

THINKING DISTORTIONS

1. All-or-Nothing Thinking. You see things in black and white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.
2. Overgeneralization. You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.
3. Mental Filter. You pick a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolors the entire beaker of water.
4. Disqualifying the Positive. You reject positive experiences by insisting that they don't count for some reason or other. In this way you can maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences.
5. Jumping to Conclusions. You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.
 - A. Mind Reading. You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you, and you don't bother to check it out.
 - B. The Fortune Telling Error. You anticipate that things will turn out badly, and you will feel convinced that your prediction is an already established fact.
6. Magnification, Catastrophizing, or Minimization. You exaggerate the importance of things (such as failure, falling short of the mark, or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny (your good and desirable qualities or someone else's limitations).
7. Emotional Reasoning. You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are, "I feel it, so it must be true."
8. Should Statements. You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn'ts, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you could accomplish anything. "Musts" and "oughts" also fall into this faulty-thinking category. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct should statements toward others, you feel anger, frustration, and resentment.
9. Labeling and Mislabeled. This is an extreme form of Overgeneralization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself, "I'm a loser." When someone else's behavior rubs you the wrong way you attach a negative label to him, "He's a jerk." Mislabeled involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.
10. Personalization. You see yourself as the cause of some problem, or take on someone's opinion as having more value than it does.