



HOW TO REDUCE SELF-DECEPTION

There are incredibly valuable reasons for better educating our minds, emotionally. Few subjects matter more to

our stability and credibility than grasping the social/emotional components of mind development. Helping to guide us is the research revelation that more has been learned during the past 30 years about this three pound mass in our heads than in all previous history, emotionally and physiologically!

Psychologists are currently well aware that the human mind can be far better educated, emotionally, than is common today! They realize that even though the inner workings of the mind are rather complex, emotionally, much more can be understood, even in our early years, than is currently being taught. And the reasons for educating the masses about emotions are monumental!

Unfortunately, the study of *emotional management* has been a tremendously uncharted subject over the centuries! The problem today is that adapting research discoveries into an education program just takes more time than we wish it would. At EI Institute, we have been working on building our own EI program for over 20 years now and with over 250 pages of lessons, activities, supplements, and quizzes, we still have more that we plan to add, and know is needed.

Some people are already aware of how easy it is to be critical of others, while not so easy to recognize or admit our own faults or ways we could improve, emotionally. Yet, what can we do

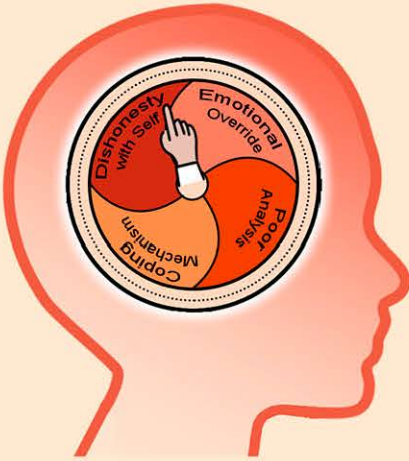
about it, even when we know that we easily deceive ourselves, especially about our own faults? Self-deception can blindside us every day. We can learn behaviors by watching what is acceptable for others who, unfortunately, also exhibit self-deception.

Thus, without deeper understanding about self-deception, it adversely affects our ability to function and behave without deceiving ourselves. This supplement will provide EI students with better understanding about the ways we deceive ourselves. With more knowledge and acute observation of our own thoughts, communication, and behavior, we have a good chance of reducing such deception significantly.

The mind doesn't just "naturally" question the quality of our thoughts, communications, and behavior or understand best practices! Working toward healthier mind development requires us to monitor for quality, and know what to look for.

Mastering the mind more healthfully, emotionally, demands an orderly navigation, which is improved by applying the helpful knowledge we acquire to guide us. Yet, just as we couldn't see much in outer space, naturally, and instead must have a high-powered telescope to point out details, we can need to be similarly equipped with revealing tools that magnify self-deception in a way that helps us recognize a difference!

This supplement is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of self-deception and share a few related activities to explore that help us overcome it.



EMOTIONAL FEELINGS and ATTITUDES THAT TRIGGER SELF-DECEPTION

To identify ways that we can deceive ourselves, we first should consider feelings and attitudes that trigger self-deception. Then spend time carefully reviewing the list of ways that we can deceive ourselves, and a few activities that help us recognize and reduce self-deception. As the list of triggers below reveals, a lot of different emotions and attitudes can contribute to self-deception. Many are accompanied with an adrenaline surge that we can, initially, most easily recognize.

TRIGGER WORDS

Agitated
 Anxious
 Arrogant
 Biased
 Bullish
 Careless
 Complacent
 Confident (over)
 Confident (under)
 Cowardly
 Daring
 Defiant
 Dejected
 Demoralized
 Depressed
 Determined
 Discouraged
 Disinterested
 Dissatisfied
 Disturbed

