Common Self-Defeating Attitudes and Fears

1. “It would be terrible to be rejected, abandoned, or alone. I must have love and approval
before I can feel good about myself.”
2. “If someone criticizes me, it means there’s something wrong with me.”
3. “I must always please people and live up to everyone’s expectations.”
4. “I am basically defective and inferior to other people.”
5. “Older people are to blame for my problems.”
6. “The world should always meet my expectations.”
7. ‘Other people should always meet my expectations.”
8. “If I worry or feel bad about a situation, it will somehow make things better. It’s not really safe to feel happy and optimistic.”
9. “I’m hopeless and bound to feel depressed forever because the problems in my life are impossible to solve.”
10. “I must always be perfect.” There are several kinds of perfectionism that can make you unhappy.

Moralistic perfectionism: ‘I must not forgive myself if I have fallen short of any goal or personal standard.”

Performance perfectionism: To be a worthwhile person. I must be a great success at everything I do.”

Identity perfectionism: “People will never accept me as a flawed and vulnerable human being.”

Emotional perfectionism: “I must always try to be happy. I must control my negative emotions and never feel anxious or depressed.”

Romantic perfectionism: “People who love each other should never fight or feel angry with each other.”

Relationship perfectionism: “People who love each other should never fight or feel angry with each other.”

Sexual perfectionism: Men may believe “I should always have full and sustained erections. It’s shameful and unmanly if I have an episode of impotence or cum too quickly.” Women may believe “I should always achieve orgasm or multiple orgasms.”

Appearance perfectionism: ‘l look ugly because I’m slightly overweight (or have heavy thighs or a facial blemish).”