



# Common Thought Mistakes (Cognitive Distortions)



<b>All or Nothing Thinking</b>	You view a situation in only two categories instead of on a continuum. You look at things in absolute, black and white categories.
<b>Fortune Telling</b>	You predict the future negatively without considering other more likely outcomes (jumping to conclusions about <u>events</u> ). You predict that things will turn out badly.
<b>Mind Reading</b>	You believe you know what others are thinking, failing to consider other, more likely possibilities (jumping to conclusions about <u>people</u> ). You assume that people are acting negatively toward you.
<b>Discounting the Positives</b>	You unreasonably tell yourself that positive experiences, your accomplishments, or qualities don't count.
<b>Emotional Reasoning</b>	You think something must be true because you "feel" (actually believe) it so strongly, ignoring or discounting evidence to the contrary. You reason from how you feel: " <i>I feel like an idiot, so I must be one.</i> "
<b>Labeling</b>	You put a fixed, global label on yourself or others without considering that the evidence might more reasonably lead to a less disastrous conclusion. Instead of saying " <i>I made a mistake</i> ", you tell yourself " <i>I'm a loser</i> ", or " <i>a jerk</i> ".
<b>Magnification/Minimization</b>	When you evaluate yourself, another person, or a situation, you unreasonably magnify the negative and/or minimize the positive. You blow things way out of proportion or you shrink their importance.
<b>Mental Filter</b>	You pay undue attention to one negative detail instead of seeing the whole picture. You dwell on the negatives and ignore the positives.
<b>Overgeneralization</b>	You make a sweeping negative conclusion that goes beyond the current situation. You view a negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.
<b>Personalization</b>	You believe others are behaving negatively because of you, without considering more plausible explanations for their behavior. You <u>blame</u> yourself for something you weren't entirely responsible for, or you blame other people and overlook the ways you contributed to the problem.
<b>"Should" Statements</b>	You have a precise, fixed idea of how you and/or others " <i>should</i> " behave and you overestimate how bad it is that these expectations are not met. You criticize yourself with " <i>shoulds</i> ", " <i>shouldn'ts</i> ", " <i>musts</i> ", " <i>oughts</i> " and " <i>have-tos</i> ".