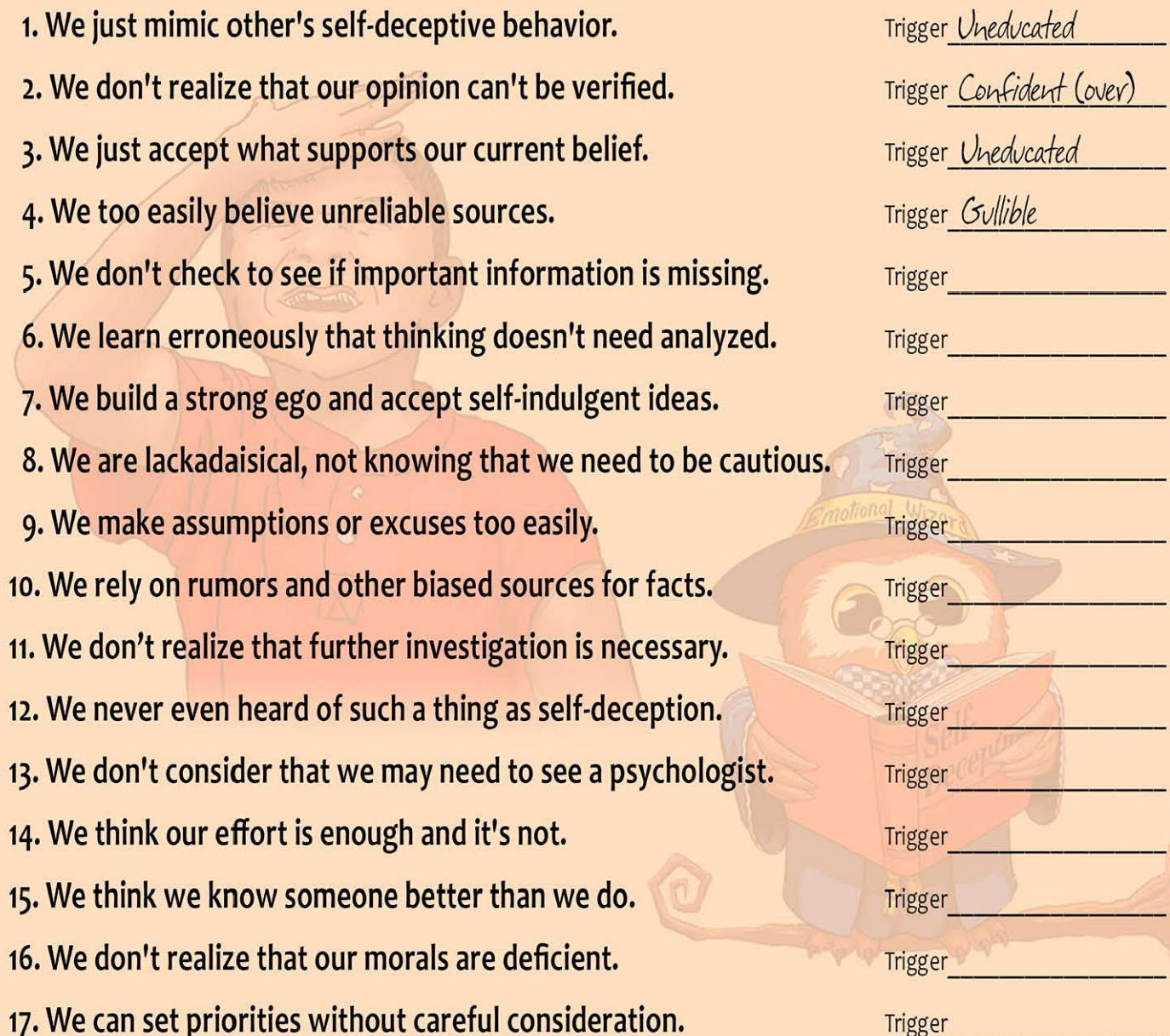
Effort (acceptable)
 Embarrassed
 Enthusiastic
 Envious
 Exaggerating
 Expectations
 Fatalizing
 Fearful
 Fearless
 Fickle
 Frustrated
 Goal-oriented
 Gratified
 Guilt (avoiding)
 Gullible
 Hopeless
 Imbalanced
 Inconsiderate
 Indestructible
 Intolerant

Manipulative
 Misrepresenting
 Negligent
 Overbearing
 Painful
 Playful (erratic)
 Preoccupied
 Promises
 Prudence (lacking)
 Rejected
 Romanticizing
 Sad
 Self-centered
 Self-esteem (high)
 Self-esteem (low)
 Shallow (thinking)
 Spontaneous
 Threatened
 Uneducated
 Vulnerable

