

Core Beliefs and Adaptations

	Core Belief	Fight – (Over)compensate	Flight – Avoid	Freeze – Surrender
Safety	I'm not safe or protected	Be a protector, hero for others. Bully. Focus on survival, strength.	Avoid "danger" and confrontation. Don't take risks	No boundaries. Stay with people who abuse or exploit. Needy
	Something bad is about to happen	Reckless, impulsive. Prevention rituals, systems, superstitions	Stay in 'safe' zone. Don't let self enjoy good times, things, or feelings	Worry constantly and seek reassurance from others
	I can't be trusted	Expect or demand trust without earning it. Positions of authority	Avoid responsibility (parenting, work...). Put off decisions	Act untrustworthy (lying, cheating, stealing...). Poor choices
	I can't trust anyone	Overshare, give trust before it's earned. Possessive, jealous	Don't confide in anyone. Avoid "authorities" or "caretakers"	Stay with untrustworthy people. Suspicious or paranoid of others
	It's not okay to show my emotions	Overshare emotions. En/discourage other people's emotions	Share superficially, share thoughts/opinions instead of feelings	Press feelings down, don't share them with loved ones or even self, blunted affect
Responsibility	It's all my fault	No accountability or self-reflection, blame other people/situations	Avoid eye contact. Deflect feedback. Hide mistakes	Overwhelmed with guilt and shame, blame self unfairly
	I'm unlovable	Focus on winning love, never single, demand attention, seduction	Sabotage relationships, keep them superficial, avoid intimacy	Choose/stay with people who are cold, mean, or unloving
	I'm bad (stupid, ugly, broken, an addict...)	Perfectionism, nitpick "flaws," focus on "fixing" self, become a healer	Deflect help, praise, healing. Hide "flaws" from others.	Put self down and/or let others do the same. Change isn't possible
	I'm shameful	Shame others. Moral authority. Proudful, don't take "disrespect"	Hide shameful parts of self. Avoid triggers (sex, "mixed company")	Indulge in the "shameful" behaviors then shame self
	I don't deserve [X]	Entitled to/demand [X]. Giving [X] to others, even at own expense	Put off steps to get [X], people or situations that would give [X]	Deprive self of [X]. Let others take [X] away. Shame self for having [X]
Choice	I have no control	Controlling, rigid rules and ethics, stubborn. Fight the power	Big ideas but put off taking action. Complain about the power without confrontation	Accept addiction, abuse, control, injustice. Submit to the power
	I'm not enough	Demand recognition. Take on too much. Self-improvement	Defensive with feedback. Procrastinate challenges	Need a lot reassurance. No faith in self, set the bar low
	I can't handle it	Refuse help, micro-managing, take over what others are doing	Procrastinate, do the bare minimum, "space out," make lists instead of progress	Ask for help with everything. Give up easy. "Lazy," careless, clumsy
	My existence is miserable	Focus on making life "better." Pretend or superficial happiness	Put off diagnosis, treatment, moving, improving life...	Accept misery (decline treatment, love, gifts, housing, help...)
	I'm a failure	Focus on "winning" (money, image, power...). Taunt others	Only do stuff where sure to succeed, avoid new/challenging things	Accept defeat at any setback, don't learn from failures to try again