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.

Interpretations
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
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.