

Treatment Suggestions for the Mistrust Schema

1. Recognize and **list** the times when you are too fearful and over vigilant to what you see as abuse.
2. Think about a full spectrum of trustworthiness of others. Using this thinking to guide you, consciously allow yourself to trust others when they deserve it.
3. Keep yourself from taking responsibility for things that are not your fault. Also, be sure to not make excuses for an abusive person's behavior. Thoughtfully place blame where it belongs.
4. Learn proper assertion skills for appropriately venting anger and other strong, negative emotions.
5. Gradually learn to trust honest people. Act on this by sharing appropriate details about yourself and secrets and memories with a partner or friend.
6. Select non-abusive friends and partners. Also, keep from mistreating others and set limits with abusive people.
7. Be less punitive when other people make mistakes. When appropriate, actively try to be forgiving instead.
8. Slowly let other people get close to you. Begin with emotional and communicative closeness. Use learned assertion skills.
9. Keep yourself from gathering evidence and keeping score regarding the things people have done to hurt you.
10. Keep yourself from testing others to see if they can be trusted.
11. Do not take advantage of other people. This behavior will increase the likelihood that others will respond in kind.
12. **List** traumas that involved abuse to you. If it is too difficult to create a list, tell a therapist so he or she can make the list. Use EMDR to decrease the negative emotions and self-perceptions created by these memories.