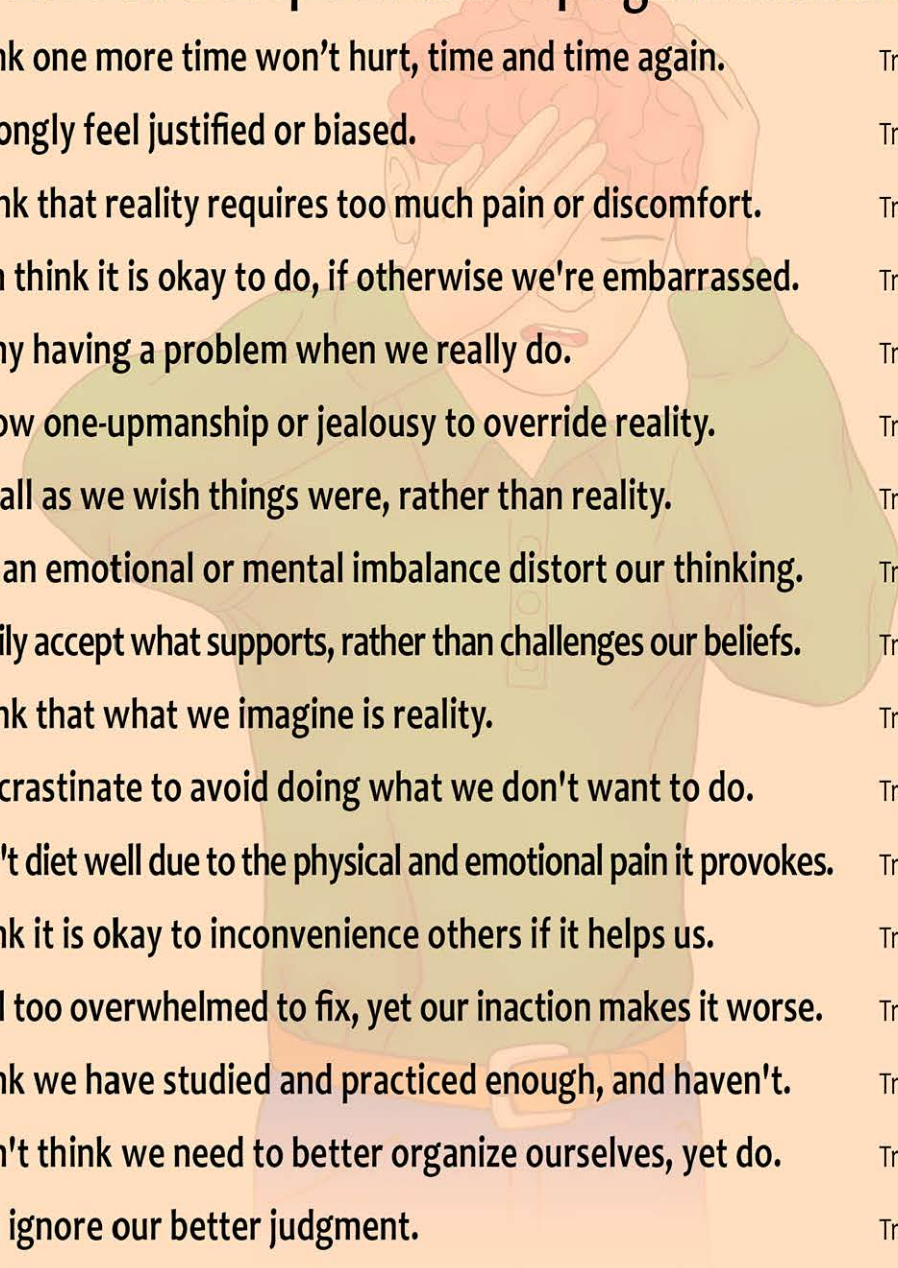
WAYS WE CAN DECEIVE OURSELVES

Guiding the mind well, emotionally, is more difficult for the uneducated and untrained mind. Such a healthy direction can often involve a reflective, investigative analysis in order to make a quality assessment. To do such an analysis, we must know what to look for. These next four pages list some common ways we can deceive ourselves to help provide a better educated viewpoint. Please spend ample time reviewing these lists for easing your familiarization, perhaps one list each day for a week. Please be aware that some category examples listed may overlap to fit in other categories. The trigger examples on the right will be further explained as a Self-Deception Activity on page 7.

