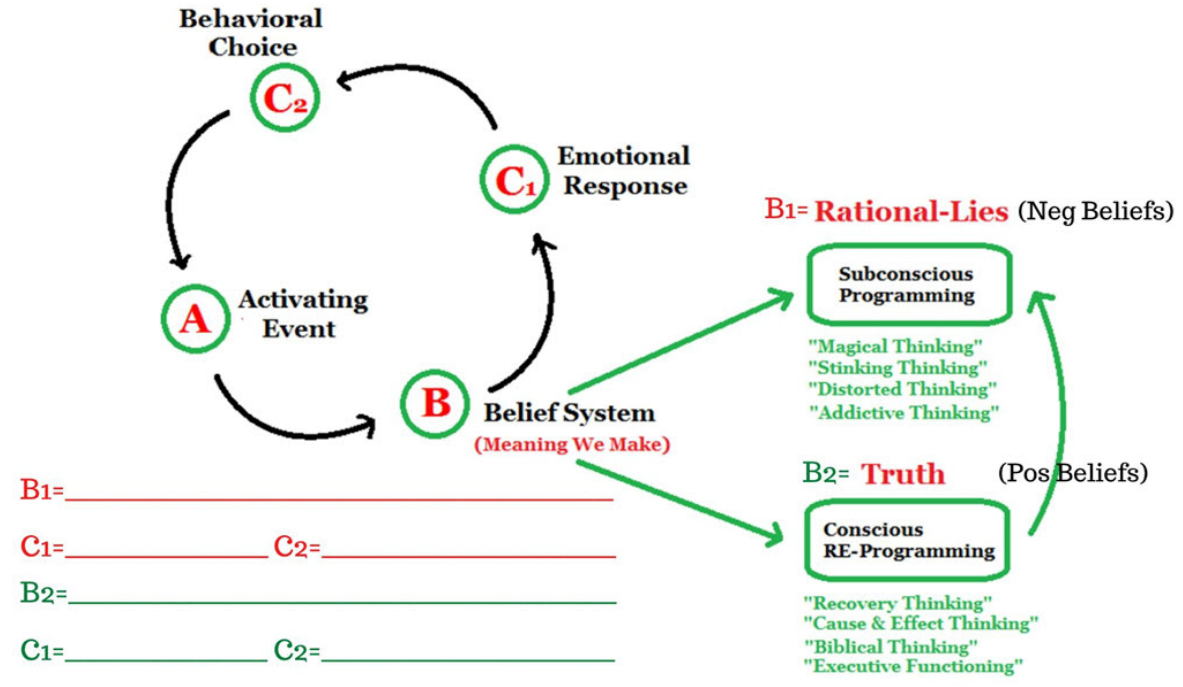
and I'm distorting my perception with the following **ANT's** and/or **Core Beliefs (B1)**

This Situation also sets me up to play the _____ **role(s)**

in a **game(s)** of _____. Instead, I will now **(B2)**

SPS to SAS Cue Card Template

(Fill out this sheet, print it off, then reset it for another use.)



Activating Event (A) _____

Right now I feel (C1) _____ and I want to (C2) _____

However, I realize that my _____ **Life Script(s)**, my _____ **Psychological Driver(s)**, and my _____ **Injunction(s)** have been triggered and I'm distorting my perception with the following **ANT's** and/or **Core Beliefs (B1)**

