












# COMMON AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS:

(Also Called Intrusive Thoughts, Cognitive Distortions or Negative Self-Talk)

<p><b>MENTAL FILTERING:</b> (Tunnel Vision)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hyper focusing on a small negative aspect of a situation &amp; failing to take into consideration the other positive aspects of a situation or the whole picture. In turn, a person might continually ruminate over the negative details for a long period of time &amp; not be able to get past it.</li> <li>People with this form of negative thinking often see their glass as being half empty rather than half full in any situation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS:</b></p> 	<p><b>TWO TYPES OF JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mind Reading:</b> Interpreting the thoughts &amp; beliefs of others without adequate evidence.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Without individuals saying so, a person who jumps to conclusions feels like they know what another person is feeling or thinking &amp; why the other person might be acting in a certain way.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Fortune Telling:</b> Predicting a negative outcome will occur without realistically considering the actual odds of that outcome.</li> </ol>
<p><b>CATASTROPHIZING:</b> (“WHAT IF’S”)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expecting disaster to strike no matter what &amp; tend to only see the worst possible outcome of a situation.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“What if I trip &amp; fall in front of everyone?”, “A storm is coming today, what if there is a tornado?”, “What if I fail my test tomorrow?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>POLARIZED THINKING</b> (“Black and White”, All or Nothing Thinking):</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only looking at situations in terms of one extreme or the other.</li> <li>A situation or a person is either <u>good</u> or <u>bad</u>, <u>success</u> or <u>failure</u> – there is no middle ground. And if you fall short of your expectations, you view yourself as a total failure. But, in reality, most situations are somewhere in the middle.</li> <li>Inability to see the “gray” area</li> </ul>
<p><b>OVERGENERALIZING:</b> “Never” &amp; “Always”</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewing negative experiences as a never-ending pattern of defeat.</li> <li>Assuming one failure will predict ongoing failure in the same activity/task.</li> <li>If something bad happens just once, you expect it to happen over and over again. A person may see a single, unpleasant event as part of a never-ending pattern of defeat.</li> <li><b>Self- limiting Overgeneralization-</b> These thoughts can keep you from taking risks or next steps, harming your career and social life.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PERSONALIZATION &amp;/OR BLAMING:</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blaming yourself for something you weren’t entirely responsible for or blaming others without looking at how your attitude or behaviors contributed to the problem.</li> <li>Seeing themselves as the cause of some unhealthy external event that they were not responsible for.</li> </ul>
<p><b>EMOTIONAL REASONING:</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The assumption that emotions reflect the way things really are.</li> <li>When a person’s emotions take over their thinking entirely, blotting out all rationality and logic.</li> <li>A person assumes their unhealthy emotions reflect the way things really are.</li> </ul>
<p><b>“SHOULD”, “MUST” &amp; “OUGHT” STATEMENTS:</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faulty thinking that contains phrases including “should”, “ought”, “must”.</li> <li>These thoughts can contribute to feelings of fear and worry. They put unreasonable demands and pressure on ourselves, which can make us feel guilty or like we’ve failed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>LABELING:</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assigning labels to ourselves or other people</li> <li>“I am stupid”, “I’m an idiot”, “Failure”</li> </ul>



# How to Challenge *Cognitive Distortions*



©2017 Sharon Martin, LCSW

---

---

- How do I know if this thought is accurate?
- What evidence do I have to support this thought or belief?
- How can I test my assumptions/beliefs to find out if they're accurate?
- Do I have a trusted friend whom I can check out these thoughts with?
- Is this thought helpful?
- Are there other ways that I can think about this situation or myself?
- Am I blaming myself unnecessarily?
- What or who else contributed to this situation?
- Is it really in my control?
- Am I overgeneralizing?
- Am I making assumptions?
- What would I say to a friend in this situation?
- Can I look for “shades of gray”?
- Am I assuming the worst?
- Am I holding myself to an unreasonable or double standard?
- Are there exceptions to these absolutes (always, never)?
- Am I making this personal when it isn't?

# CHALLENGE AUTOMATIC NEGATIVE THOUGHTS WORKSHEET

## 1 RECOGNIZE & ISOLATE THOUGHT

Building awareness allows you an opportunity to challenge and refute those negative thoughts



1. Stop and pause for a moment, recognize what you are thinking isn't quite right
2. Pay attention to your body and emotions
3. Isolate and focus on the irrational thought and try to separate it from who you are
4. Think about what you are thinking about by having an external view of your thought

## 2 WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHT

Focus and think about what the thought is really about and write it out. After writing, you will feel a sense of relief that your mind has been emptied.

## 3 DISTRESS LEVEL

Identify the distress level (0-10):  
0 = Calm    10 = Extreme

## 4 DISTORTION TYPE

Identify the cognitive distortion:  
(Refer to list of cognitive distortions)

## 5 CHALLENGE & REFRAME THOUGHT

Challenge the cognitive distortion by evaluating evidence, focusing on positives, and avoid thinking in extremes (Refer to list of challenges):

1. Challenge & refute negative thoughts
2. Modify language and internal dialogue
3. Replace negative distortions with positive healthy thoughts
4. Write down the more reasonable reframed thought



## 6 REEVALUATE DISTRESS LEVEL

Reevaluate the distress level (0-10) and compare it to step 3. If the distress level has not decreased, consider repeating the exercise again.