

THINKING TRAPS



When negative thoughts and feelings are drowning out the positive, check this list to make sure you aren't stuck in these common thinking traps.

1 MIND READING

This is when you think you know what others are thinking and assume they are thinking negatively about you. Worse than that we often behave as if it is true which causes others to pull away and ends up being a self-fulfilling prophecy.

2 FORTUNE TELLING

Are you predicting that the worst case will happen? When we assume things will turn out badly we often act accordingly, which can also result in a self-fulfilling prophecy.

3 FILTERING

We often focus only on the negative aspects of a situation or person. We ignore the positives and frame the situation as if it is only negative.

4 CATASTROPHING

When you envision the worst case scenario and predict you won't be able to deal with it. Also known as maximizing, this is when you make negative aspects big and positive aspects of your life small.

5 OVER GENERALIZATION

This is when you decide that the most recent negative event is one in a chain of negative events. This type of thinking assumes that bad things will continue to happen over and over again.

6 LABELING

This happens when you attach a label to someone or yourself because of a mistake or a failure. Instead of acknowledging that you or someone else made one mistake you become the mistake and allow it to define you.

7 PERSONALIZATION

This occurs when you assume that everything other people do is an attack on you. It's taking actions by other people personal. You may also see yourself as the cause of some negative event that in reality you have nothing to do with.

8 SHOULD STATEMENTS

When you make should statements about how you or others should or shouldn't behave or act. These rules are strict and black and white and people (including yourself) can rarely meet these expectations.

9 EMOTIONAL REASONING

This is the most common and occurs when you take your emotions as evidence for the truth. This can get you stuck in a never ending loop of negativity. When you think negative you behave different which results in more negativity.

10 CONTROL FALLACIES

This is when you believe that you are in complete control of your life and everything that happens is your fault. It also occurs when you believe you have no control over your life and you are a victim of fate.

11 FALLACY OF FAIRNESS

If you feel resentful because life isn't fair and others aren't abiding by your rules fairness, you might be trapped in a fairness fallacy. The truth is life isn't fair and everyone doesn't always get the same things.

12 ALWAYS BEING RIGHT

It's a personal attack when people think you're wrong. You tend to put others on trial to prove you are right. You can be defensive and can't stand the thought that you might be wrong.