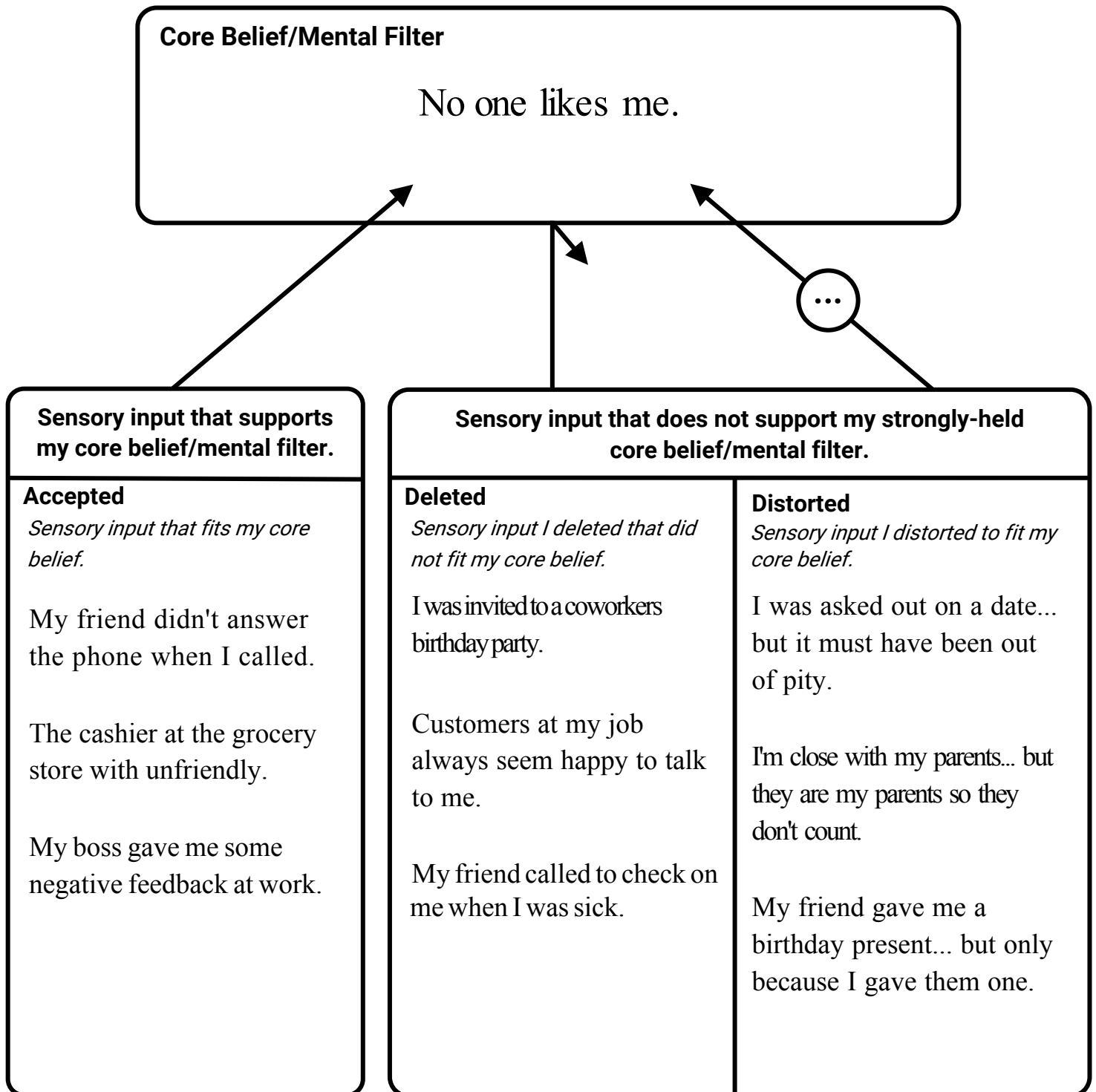
This Situation also sets me up to play the _____ **role(s)** in a **game(s)** of _____. Instead, I will now (B2)

My Core Beliefs/Mental Filters

Examining the Evidence

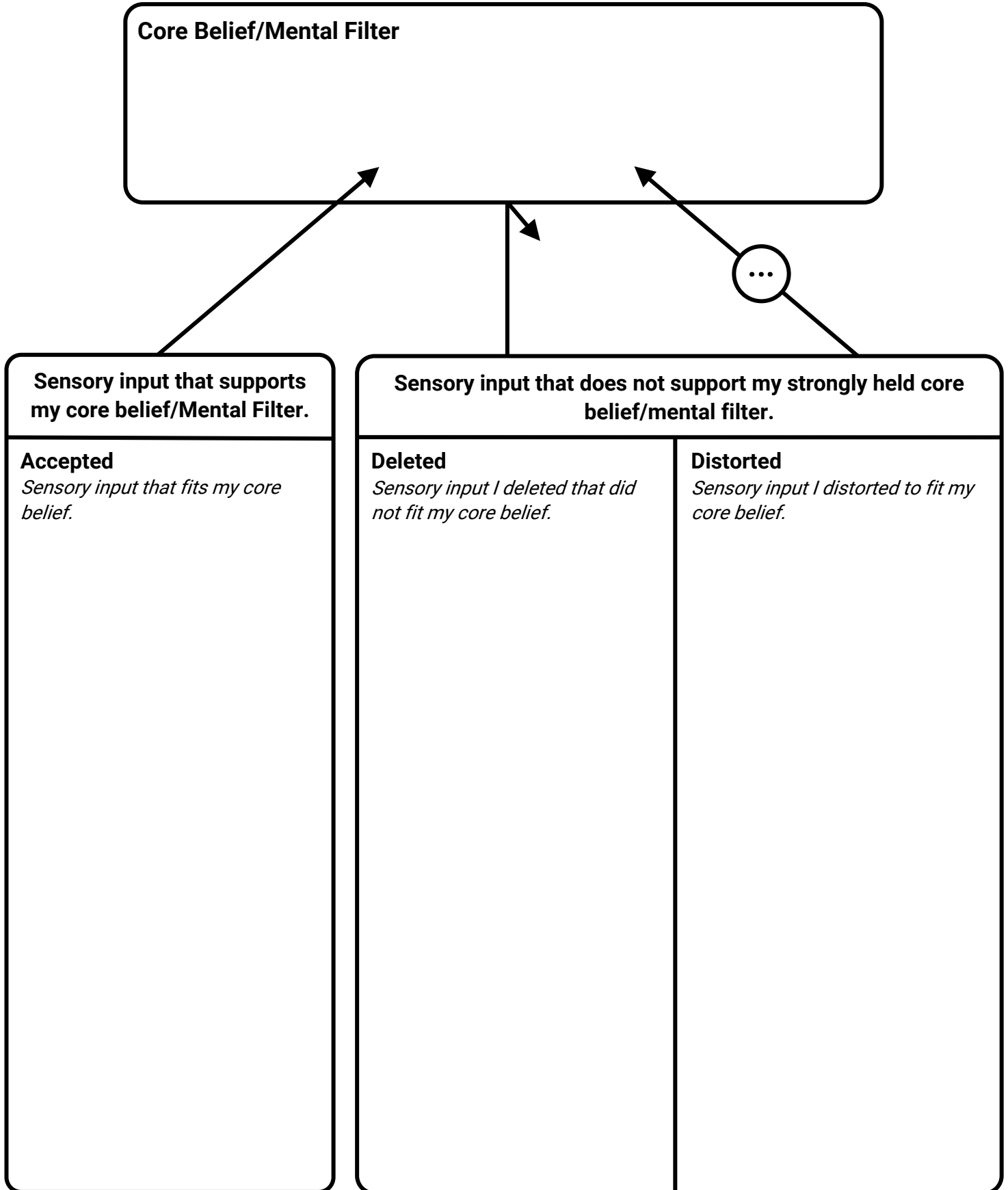
Strongly Held Core beliefs or Mental Filters are a person's most central ideas about themselves, others, and the world. These beliefs act like a lens through which every situation and life experience is seen.

