

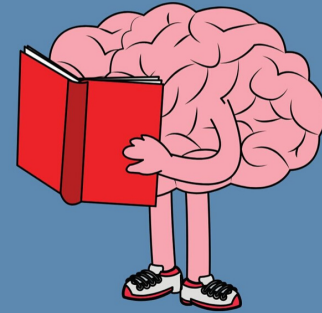
# 20 THINKING ERRORS



## MIND READING

When you think you know a person's intentions or thoughts, you are engaging in a thinking error known as mind reading.

You assume people are focusing on your flaws and believe that someone is reacting negatively to you, even though their response might have nothing to do with you at all.



## MENTAL FILTER

Mental filter is a term used to describe one type of cognitive distortion, or faulty thought pattern, that can often lead to higher levels of anxiety and depression.

When thinking through a mental filter, a person is focusing only on the negative aspects of a situation and filtering out all of the positive ones.



## DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVES

Disqualifying the Positive. This is an extreme form of all-or-nothing thinking in which we filter out all the positive evidence about our performance, and only attend to the negative. It is all-or-nothing thinking, without the "all"!



# BLACK AND WHITE THINKING

Splitting (also called black-and-white thinking or all-or-nothing thinking) is the failure in a person's thinking to bring together the dichotomy of both positive and negative qualities of the self and others into a cohesive, realistic whole. It is a common defense mechanism.



# COMPARE AND DESPAIR

Seeing only the good and positive aspects in others, and getting upset when comparing ourselves negatively against them.



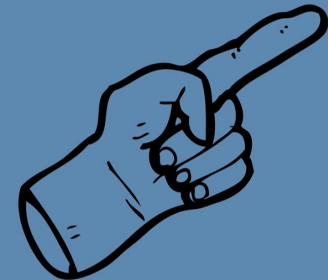
# CATASTROPHISING

Catastrophizing is an irrational thought a lot of us have in believing that something is far worse than it actually is. Catastrophizing can generally can take two different forms: making a catastrophe out of a current situation, and imagining making a catastrophe out of a future situation.



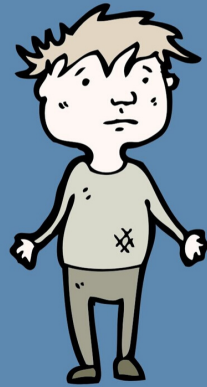
# BLAMING

When a person engages in blaming, they hold other people responsible for their emotional pain. They may also take the opposite track and instead blame themselves for every problem — even those clearly outside their own control. For example, "Stop making me feel bad about myself!" Nobody can "make" us feel any particular way — only we have control over our own emotions and emotional reactions.



# PERSONALISATION

Personalization is a distortion where a person believes that everything others do or say is some kind of direct, personal reaction to them. They literally take virtually everything personally, even when something is not meant in that way. A person who experiences this kind of thinking will also compare themselves to others, trying to determine who is smarter, better looking, etc.



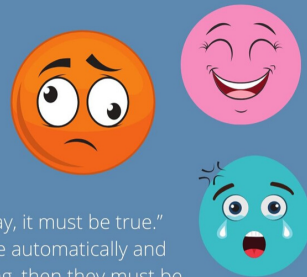
# FALLACY OF CHANGE

In the fallacy of change, a person expects that other people will change to suit them if they just pressure or cajole them enough. A person needs to change people because their hopes for success and happiness seem to depend entirely on them. This distortion is often found in thinking around relationships



# EMOTIONAL REASONING

The distortion of emotional reasoning can be summed up by the statement, "If I feel that way, it must be true." Whatever a person is feeling is believed to be true automatically and unconditionally. If a person feels stupid and boring, then they must be stupid and boring. Emotions are extremely strong in people, and can overrule our rational thoughts and reasoning. Emotional reasoning is when a person's emotions takes over our thinking entirely, blotting out all rationality and logic. The person who engages in emotional reasoning assumes that their unhealthy emotions reflect the way things really are — "I feel it, therefore it must be true."



# LABELLING

Labeling is a cognitive distortion in which we generalize by taking one characteristic of a person, and applying it to the whole person. Because I failed a test, I am a failure. ... This results in the label feeling more apt a descriptor of the person, and we believe it more.





# SHOULDs AND MUSTs

It is quite common in everyday language to hear people use "I should", and "I must" statements. Sometimes it's not necessarily unhelpful to think, "I should get my work in on time" and it can even be quite important to think "I should not get drunk and then drive home". However, these types of statements become unhelpful when you use "should" and "must" statements to put unreasonable demands or pressure on yourself.



# ALWAYS BEING RIGHT

In this cognitive distortion, being wrong is unthinkable. This distortion is characterized by actively trying to prove one's actions or thoughts to be correct, and sometimes prioritizing self-interest over the feelings of another person.



# CONTROL FALLACY

Control fallacies is an irrational way of thinking characterized by believing that one is "externally controlled" or has "internal control". ... Those with this kind of fallacy often blame others, luck, the weather, or other external sources for negativities that happen in their lives.



# MAGNIFICATION AND MINIMISATION

This cognitive distortion consists of seeing the positive results of your actions as smaller than they really are and the negative results of your actions as bigger than they really are. It is sometimes called "catastrophizing" or, more informally, "making a mountain out of a molehill."



# FALLACY OF FAIRNESS

The belief that life should be fair. When life is perceived to be unfair, an angry emotional state is produced which may lead to attempts to correct the situation.



# FORTUNE TELLING

Fortune telling is a cognitive distortion in which you predict a negative outcome without realistically considering the actual odds of that outcome. It is linked to anxiety and depression, and is one of the most common cognitive distortions that arise during the course of cognitive restructuring.



# OVERGENERALISATION

This fallacy is sometimes called the overgeneralization fallacy.

It involves making a claim based on evidence that is just too limited. Essentially, you can't make a claim and assert that something is true if you have only an example or two as evidence.



# MAGICAL THINKING

Magical thinking is the belief that one's own thoughts, wishes, or desires can influence the external world. It is common in very young children. A four-year-old child, for example, might believe that after wishing for a pony, one will appear at his or her house.



# JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

'Jumping to conclusions' is made easy with hasty generalizations. This is where a speaker will form a specific conclusion without considering all of the variables involved. A speaker will use this fallacy when thinking of the world in 'black or white' terms. If not A then the solution must be B.

