

## Safety Issues Module

**Beliefs Related to SELF:** The belief that you can protect yourself from harm and have some control over events.

### Prior Experience

Negative	Positive
If you are repeatedly exposed to dangerous and uncontrollable life situations, you may develop negative beliefs about your ability to protect yourself from harm. The traumatic event serves to confirm those beliefs.	If you have positive prior experiences, you may develop the belief that you have control over most events and can protect yourself from harm. The traumatic event causes disruption in this belief.

Symptoms Associated With Negative Self-Safety Beliefs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Chronic and persistent anxiety</li> <li>➤ Intrusive thoughts about themes of danger</li> <li>➤ Irritability</li> <li>➤ Startled responses or physical arousal</li> <li>➤ Intense fears related to future victimization</li> </ul>

### Resolution

If you previously believed that...	Possible self-statements may be...
“It can’t happen to me,” you will need to resolve the conflict between this belief and the victimization experience.	“It is unlikely to happen again, but the possibility exists.”
“I can control what happens to me and can protect myself from any harm,” you will need to resolve the conflict between prior beliefs and the victimization experience.	“I do not have control over everything that happens to me, but I can take precautions to reduce the possibility of future traumatic events.”
... you had no control over events and could not protect yourself, the traumatic event will confirm these beliefs. New beliefs must be developed that mirror reality and serve to increase your beliefs about your control and ability to protect yourself.	“I do have some control over events and I can take steps to protect myself from harm. I cannot control the behavior of other people, but I can take steps to reduce the possibility that I will be in a situation where my control is taken from me.”

**Beliefs Related to OTHERS:** The belief about the dangerousness of other people and expectancies about the intent of others to cause harm, injury, or loss.

### Prior Experience

Negative	Positive
If you experienced people as dangerous in early life or you believed it as a cultural norm, the traumatic event will seem to confirm these beliefs.	If you experienced people as safe in early life, you may expect others to keep you safe and not cause harm, injury, or loss. The traumatic event causes a disruption in this belief.

Symptoms Associated With Negative Others-Safety Beliefs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoidant or phobic responses</li> <li>➤ Social withdrawal</li> </ul>

### Resolution

If you previously believed that...	Possible self-statements may be...
“Others are out to harm me and can be expected to cause harm, injury, or loss,” you will need to adopt new beliefs in order to be able to continue to feel comfortable with people you know and to be able to enter into new relationships with others.	“There are some people out there who are dangerous, but not everyone is out to harm me in some way.”
“I will not be hurt by others,” you will need to resolve the conflict between this belief and the victimization.	“There may be some people who will harm others, but it is unrealistic to expect that everyone I meet will want to harm me.”