As a person has new experiences, their core beliefs may gradually change. However, some experiences have a greater impact than others. Sensory input that *supports* a core belief is easily integrated, making the belief stronger. Sensory input that *does not* support a belief tends to be deleted or distorted to fit the core belief.



My Core Beliefs/Mental Filters

(Fillout this sheet, print it off, then reset it for another use.)



Loosen Limiting Beliefs

Thoughts are like a running dialogue in your brain. They come and go fast. So fast, in fact, that we rarely have the time to question them. Because our thoughts determine how we feel, and how we act, it's important to challenge any thoughts that cause us harm.

Thought to be questioned:

What is the positive intention of believing that thought?

How do you react when you believe that thought?

Where do you feel it in your body when you believe that thought?

What mental movies play in your mind when you believe that thought?

How do you treat others when you believe that thought? (Firefighters? Self-Sabotage? Etc.)

Loosen Limiting Beliefs

How do you treat yourself when you believe that thought?

How have you lived your life because you believed that thought?

What negative consequences do you get for holding onto that thought?

What benefits do you get for holding onto that thought? What stops you from letting it go?

Can you find a peaceful reason to keep that thought? (If yes, take that reason through the process)

Does this thought fit any categories from the handout “Magical Thinking & ANTs” (pg. 3)

Loosen Limiting Beliefs

Imagine in detail how would you have lived life if you didn't believe that thought?

Imagine you are meeting the you for whom this thought is just not an issue. What do you see?

Who are you right now, sitting here without that thought?

What is a new belief you would like to have in place of that thought?

Take this new belief through this process beginning on pg 12. This process loosens negative beliefs while strengthening positive beliefs.

Loosen Limiting Beliefs

Turn the thought around. (Example Belief: *I can't do anything right.*)

A. Turn it around to the opposite (*I can't do anything wrong.*): How is this turnaround just as true or truer? Specifically, how often have you done things right? How many times did you do something right today?

B. Turn it around to the other (*Bill can't do anything right.*) How is this turnaround just as true or truer? Specifically, how often has (some other person) done things wrong? How many times did that person do something right today?

C. Turn it around to something more accurate (*I can do most things right, or I can make mistakes sometimes*) How is this turnaround just as true or truer? How does this belief feel when you try it on for size? Take this new belief through the process

Belief Audit

(For establishing and strengthening desired beliefs)

Belief: _____
What is a belief that is important for you to establish or strengthen?

Because I _____
Why do you want to have this as a belief?

Therefore I _____
What is an effect or requirement of this belief?

After I _____
What must you do to strengthen and support this belief?

While I _____
What else is going on in your life as you develop this belief?

Whenever I _____
When, under what conditions do you most want/need this belief?

So that I _____
What is the positive intention of this belief? What will it do for you?

If I _____
What outcomes, conditions, or circumstances relate to this belief?

***Although I** _____
What alternatives or obstacles are there regarding this belief?

In the same way that I _____
What is a similar belief that you already have?

Upon completion, read each of the entries, from the beginning, deleting the prompt words just before I (except *although). Write the resulting belief statement below – then memorize it, put it on a note card, carry it with you:

