

Thinking Errors

All or Nothing Thinking –You see things in black and white categories with no shades of grey. Things are either perfect or a total failure.

Overgeneralizing—Falsely assuming that one negative experience in a certain situation will always repeat itself in similar circumstances.

Mental Filter—If something is a combination of negative and positive aspects, you chose to focus solely on the negative. As a result, your entire view of the person, or situation is predominately negative.

Jumping to Conclusions---You make a negative interpretation about a person, circumstance, or event even though the evidence does not support your conclusions.

Mind Reading—You assume someone is thinking or believing something negative about you, without the evidence to support your beliefs.

Fortune Telling---You anticipate things will turn out badly, and believe your prediction is an already established fact.

Magnifying---You exaggerate the importance of things, blowing them out of proportion.

Minimizing—You shrink the importance of things; for example your good qualities or other peoples mistakes.

Catastrophizing---You attribute extreme and catastrophic consequences to the outcome of events. For example, having a panic attack means you are mentally ill.

Emotional Reasoning—You judge yourself or others on the basis of your feelings alone. You conclude because you feel like a loser, you are a loser. This thinking error assaults your identity and intrinsic worth.

Should, Must, Have to, and Ought Statements--- Inflexible ways of thinking that box you into perfectionism and control. By believing things must be, should be, or ought to be a certain way, you allow yourself no room for error. When things aren't the way you think they should be, you feel anger, guilt, frustration, or hurt.

Perfectionistic Thinking—You have a tendency to place high expectations on yourself or others, and when anything falls short you become hurt and disappointed.

Personalization—You look at everything that happens as somehow your fault or responsibility. You internalize what others say or do to mean that something is wrong with you.

Self-Defeating Thinking—Any unnecessary thought or belief that causes you needless turmoil, and makes it hard for you to reach your goals. The key here is asking yourself if there is a more beneficial way of looking at the situation or yourself, which is equally or more valid and will help you move forward to reach your goals.

Questions to Dispute Thinking Errors

What evidence do I have to support this belief? To refute it?

What beliefs are driving me in this situation? Are they always true for me?

Does this typing of thinking help or hinder my well-being?

What alternative explanation might there be?

Is there another possibility? What is the evidence for that?

What would an impartial observer tell me?

How important on a scale of 1–10 is my concern?

To what extent does my future reside on this?

What is the worst that could happen?

If the worst thing did happen, what could I do?

Is there a more helpful way for me to think about this?

What would it be?

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