

Cognitive Distortions

From "Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy" by David D. Burns, MD

Usage	Distortion	Description				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	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.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Overgeneralization	You see a single negative event as a never ending pattern of defeat.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Mental Filter	You pick out 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.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Disqualifying the Positive	You reject positive experiences by insisting 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.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Jumping to Conclusions	<div>You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.</div> <table><tr><td>Mind Reading</td><td>You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you and you don’t bother to check this out.</td></tr><tr><td>The Fortune Teller Error</td><td>You anticipate that things will turn out badly, and you feel convinced that your prediction is an already established fact.</td></tr></table>	Mind Reading	You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you and you don’t bother to check this out.	The Fortune Teller Error	You anticipate that things will turn out badly, and you feel convinced that your prediction is an already established fact.
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The Fortune Teller Error	You anticipate that things will turn out badly, and you feel convinced that your prediction is an already established fact.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Magnification (Catastrophizing) or Minimization	You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof up or someone else’s achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny (your own desirable qualities or the other fellow’s imperfections). This is also called the “binocular trick”.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Emotional Reasoning	You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: “I feel it; therefore, it must be true.”				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Should Statements	You try to motivate yourself with should and shouldn’ts, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you could be expected to do anything. “Musts” and “oughts” are also offenders. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct should statements toward others, you feel anger, frustration and resentment.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Labeling and Mislabeling	This is an extreme form of over generalization. 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.” Mislabeling involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	Personalization and Blame	With personalization, you see yourself as the cause of some negative external event which in fact you were not primarily responsible. With blame, you blame other people or your circumstances for problems, and overlook ways that you might be contributing to the problem.				