

# BELIEFS REGARDING CHANGE

It is only ethical to inform you right at the start about your counselor's beliefs regarding change.

1. People are generally doing the best they can with the skills they have.
2. People want to be empowered to do better and to solve their own problems. While some people are so discouraged they may even say they do NOT want to do better, the truth is that they would if they thought they could.
3. People can learn attitude, emotion, esteem, script, thinking, and ego skills that will empower them to lead more productive, prosperous, and happy lives without continual psychotherapy.
4. People have a right to know what their counselor or therapist thinks they are doing. Unfortunately, far too many therapists now consider it acceptable to manipulate clients for their own sake by, for example, using interventions and techniques that the therapist never fully explains or discloses to their clients (e.g., strategic and paradoxical interventions).
5. Psychotherapy can be more than just having a paid friend (relationship or supportive therapy). If a client really needs a friend—then be one—but help them find out how to get friends and support for free like the rest of us.
6. Brief psychotherapy can be more than just reframing problems into solutions.
7. Psychotherapy is most effective, productive, and lasting when its main focus is on skill training rather than on comforting. Comforting should NOT be something one has to pay for. Comforting should be found through the development of a support system: self-help groups, friends, family, affiliations, memberships.
8. Psychotherapy is most effective when its focus is on your inner world and NOT merely on your behaviors, which are only symptoms of internal problems. "Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."—Matthew 23: 26.
9. The chemical imbalance theory of mental illness is backwards: the chemical imbalance is NOT the cause but only the symptom of the problem. Clinical studies at the University of Pennsylvania have shown that changing your thinking style will correct the imbalance of chemicals in your brain (Beck, Rush, Shaw, Emery, 1979).
10. Responsibility for behavior is NOT enough. It is far more important for people to learn to be responsible for their attitude, feelings, esteem, scripts, thinking, and ego.
11. Blaming and damning others (or life) puts others in charge of your life and robs you of your personal power to better your life. Blaming and damning others or life is the surest way to lose any control that you have.
12. Blaming and damning your being (yourself) makes you worse NOT better. Blaming and damning your being causes you to serve rebellion, self-centeredness, depression, codependency, and-or antisocial styles.
13. Blaming and damning your behavior is a waste of time and energy. Behaviors cannot be focused on because they are only descriptions of processes. In other words, behaviors cannot be captured because they are NOT things.
14. Blaming and damning your decision system can result in positive and constructive change if: (1) it is NOT allowed to include the blaming and damning of your being, and (2) you learn more effective skills to replace your less effective choosing styles.
15. Counselors need to provide mental health services and NOT allow money to force them to just serve behavioral or chemical health.

In short, good counseling is: (1) the recognition of poor coping due to a lack of skill development, which is due to poor developmental conditions; (2) the development of new skills and the application of old and new skills to improve both specific and general coping functioning; (3) the recognition that decision systems drive coping mechanisms; (4) the recognition that thought-things drive the dysfunctional meaning, rule, script, or decision systems.

**What to change?** Not your being—you are NOT God, you did NOT make your being and you cannot change or alter it in any way. Not your behavior—your behavior is already done and beyond change or control of any kind. Not your ego—that is a waste of time as ego is only a collection of dead judgments based on descriptions of nonexistent behaviors. What to change? Your process of choosing and thereby your choices and thereby your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Why are you alone responsible for your processes of choosing and your choices? Because no one else is or can be. Why? Because if anyone else is, you are either NOT real or you are psychotic. To be an independent being, you have to be in charge of your own mind. If someone else is in control of your mind, then you are merely a puppet, a figment of someone else's imagination, or a robot—not a real free or sentient being.

Is there anything legitimate about blaming others? Yes, others taught you insane decision systems. But only you, as an adult, can decide to continue to keep reinforcing your self-defeating decision processes or to stop believing in them. The truth is that you have told yourself more (self-talk) and thereby conditioned yourself more—than what everyone else combined has told you and conditioned you to believe. Take back your responsibility and regain your personal power. You can consciously control your decision making processes or you can be unconsciously controlled by your decision making processes—the choice is yours alone. Choose to choose. Will to will now!