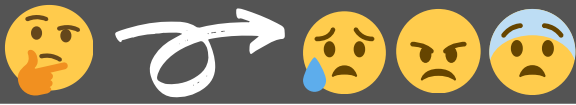


10 Common Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive distortions are misleading ways of thinking about yourself, others, or events that tend to produce negative feelings and distress.

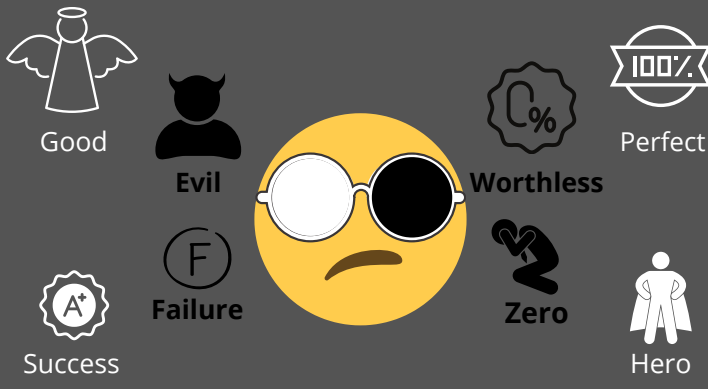


Below are ten of the most common distortions identified by Dr. David D. Burns (2008; 2020).

the thinking traps you tend to fall into most!

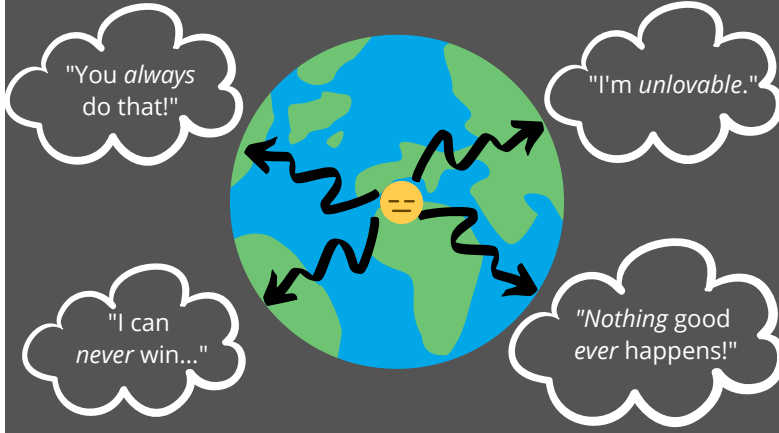
Infographic created by [Patrick Healy \(2021\)](#). See [here for sources](#). All text and images courtesy of [Canva](#).

1. All-or-Nothing Thinking



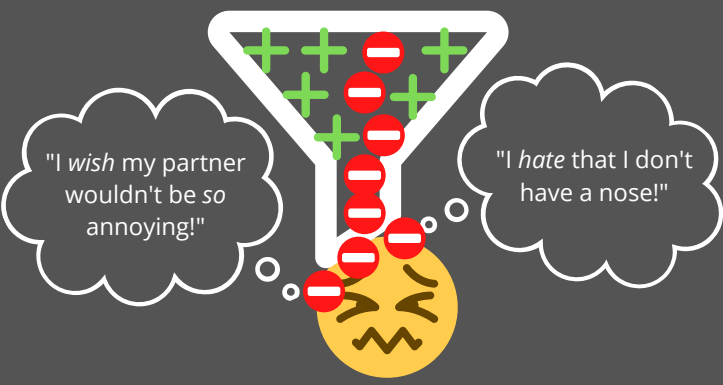
You look at things in absolute, black-or-white categories, as if shades of gray don't exist.

2. Over-Generalizing



You generalize from some specific flaw or mistake to a larger, more global trait or pattern.

3. Mental Filtering



You filter out the positive(s) and focus entirely on the negative(s).

4. Discounting the Positive



You throw out or downplay all evidence of your positive qualities or successes.

5. Jumping to Conclusions

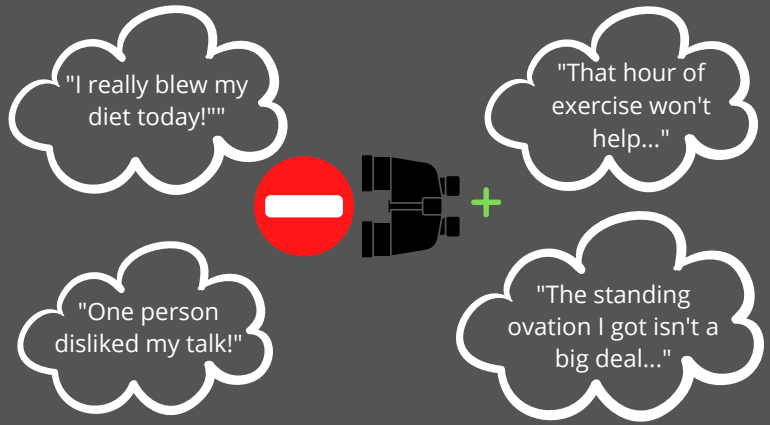


Mind-Reading
You automatically believe others think poorly of you or will judge you.

