

# Thinking Errors



**Mind Reading.** Believing you know what someone else is thinking, or why they are doing something, without having enough information.

examples:

- "People are looking at me. They probably think my shirt is ugly."
- "Emma didn't invite me to her party. I bet she thinks I'm weird."



**Negative Labeling.** Having a negative belief about yourself and thinking it applies to everything you do.

examples:

- "I'm a loser so my artwork stinks."
- "I'm so stupid. Everything I say is dumb."



**Setting the Bar Too High.** Thinking that you must be perfect in everything you do, otherwise you're no good.

examples:

- "If I don't get an A on every test, I'm not smart."
- "I have to win every tennis match I play, otherwise I'm worthless."

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**Ignoring the Good.** You pay more attention to bad things, and ignore when something good happens.

**examples:**

- You get one answer wrong on a long test, and all you can think about is the mistake.
- You score two goals in your soccer game, but all you can think about is the shot you missed.



**Blowing Things Up.** Making a really big deal out of something small, or making something a little bit bad seem like the worst thing ever.

**examples:**

- You get a stain on your new shoes and you think they're ruined and can't be worn anymore.
- "I'm not allowed to see my friends on Friday. My life is horrible!"



**Fortune Telling.** Thinking you know what will happen in the future, and that it will be bad.

**examples:**

- "I know if I ask her to the dance she's going to say no."
- "I bet no one will come to my birthday party."

# Thinking Errors



**Self-blaming.** Blaming yourself for anything that goes wrong around you, even if you had nothing to do with it.

**examples:**

- When your basketball team loses a game, you think it's entirely your fault.
- "Alicia is sad today. I probably did something to upset her."



**Feelings as Facts.** Believing that if you feel something, it must be true.

**examples:**

- "I feel ugly, so I must be ugly."
- "I feel like I'm a bad friend, so I must be a bad friend."



**"Should" Statements.** Believing things have to be a certain way.

**examples:**

- "People should always be nice to me."
- "I should always be happy. I should never be sad."

# 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*

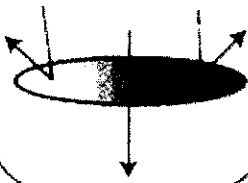
## Over-generalising

*"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*

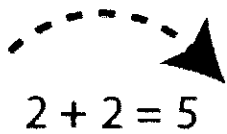
## Disqualifying the positive



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 or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault