

TABLE 15.1 Self-destructive beliefs and constructive beliefs

Self-destructive beliefs	Constructive beliefs
<i>Should, must, ought-to and have-to beliefs</i>	
My friends <i>should</i> be loyal to me. mean there's	Sometimes my friends won't be loyal to me; that's the way it is. It doesn't something wrong with me.
Other people <i>should</i> live up to my expectations.	Other people won't live up to my expectations.
I <i>must</i> conform to my peers. I <i>must</i> win.	I can be an individual and do my own thing. According to the law of averages most people only win 50 per cent of the time. I don't need to win to feel OK.
I <i>ought</i> to please my brother rather than do what I want.	I need to attend to my own needs so that I feel OK. Then if I feel OK, I can care about other people too.
I <i>have to</i> visit my dying uncle everyday.	I have a choice. I can choose whether or not to visit my dying uncle every day.
<i>Catastrophizing beliefs</i>	
I can never go back to school again. It would be too embarrassing. I wouldn't be able to face the other students.	I am me, I am OK. Everybody makes mistakes at times, so I'm normal and proud to be me.
I might as well stop work on the project altogether because it is a total failure. It's all too much. I just can't cope anymore. Nobody will ever respect me again.	I've done really well to take on such a hard project. It's not a <i>total</i> failure. I can still get some positives out of it. I can cope. I always have in the past, and I will now. I don't need other people's respect to feel good about myself I am OK.
<i>Always and never beliefs</i>	
I'm not going to ask my mother because she <i>always</i> says 'no'.	I am going to ask my mother because she might say 'yes'.
I <i>never</i> succeed in anything. Everybody <i>always</i> criticizes me.	Sometimes I succeed and sometimes I fail. I'm human and I'm OK. People sometimes criticize me, but that's OK because it's impossible to please everybody all the time.
I should <i>never</i> make mistakes.	Everybody makes mistakes. The only way to avoid making mistakes is to do nothing, and that's not me.
<i>Intolerance-of-others beliefs</i>	
She makes me mad because she borrows my library books and then returns them late. She deliberately gets me into trouble. He didn't turn up to meet me after class as we arranged. He deliberately stood me up to make me look foolish.	She's just careless. I know that and I have a choice about whether to lend her my library books or not.
My little brother makes me mad because he never does his share of the work.	He probably forgot – that's the way he is, and there is nothing I can do about that. He's the one who's made the mistake. I can feel OK about me. My brother is lazy. I can't change him. so I'll ignore his behaviour and be proud of being a hard worker myself.
<i>Blaming beliefs</i>	
I can't do my homework because my sister keeps asking me to play with her. If he didn't keep annoying me I wouldn't hit him. It's his fault that I get into trouble. I am always late for class because they are so slow at the tuckshop.	I don't have to play with my sister when I have important things to do for me. I can choose other ways to deal with his annoying behaviour so that I don't get into trouble. I can only blame myself if I'm late because I don't get to the tuckshop earlier. I am in control of what happens.
<i>Negative self-perception beliefs</i>	
I'm a victim.	I'm powerful.
I'm a loser.	I'm a winner.
I'm no good.	I'm OK.
I'm worthless.	I'm worthwhile.
I'm helpless.	I'm resourceful.
I'm a bad person.	I'm good person.
I'm incapable.	I'm capable.
I'm stupid.	I'm smart.
I'm unlovable.	I'm lovable.