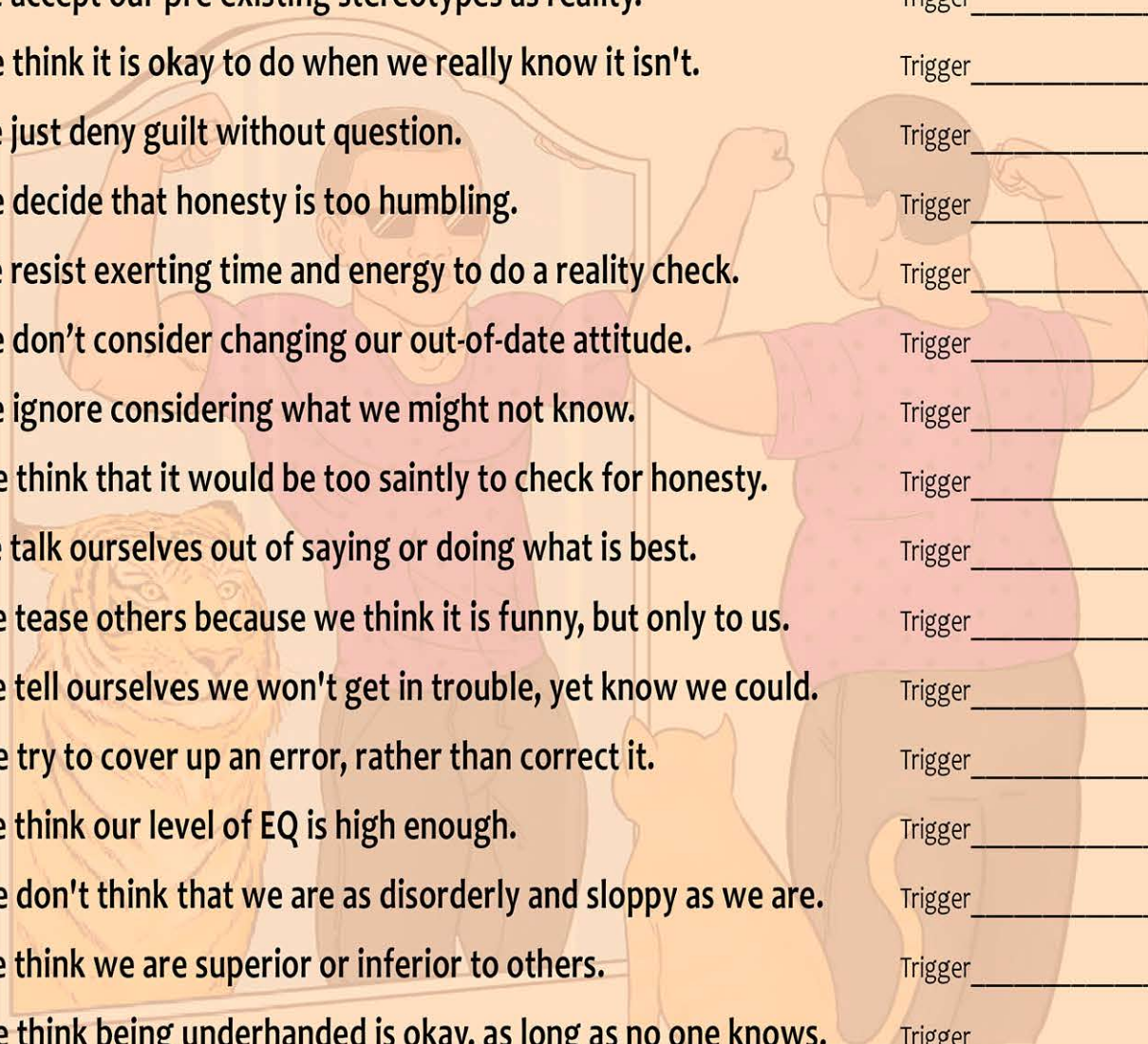
A. We Didn't Learn to Analyze Our Thinking Well

