

# Unhelpful Thinking Patterns

Credit David Burns, MD - feelinggood.com



## All or Nothing

Sometimes called “black and white thinking.”

*“If I’m not perfect I have failed.”*

*“Either I do it right or not at all.”*



## Over-Generalizing

Seeing a pattern based on a *single* event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw.

*“Everything is always \_\_\_\_\_.”*

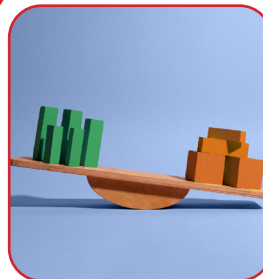
*“Nothing good ever happens.”*



## Mental Filter

Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.

*Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes.*



## Dismissing the Positives

Discounting the good things that have happened, or the good things you have done.

*“That doesn’t count.”*



## Jumping to Conclusions

**Mind Reading:** Imagining that we know what others are thinking.

**Fortune Telling:** Predicting the future.



## Magnification & Minimization

Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important



## Emotional Reasoning

Assuming that - just because we feel a certain way - then, what we’re thinking must be true.

*“I feel embarrassed, so I must be an Idiot.”*



## Should & Must

Using critical words can make us feel guilty or like we’ve failed.

When we ‘musterbate’ or ‘should’ ourselves, the result is often frustration or anger.



## Labeling

Assigning labels to ourselves or other people.

*“I’m a loser.”*

*“I’m completely useless.”*

*“They’re such an Idiot.”*



## Personalization

Blaming yourself, or taking responsibility for something that wasn’t your fault.

Or blaming others for something that was your fault.

