

COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS EXAMPLES

Examples of 15 Common Cognitive Distortions that Influence Your Thinking Patterns



1. POLARIZED THINKING

A student who gets an A- on an exam feels like a failure because they are used to getting A+ grades only. They have the mentality, "If I am not successful at everything I do, I am a complete failure".



2. MENTAL FILTERING

NEGATIVE MENTAL FILTERING

An employee receives a good performance review but focuses on one negative comment their manager made about them.

DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVE

A student gets a good grade but overlooks it and tries to explain their good grade as simply luck or fluke instead of hard work.



3. OVERGENERALIZATION

A student receives a bad grade on one exam, based on this they think they are stupid and a failure and believe that all future exams they will get a bad grade as well.



4. JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

MIND READING

A friend you are spending time with seems distracted or uninterested. You jump to the conclusion it has to do with you.

FORTUNE TELLING

You have a date but you predict that the date will go bad. You make assumptions about the date before it has occurred.



5. CATASTROPHIZING

MAGNIFICATION

A person's lunch date is running late and assumes the worst. Their worries escalate quickly & thoughts become exaggerated.

MINIMIZATION

An athlete wins an award but does not acknowledge their accomplishment. They minimize the importance of the award.



6. PERSONALIZATION

You attend a party but all your friends are busy engaging with other people. You feel like they do not have any interest in being your friend and engaging in conversation with you. This makes you think you don't belong or are unfairly excluded.



7. BLAMING

Placing blame for relationship issues on your partner instead of sharing the responsibility for actions taken by both partners. You assume the victim mentality and think everything they do is to hurt you.