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|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. We just mimic other's self-deceptive behavior. | Trigger <u>Uneducated</u> |
| 2. We don't realize that our opinion can't be verified. | Trigger <u>Confident (over)</u> |
| 3. We just accept what supports our current belief. | Trigger <u>Uneducated</u> |
| 4. We too easily believe unreliable sources. | Trigger <u>Gullible</u> |
| 5. We don't check to see if important information is missing. | Trigger _____ |
| 6. We learn erroneously that thinking doesn't need analyzed. | Trigger _____ |
| 7. We build a strong ego and accept self-indulgent ideas. | Trigger _____ |
| 8. We are lackadaisical, not knowing that we need to be cautious. | Trigger _____ |
| 9. We make assumptions or excuses too easily. | Trigger _____ |
| 10. We rely on rumors and other biased sources for facts. | Trigger _____ |
| 11. We don't realize that further investigation is necessary. | Trigger _____ |
| 12. We never even heard of such a thing as self-deception. | Trigger _____ |
| 13. We don't consider that we may need to see a psychologist. | Trigger _____ |
| 14. We think our effort is enough and it's not. | Trigger _____ |
| 15. We think we know someone better than we do. | Trigger _____ |
| 16. We don't realize that our morals are deficient. | Trigger _____ |
| 17. We can set priorities without careful consideration. | Trigger _____ |

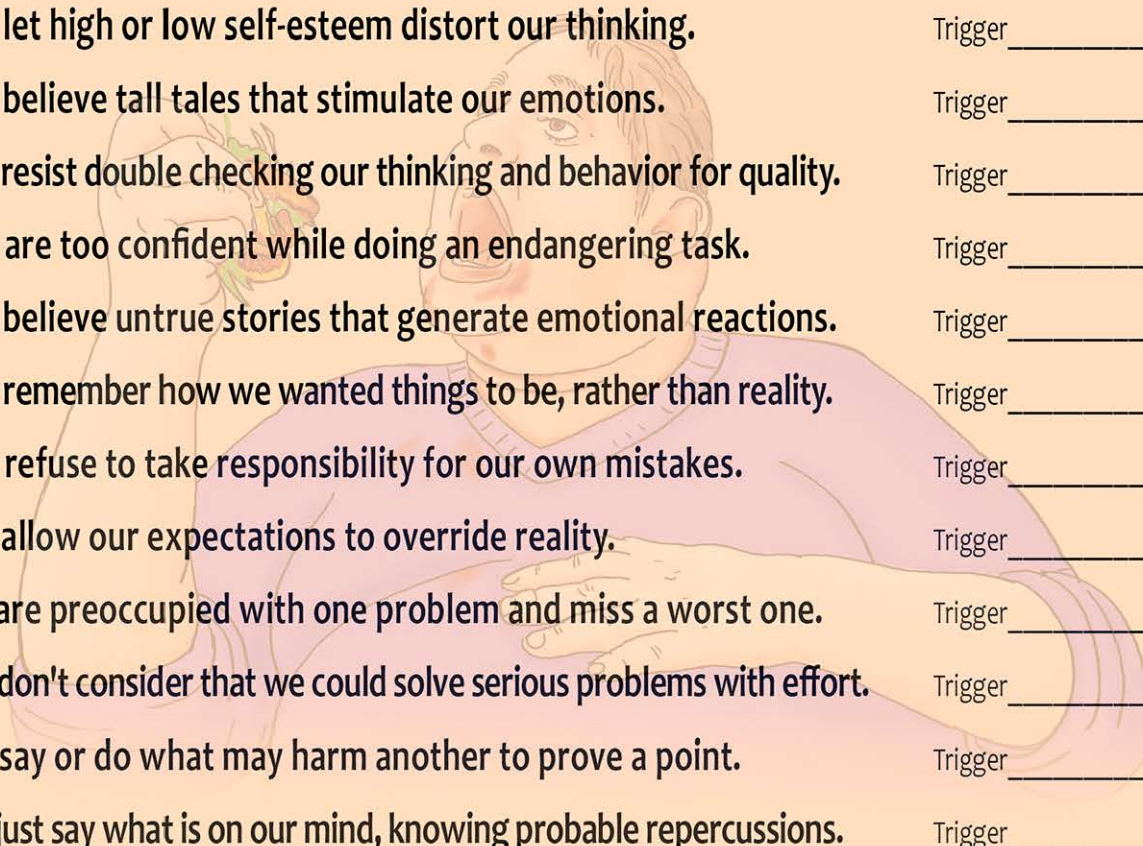
B. We Use Self-Deception as a Coping Mechanism

