

10 Common Ways of Thinking

1. **Mind reading:** You believe that you know what other people think or feel without having sufficient evidence. "She thinks I'm weird" or "Other people don't struggle like I do."
2. **Fortune telling:** You predict the future and generally predict that bad things will happen. "No one will talk to me" or "I'll fail the course."
3. **Catastrophizing:** You believe that what has happened or will happen will be so awful and unbearable that you won't be able to cope with it. "I couldn't bear it if he said no" or "If that happened I'd just fall apart."
4. **Labeling:** You assign global negative traits to yourself and others. "I'm worthless" or "He's a terrible person."
5. **Discounting positives:** You convince yourself that the positives that you achieve are unimportant or due to chance. "Friends are supposed to be nice" or "I only did well this time because it was easy."
6. **Negative filter:** You focus almost exclusively on the negatives and seldom notice the positives. "Look at all of the people who don't like me" or "I'm not outgoing like other people."
7. **Overgeneralizing:** You perceive a global pattern of negatives on the basis of a single incident. "This always happens to me" or "I'll never find another boyfriend/girlfriend."
8. **Dichotomous thinking (aka: black-and-white thinking):** You view events, or people, in all-or-nothing terms. "If I can't do it perfectly, I shouldn't even try" or "If we're not best friends, then she must not care about me at all."
9. **Personalizing:** You attribute a disproportionate amount of the blame or responsibility to yourself for negative events and fail to see that certain events are also caused by others. "We're in this trouble because of me" or "They didn't come over and talk to me because I'm such a loser."
10. **Blaming:** You focus on the other person as the *source of your negative feelings* and you refuse to take responsibility for changing yourself. "If only my parents would help me more, then I wouldn't be so anxious all the time" or "No one will help me, that's why I'm still depressed."

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

All or nothing thinking



Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'.

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

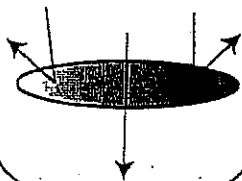
Over-generalising

"everything is always rubbish"

"nothing good ever happens"

Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw

Mental filter



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

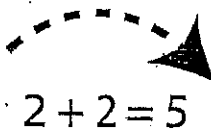
Disqualifying the positive



Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count

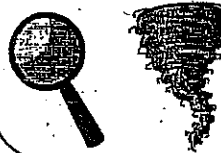
Jumping to conclusions



There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:

- **Mind reading** (imagining we know what others are thinking)
- **Fortune telling** (predicting the future)

Magnification (catastrophising) & minimisation



Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important

Emotional reasoning



Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

should must

Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed

If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration

Labelling



Assigning labels to ourselves or other people













*I'm a loser
I'm completely useless
They're such an idiot*

Personalisation













"this is my fault"

Blaming yourself. Taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.

Finding Alternative Thoughts

Unhelpful Thinking Habit	Alternative more balanced thought
 <p>Mental Filter</p>	<p>Am I only noticing the bad stuff? Am I filtering out the positives? Am I wearing those 'gloomy specs'? What would be more realistic?</p>
 <p>Mind-Reading</p>	<p>Am I assuming I know what others are thinking? What's the evidence? Those are my own thoughts, not theirs. Is there another, more balanced way of looking at it?</p>
 <p>Prediction</p>	<p>Am I thinking that I can predict the future? How likely is it that that might really happen?</p>
 <p>Compare & despair</p>	<p>Am I doing that 'compare and despair' thing? What would be a more balanced and helpful way of looking at it?</p>
 <p>Critical self</p>	<p>There I go, that internal bully's at it again. Would most people who really know me say that about me? Is this something that I am totally responsible for?</p>
 <p>Shoulds and musts</p>	<p>Am I putting more pressure on myself, setting up expectations of myself that are almost impossible? What would be more realistic?</p>
 <p>Judgements</p>	<p>I'm making an evaluation about the situation or person. It's how I make sense of the world, but that doesn't mean my judgements are always right or helpful. Is there another perspective?</p>
 <p>Emotional Reasoning</p>	<p>Just because it feels bad, doesn't necessary mean it is bad. My feelings are just a reaction to my thoughts – and thoughts are just automatic brain reflexes</p>
 <p>Mountains and molehills</p>	<p>Am I exaggerating the risk of danger? Or am I exaggerating the negative and minimising the positives? How would someone else see it? What's the bigger picture?</p>
 <p>Catastrophising</p>	<p>OK, thinking that the worst possible thing will definitely happen isn't really helpful right now. What's most likely to happen?</p>
 <p>Black and white thinking</p>	<p>Things aren't either totally white or totally black – there are shades of grey. Where is this on the spectrum?</p>
 <p>Memories</p>	<p>This is just a reminder of the past. That was then, and this is now. Even though this memory makes me feel upset, it's not <u>actually</u> happening again right now.</p>

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