



Emotional Control: Letting Go of Mistakes and Frustration

Key Concepts:

- **Frustration**—Mad or upset in the present about not reaching an expectation or a goal.
- **Dwelling**—Constantly thinking about something from the past that is upsetting. It dominates your mind.
- **Expectations**—A need or belief about the way you think you **should** perform or behave.
- **Irrational Beliefs**—Unhealthy beliefs that cause you to feel frustrated or upset. Irrational beliefs cause you to expect that the world treat you fairly.

1. Do you set yourself up for frustration?

- Frustration comes from your rigid expectations of how you think they *should* perform or how others should act around you.
- When you don't match or live up to those expectations, you become upset and want to "beat yourself up mentally."
- **Exercise:** What expectations set yourself up to feeling like you are failing?

2. No one can make you feel frustrated but yourself

- It's your beliefs about an error or mistake that cause you to feel upset.
- Example. **Error:** Cracking on a note. **Belief:** "I'm too good to make stupid mistakes." **Consequence:** "I should feel frustrated and upset with myself."
- **Exercise:** List the events that make you upset. What is the corresponding belief that helps you be upset? Finally, what is a better way to think about that event?

3. Get the monkey off your back!

- Do you carry a mistake around with you, even into the next performance?
- Stop the DWELLING! That was ancient history.
- In order to stop the dwelling 1) acknowledge 2) learn from the event, 3) refocus on the present.
- In the next phrase, selection, performance give yourself a pep talk so you can move on.

4. Irrational Beliefs or Thinking Errors (Ellis, 1994) That Keep You Stuck

- Ignoring positive events and exaggerating the negative.
- Over-generalizing. "If I mess up, I will continue to mess up."
- I'm only as good as...syndrome: "I must be outstandingly competent, or I am worthless."
- "My frustration is caused and is forced on me by outside people and events."
- "I should be upset when things are not the way I like or expect them to be."
- Perfectionism: "I must have certain and perfect control over things."
- Helplessness: "I have no control over my emotions and that I cannot help feeling disturbed about things."

Irrational Belief/Thinking Error Identification

In the space below identify which irrational beliefs or thinking errors you have and the particular emotions they trigger. In the R Column, identify the new, more rational belief that will result in emotions that are more manageable.

Irrational Belief/Thinking Error	Triggered Emotions	New, Rational Belief