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1. We think one more time won't hurt, time and time again. Trigger _____
 2. We strongly feel justified or biased. Trigger _____
 3. We think that reality requires too much pain or discomfort. Trigger _____
 4. We can think it is okay to do, if otherwise we're embarrassed. Trigger _____
 5. We deny having a problem when we really do. Trigger _____
 6. We allow one-upmanship or jealousy to override reality. Trigger _____
 7. We recall as we wish things were, rather than reality. Trigger _____
 8. We let an emotional or mental imbalance distort our thinking. Trigger _____
 9. We easily accept what supports, rather than challenges our beliefs. Trigger _____
 10. We think that what we imagine is reality. Trigger _____
 11. We procrastinate to avoid doing what we don't want to do. Trigger _____
 12. We don't diet well due to the physical and emotional pain it provokes. Trigger _____
 13. We think it is okay to inconvenience others if it helps us. Trigger _____
 14. We feel too overwhelmed to fix, yet our inaction makes it worse. Trigger _____
 15. We think we have studied and practiced enough, and haven't. Trigger _____
 16. We don't think we need to better organize ourselves, yet do. Trigger _____
 17. We can ignore our better judgment. Trigger _____
 18. We can sacrifice morals for profit or other advantage. Trigger _____

C. We Don't Question Our Self-Honesty or Credibility

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1. We habitually need to be right. Trigger _____
2. We too easily blame others for our own bad behavior. Trigger _____
3. We accept our pre-existing stereotypes as reality. Trigger _____
4. We think it is okay to do when we really know it isn't. Trigger _____
5. We just deny guilt without question. Trigger _____
6. We decide that honesty is too humbling. Trigger _____
7. We resist exerting time and energy to do a reality check. Trigger _____
8. We don't consider changing our out-of-date attitude. Trigger _____
9. We ignore considering what we might not know. Trigger _____
10. We think that it would be too saintly to check for honesty. Trigger _____
11. We talk ourselves out of saying or doing what is best. Trigger _____
12. We tease others because we think it is funny, but only to us. Trigger _____
13. We tell ourselves we won't get in trouble, yet know we could. Trigger _____
14. We try to cover up an error, rather than correct it. Trigger _____
15. We think our level of EQ is high enough. Trigger _____
16. We don't think that we are as disorderly and sloppy as we are. Trigger _____
17. We think we are superior or inferior to others. Trigger _____
18. We think being underhanded is okay, as long as no one knows. Trigger _____
19. We don't consider that we may be lacking humility. Trigger _____
20. We think that certain dysfunctions are normal and okay. Trigger _____
21. We don't consider that we are being irresponsible. Trigger _____

D. We Let our Emotions Override Reality or Better Judgement

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1. We let subtle, yet strong desires, override discipline and responsibility. Trigger _____
 2. We let high or low self-esteem distort our thinking. Trigger _____
 3. We believe tall tales that stimulate our emotions. Trigger _____
 5. We resist double checking our thinking and behavior for quality. Trigger _____
 6. We are too confident while doing an endangering task. Trigger _____
 7. We believe untrue stories that generate emotional reactions. Trigger _____
 8. We remember how we wanted things to be, rather than reality. Trigger _____
 9. We refuse to take responsibility for our own mistakes. Trigger _____
 10. We allow our expectations to override reality. Trigger _____
 11. We are preoccupied with one problem and miss a worst one. Trigger _____
 12. We don't consider that we could solve serious problems with effort. Trigger _____
 13. We say or do what may harm another to prove a point. Trigger _____
 14. We just say what is on our mind, knowing probable repercussions. Trigger _____
 15. We dislike solving problems, so let them continue to disturb our life. Trigger _____
 16. We dislike doctors, so avoid going, even when serious symptoms. Trigger _____

