

## Countering Irrational Beliefs

### IRRATIONAL BELIEF:

THE IDEA THAT HUMAN MISERY IS INVARIABLY EXTERNALLY CAUSED AND IS FORCED ON US BY OUTSIDE PEOPLE AND EVENTS

### CONSIDER INSTEAD:

Unhappiness is largely caused by the view that we take of unfortunate conditions.

As ancient philosopher Epictetus said, it is not external events but **our views, our self-talk, our beliefs about those events that upset us**. So, challenge your irrational ideas.

You *may* be able to change external events in the future and you **certainly** can change your thinking.

Remember no one can make you feel any way; you are responsible for your own feelings.

### EXAMPLES Role-play both unhealthy & healthy self-talk for each of the following

1. 46-year-old Diane's husband just filed for divorce. They have been married for 22 years and have four children together. He states he is in love with his 27 year old coworker.
2. Brian is in the hospital following a serious car accident. He is currently confined to bed and may be paralyzed from the waist down.
3. Bethany recently graduated from college. The job and cute apartment she had anticipated following graduation have not materialized and she is currently living back at her parent's place.

YOUR TURN: List some of your own irrational responses and the healthy alternative

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