Fortune-Telling
You make unfounded, catastrophic predictions about future events.

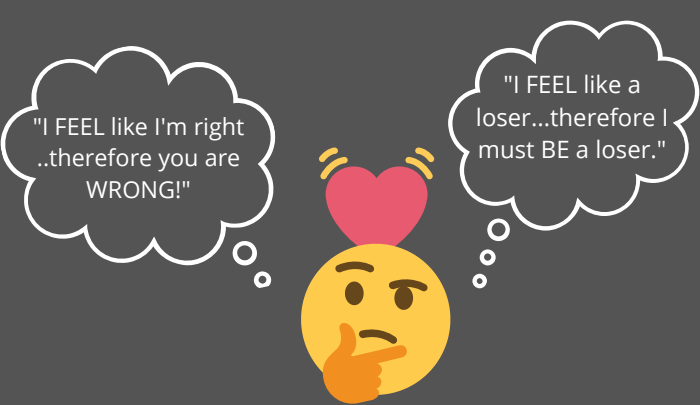
You make hasty, negative predictions based on little to no evidence. There are two types.

6. Magnifying - Minimizing



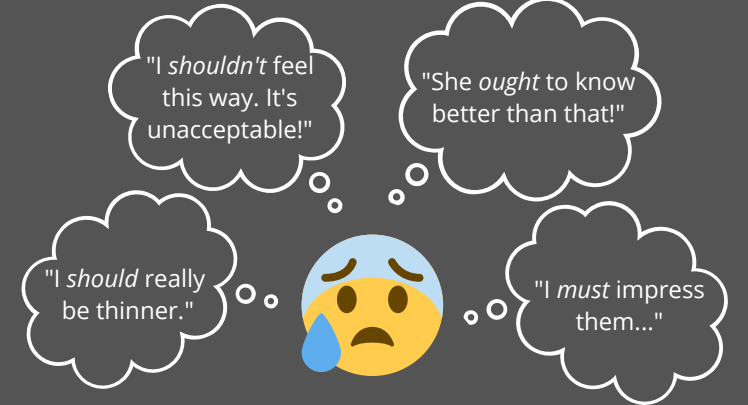
You "zoom-in" on the negative(s) and/or "zoom-out" on the positive(s).

7. Emotional Reasoning



You reason based on your feelings rather than facts, evidence, and reality.

8. "Should" Statements



You tell yourself that you, others, or the world should(n't) think, feel, act, or be a certain way.

9. Labeling

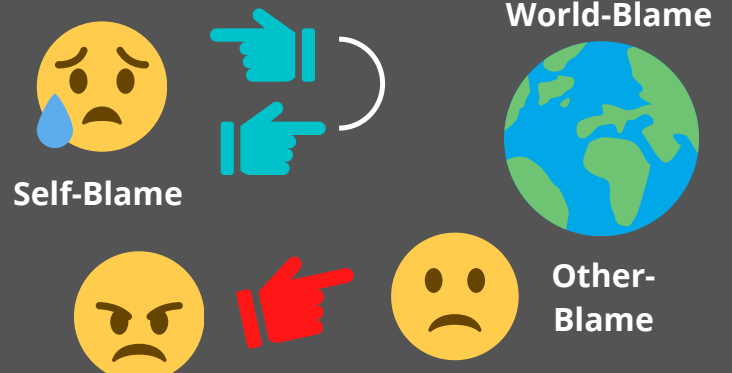


Self
You apply harsh, meaningless labels to yourself.

Others
You criticize others using a variety of mean names, descriptions, and language.

You attempt to capture the essence of someone using a single word or two.

10. Blaming



You find fault in yourself or others, instead of trying to solve the problem at hand.

Q: How many cognitive distortions did you check off?

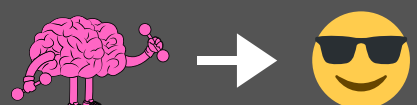
Q: Which distortion, if any, do you tend to engage in most often?

Tally your number of checks in the box above.

Write the name of it in the field above.

Identifying cognitive distortions is a key technique utilized by therapists and their clients in **cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)**.

The BIG idea behind CBT is that by changing how we **THINK**, we can change how we **FEEL**.



To learn more, check out [Dr. Burns' website!](#)