SELF-DECEPTION HELPFUL ACTIVITIES

1. This activity will help students grasp the underlying symptoms of self-deception. Please take time to match the different alphabetized trigger words from page 2 with scenarios listed on pages 3, 4, 5, and 6 that seems fitting. Trigger words are to be noted in the blank spaces next to each scenario listed. See the examples on page 3. This activity is not meant to be a simple process, but the more serious thought helps to build a more educated understanding of what can cause us to deceive ourselves. We do not provide answers as many have duplicate possibilities. This may take a while, so maybe just match up one or two trigger columns each day.

2. This second activity will assist in better understanding and practicing self-monitoring to catch potential self-deception. It is very dangerous not to question our thinking, especially related to self-deception. We can't just think very casually and let anything that comes to mind direct us. We need to apply a more engineering approach to coordinate our thinking than we may realize is even possible. We must teach the mind to practice a monitoring mode of thinking. Self-monitoring is a reflective investigative analysis of our own thoughts and behaviors. Practicing self-monitoring helps us become more conscientious about our thoughts and actions, especially regarding our credibility and security, aspects of thought that are important to healthy mind operation.

Starting with 2A Lesson, our program suggests a number of ways to practice self-monitoring. For this activity, spend time reminding yourself to pay attention to adrenaline surges, as a surge can be a physiological feeling that accompanies emotional triggers. When a surge occurs, it's a cue to pay closer attention and question what trigger is being affected, as well as what our next action should be.

One last note as food for thought regarding the practice of self-monitoring. To change direction or make thorough assessments, we may need to consider weighing any number of choices. We may need to resourcefully wonder, look for signals, cues, gauge values, and create ongoing healthy thoughts, plans, and strategies. Such actions for thorough assessments or changing direction may sometimes also require innovation on our part. Thus, we must be looking for a better, healthier way to react.

3. Memorize a few quotes about self-deception:

The first principle is that you must not fool yourself, and you're the easiest person to fool.—

Richard Feynman,
American theoretical physicist

Insensibly, one can begin to twist facts to suit theories instead of theories to suit facts. —

Arthur Conan Doyle's fictional character,
Sherlock Holmes

Above all, do not lie to yourself. A man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes to a point where he does not discern any truth either in himself or anywhere around him, and thus falls into disrespect towards himself and others.—

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Russian novelist

There are genuine mysteries in the world that mark the limits of human knowing and thinking. Wisdom is fortified, not destroyed, by understanding its limitations. Ignorance does not make a fool as surely as self-deception. —

Mortimer J. Adler, American philosopher, educator, encyclopedist, and author.

4. The following EI program supplements explain how emotions can encourage or sabotage emotional growth and are well worth your time to study and review: The Ego's Dark Side, Potent Emotional Compass, Positive and Negative Emotional Forces, Control Words, and Emotional Extremes.
5. For further study and broader understanding of self-deception, you can find a number books and articles on the Internet. Two books we recommend to help you better understand self-deception are:

Vital Lies, Simple Truths (The Psychology of Self-Deception) by Daniel Goleman

Triggers by Marshall Goldsmith

With a comprehensive review of this supplement and access to the resources mentioned, there is no doubt that you will be much better equipped to recognize self-deception and avert action. Studying EI broadly helps us reap a myriad of benefits. It enables us to identify, qualify, and reduce ill reasoning. Yes, it can reduce self-deception, but also reduces overall frustration and fears. Improving our EQ can empower us in every realm of our lives— as we deal with the most intricately complex computing system known, our own minds. Better education in EI enables us to identify, qualify, and reduce much dysfunctional behavior. We need to be well educated in discretion, caution, courtesy, gratefulness, and cooperation, as well as attitude.

