



MINDWHATMATTERS

Common Thinking Errors

1. Catastrophising

When things go wrong, you have a tendency to exaggerate the consequences and imagine that the results will be disastrous. You view the situation as “worst case scenario”

E.g. you wake up late for work and think, “OMG, my boss is going to fire me”

2. Jumping to conclusions

Drawing a conclusion without any real evidence. We jump to conclusions when we assume that we know what someone else is thinking and when we make predictions about what is going to happen in the future.

E.g. “He has been very quiet the whole day. He must be angry with me.”

3. Overgeneralisation

Drawing a general conclusion on the basis of only one incident or one piece of evidence.

E.g. One cab driver takes a longer route. You think, “all cab drivers are the same; all out to cheat people”

4. Perfectionistic thinking

Things are black or white, all or nothing. There no grey or middle ground, no room for mistakes.

E.g. “If I don’t come in first, I don’t even want to try”

5. Labelling

When you use label, you might call yourself or other people names. You identify with your own or other’s shortcomings.

E.g. “I am useless” instead of “I made a mistake.”

“She is lazy” instead of “She did not complete this piece of work”.

6. Personalisation

Blaming yourself for or anything that goes wrong, even when it’s not your fault or responsibility

7. Filtering

When you filter, first you hone in on the negative aspects of your situation. Then you ignore or dismiss all the positive aspects.

E.g. Focusing on the one critical remark in your paper, neglecting the several compliments.

8. Shoulds

Having a list of ironclad rules about how others and we should behave. A person often believes they are trying to motivate themselves with shoulds and musts

E.g. “I must exercise. I shouldn’t be so lazy.”



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Thought Challenging

What thinking error am I making?

1. Am I thinking catastrophising? (*What's the worst that can happen?*)
2. Am I jumping to conclusions? (*How am I able to predict the future or mind read?*)
3. Am I overgeneralising? (*What are the facts? What are my interpretations?*)
4. Am I being perfectionistic (*Are my expectations unrealistic?*)
5. Am I labelling? (*Judge the situation, not the person*)
6. Am I personalising? (*Am I really to blame? Is this all about me?*)
7. Am I filtering? (*Am I looking at the negatives, while ignoring the positives?*)
8. Am I shoulding? (*Stop "shoulding" over myself*)

What is the evidence?

What evidence do I have to support my thoughts?
What evidence do I have against them?

What is the worst case scenario?

What's the worst possible thing that can happen?
How bad would that really be?

What alternative views are there?

How would someone else view this situation?
How would I have viewed this situation in the past?

What is the effect of thinking the way I do?

Does it help me, or hinder me from getting what I want?
In what way does it help or hinder?

What action can I take? (problem solve)

What can I do to change my situation?
Am I overlooking solutions to problems on the assumption they won't work?