

Thinking Errors



Labeling

Also known as name calling
– putting situations or
people, including yourself,
into a category based on
single events.

Ex: “I’m stupid.”

Antidote:

Try not to label yourself, others, or
situation. Instead, describe the
specific situation.

Ex: “I made a mistake.”

Fortune Telling

Predicting that bad things
are going to happen in the
future.

Antidote:

Remind yourself of other possible
positive or neutral things that could
happen.

Mind Reading

Assuming you know what is
happening in the minds of
other people.

Antidote:

Remind yourself you can only
guess about others perceptions –
you cannot be sure unless they tell
you.

Catastrophizing

When one bad thing happens, you predict the worst possible will happen, even when you don't have any evidence.

Antidote:

Think about all of the possible outcomes that could occur instead.

Overgeneralizing

When one bad thing happens, you think everything has gone or will go badly or that everyone thinks about or treats you poorly.

Antidote:

Recognize that your thoughts are related to one specific event or interaction and not to all situations or people in your life.

Personalization

When things don't go as expected, you think it must be because of something about you: such as someone doesn't like or is upset with you.

Antidote:

Think of other possible reasons things could have not gone as expected.

Emotional Reasoning

Believing our feelings are based in reality. So, if you feel scared about something, then you shouldn't do it.

Antidote:

Remember that just like your thoughts are not always realistic, your feelings may not be based on facts either. Look for ways to soothe your feelings and then look at the evidence.

Tunnel Vision

Only thinking about the bad things that happened or could happen while ignoring the good

Antidote:

Think about all of the details, both the positive and the negative, to get a bigger picture and a more balanced point of view.

Black-and-White

Thinking

Thinking of people, situations, or things as all one way or another: such as all good/all bad

Antidote:

Think about the “grays” or in degrees of positive, neutral, negative.

Unreal Ideal

Comparing yourself negatively and excessively to others in ways that are not fair, or don't consider all the facts (age, advantages, experience, etc.)

Antidote:

Focus on measuring your sense of “success” against your own skills and abilities and how you are doing with reaching the goals you set for yourself.