

## Thinking Errors

**Fortune Telling** – attempting to predict what will happen

Ex: It won't go my way. They will tell me 'no.' It will just end up in an argument

Challenge: How do I know what will happen? I only know what is happening right now

**Mind Reading** – we assume we know what others are thinking

Ex: She thinks I'm stupid. My boss thinks I'm a bad employee. My spouse is mad at me.

Challenge: How do I know what others are thinking? What is the evidence? Why do I care?

**Black & White/Extremes** – everything in terms of all good or all bad

Ex: Nothing ever goes my way. I'm not good at anything. Nobody loves me.

Challenge: Look for shades of gray; am I taking an extreme view?

**Personalizing** – blame yourself for everything that goes wrong

Ex: There's a problem at work, it must be my fault. People are whispering, it must be about me

Challenge: Am I really to blame? Is this all about me? Are there other explanations?

**Filtering/ Disqualifying the positive** – hone in on the negative, dismiss the positive aspects

Ex: I didn't get anything done today. I have the worst luck. I'm not good at anything.

Challenge: Is there a more balanced way to look at the situation?

**Catastrophizing** – taking a worry or problem and exaggerating it

Ex: It's the end of the world. I screwed up at work, so I'm probably going to get fired.

Challenge: What's a more realistic outcome? What is most likely going to happen?

**Over-generalizing** – bad experience in one situation will repeat in other situations

Ex: One doctor didn't listen to me, neither will this one. That cop was a jerk, all cops are jerks.

Challenge: What are the facts? Am I assuming it will happen every time due to one experience?

**Shoulds and Musts** – focus on others' expectations of you instead of your own needs

Ex: Well he should have \_\_\_\_\_. And she should \_\_\_\_\_

Challenge: What do I have control over right now? Am I imposing my expectations onto others?

**Labeling** – call yourself or people names instead of being specific about what happened

Ex: I'm so stupid. I'm an idiot. INSTEAD OF "I made a mistake"

Challenge: describe the situation, your thoughts, and feelings

**Fact vs feeling/ Emotional Reasoning** – confuse feelings with reality, assume perceptions are correct

Ex: I had this thought/feeling so it MUST be true.

Challenge: Am I thinking this way because I'm feeling bad right now? What are the facts?

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