

16 STYLES OF DISTORTED THINKING

1. **FILTERING.** You take the negative details and magnify them while filtering out all positive aspects of a situation.
2. **POLARIZED THINKING.** Things are black and white, good or bad. You have to be perfect or you are a failure. There is no middle ground.
3. **OVERGENERALIZATION.** You come to a general conclusion based on a single incident or piece of evidence. If something bad happens once, you expect it to happen over and over again.
4. **MIND READING.** Without their saying so you assume you know what people are thinking and feeling and why they act the way they do. In particular, you think you are able to divine how people are thinking and feeling towards you.
5. **CATASTROPHIZING.** You expect disaster. You notice or hear about a problem and start “what ifs”: What if tragedy strikes? What if it happens to you?
6. **PERSONALIZATION.** Thinking that everything people do or say is somehow a reaction to you. You also compare yourself to others, trying to determine who is smarter, better looking, etc.
7. **CONTROL FALLACIES.** If you feel externally controlled, you see yourself as helpless, a victim of fate. The fallacy; of internal control has you responsible for the pain and happiness of everyone around you.
8. **FALLACY OF FAIRNESS.** You feel resentful because you think you know what’s fair, but other people won’t agree with you.
9. **BLAMING.** You hold other people responsible for your pain – or take the other tack and blame yourself for every problem or reversal.
10. **SHOULD.** You have a list of ironclad rules about how you and others should act. People who break the rules anger you, and you feel guilty if you violate the rules.
11. **EMOTIONAL REASONING.** You believe that what you feel must be true – automatically. If you FEEL stupid and boring, then you must be stupid and boring.
12. **FALLACY OF CHANGE.** You expect that other people will change to suit you if you just cajole them enough. You need to change people because your hopes for happiness seem to depend entirely on them.
13. **GLOBAL LABELING.** You generalize one or two qualities into a negative global judgement.
14. **BEING RIGHT.** You are continually on trial to prove that your opinions and actions are correct. Being wrong is unthinkable and you will go to any length to demonstrate your rightness.
15. **HEAVEN’S REWARD FALLACY.** You expect all your sacrifice and self-denial to pay off, as if there were someone keeping score.
16. **LABELING.** You attack a negative label or judgement to yourself, others or your experiences, without looking at all the facts.