








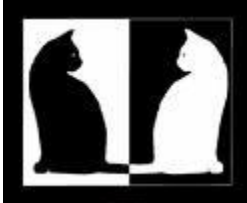




Unhelpful Thinking Habits

Over the years, we tend to get into unhelpful thinking habits such as those described below. We might favour some over others, and there might be some that seem far too familiar. Once you can identify your unhelpful thinking styles, you can start to notice them – they very often occur just before and during distressing situations. Once you can notice them, then that can help you to challenge or distance yourself from those thoughts, and see the situation in a different and more helpful way.

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|  <p>Mental Filter When we notice only what the filter wants or allows us to notice, and we dismiss anything that doesn't 'fit'. Like looking through dark blinkers or 'gloomy specs', or only catching the negative stuff in our 'kitchen strainers' whilst anything more positive or realistic is dismissed</p> |  <p>Judgements Making evaluations or judgements about events, ourselves, others, or the world, rather than describing what we actually see and have evidence for</p> |
| <p>Mind-Reading Assuming we know what others are thinking (usually about us)</p>  | <p>Emotional Reasoning I feel bad so it must be bad! I feel anxious, so I must be in danger</p>  |
|  <p>Prediction Believing we know what's going to happen in the future</p> |  <p>Mountains and Molehills Exaggerating the risk of danger, or the negatives. Minimising the odds of how things are most likely to turn out, or minimising positives</p> |
| <p>Compare and despair Seeing only the good and positive aspects in others, and comparing ourselves negatively against them</p>  | <p>Catastrophising Imagining and believing that the worst possible thing will happen</p>  |
|  <p>Critical self Putting ourselves down, self-criticism, blaming ourselves for events or situations that are not (totally) our responsibility</p> |  <p>Black and white thinking Believing that something or someone can be only good or bad, right or wrong, rather than anything in-between or 'shades of grey'</p> |
| <p>Shoulds and musts Thinking or saying 'I should' (or shouldn't) and 'I must' puts pressure on ourselves, and sets up unrealistic expectations</p>  | <p>Memories Current situations and events can trigger upsetting memories, leading us to believe that the danger is here and now, rather than in the past, causing us distress right now</p>  |