

Common distortions of thinking (“Unhelpful thinking”)

- **All or nothing (black & white) thinking** -
“If I’m not a success, I’m a failure”
- **Catastrophizing (Magnification, Awfulising, “I-can’t-stand-it-itis”)**
“I’ll be so upset, I won’t be able to function at all”; “My relationship ended, so nobody will ever want a relationship with me”; “I can’t bear this...”
- **Disqualifying the positive** - “I got a good mark, but I was just lucky”
- **Emotional reasoning** - “I feel it, therefore it must be true”; “I’m so anxious it proves I must be about to lose my job”.
- **Labeling**—applying global judgements instead of focusing on specific situations or behaviour: “I failed this module – it proves I’m a loser”;
- **Minimizing** - “It was just luck I got the job really...”
- **Mental filtering/focusing on the negative**
“I received one low mark... I’m doing a terrible job”
- **Jumping to Conclusions (1) - Mind reading**
“I know he hates my guts– he didn’t say hello today”
- **Jumping to Conclusions (2) – Fortune telling**
“I won’t get the job so I won’t bother going”
- **Overgeneralization**- Generalizing on the basis of one event: “If I can’t succeed with this partner, I’ll never make another relationship work”;
- **Personalization (self-blame) vs. Blaming**
“He was short with me because I did something wrong”; vs. “It’s all her fault our relationship ended”
- **Demandingness** – oftenshould/must statements implying fixed beliefs:
“If she loves me, she’ll do this for me”; “I must win!”
- **Tunnel vision** - “This drink is going to be so good!”
- **Self-focussed thinking**
“He must be veggy to be my friend”; “People should think the way I do”
- **Unrealistic comparisons**
“I should be living like that (beautiful/rich/entertaining/successful etc) colleague/boss/filmstar
- **Being right** - “I know I’m right so there’s no point listening to another view”