

Myths We Live By (Interpretations)

“**Myths**” are stories that we come to believe, simply because they have been a part of our lives or our thinking for so long. We often don’t ever question them. We just assume that they are real. Our thoughts can be like myths, “stories” that are so deep a part of how we live, that we no longer notice them. Myth thoughts may not be something that we would admit to believing if someone asked us about them, but we believe them in our emotion mind, in our hearts, anyway.

These myths of thinking may come from our families, friends, or culture. We have myths about almost everything in our lives. Most people have myths about emotions that cause them to react in ways that are not helpful sometimes. The key is to know what your own myths are, what usually “triggers” them in your mind, and how you can keep them from controlling your behavior when that behavior would hurt you.

Each person’s myths are unique, however, there are some fairly common myths. Here are a few myths about emotion (check them if you find that you believe them in rational mind, emotion mind, both, or if they FEEL like wise mind)

- ___ 1. There is a right way to feel in every situation.
- ___ 2. Letting others know that I am feeling bad is a weakness.
- ___ 3. Uncomfortable feelings are bad and destructive.
- ___ 4. Being emotional means being out of control.
- ___ 5. All painful emotions are a result of a bad attitude.
- ___ 6. If others don’t approve of how I am feeling, I obviously shouldn’t feel the way that I do.
- ___ 7. Other people are the best judge of how I am feeling.
- ___ 8. Painful emotions are not really important and should be ignored.

Can you think of any other myths?

- ___ 9. _____
- ___ 10. _____

Strength Building Self-Statements

Once you've identified your own common myths, these statements can help you fight them. It might be helpful to put them on note cards and carry them with you to use when you find that a myth has arisen and is charging up emotion-mind.

1. What's the worst that can happen? And based on my *experience*, and **NOT** on my emotions, how likely is that to happen?
2. Feelings are sometimes painful, but are time-limited.
3. It will get easier each time I practice.
4. My success is measured by taking skillful action, not by whether I was anxious when I did it.
5. I'm not going to let a lapse get in my way. I'm going to continue making progress towards my goal.
6. Feeling I can't do it is **NOT** the same as not being able to do it. Stick to the plan.
7. Good job—I'm staying in the situation, even though it's hard.
8. I'm going to make it.
9. It's a sign of strength to ask for help in an effective way.
10. Knowing when to ask for coaching is a skill in itself.
11. I am a unique person, and I have unique reactions. Only I can determine how I **SHOULD** feel in any given situation.
12. My feelings are not right or wrong, they just simply **ARE**.
13. A feeling of certainty is not the same as the truth.
14. My painful emotions happen for a reason and are an important source of information and direction for me.
15. Urges are a natural part of emotions and of being human. Having an urge (even a strong urge) does not mean that I have to **DO** anything at all.