

THINKING PATTERNS COMMON WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

The following are examples of common thinking patterns which occur when struggling with anxiety and depression. It is common to overestimate negative threats and underestimate your ability to cope with a stressful situation.



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BLACK OR WHITE THINKING

Pattern of only considering two scenarios. Creative problem solving involves considering at least three options and decreases that likelihood that you are overlooking options.

"She hasn't returned my call. She either hates me or didn't get my message."



BELIEF FILTER

Unchallenged belief which impacts how you process information or view yourself.

Examples of common filters are:

- 1) "I'm stupid."
- 2) "If I gain weight, I'm not beautiful."
- 3) "I have to be wealthy or I'm less than."



EMOTIONAL REASONING

Pattern of allowing your emotions to override your cognitive interpretation of a situation.

"As a parent, I feel guilty for putting my child in time-out. I feel like I'm a bad mom."



JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

Assuming you know what others are thinking or know the outcome of the scenario before it happens.

"I know exactly how this conversation is going to go."



LABELING

Using negative labels to describe yourself and others.

"A sane person wouldn't have thoughts like this. Am I crazy?"



USING ABSOLUTES

Drawing a conclusion based on a singular or repeated event and not considering all the facts. These phrases typically start with words like *always* or *everything*.

"You're always ignoring me!"



SHOULD THINKING

Judging yourself based on what you believe a "good person" would do.

"I know I shouldn't think this way, but I hate feeling like I have to stay at the party all night."



BLOCKING INFORMATION

Cognitive pattern of not acknowledging the good in a situation or a past success. Such as thinking you will not succeed in a task, even though you have never failed at similar tasks.



SELF-SHAMING OR BLAMING

Intense feeling that you are defective and should take responsibility for a negative outcome or situation.

"That went well, but who am I to think I'm so great. I'm such a joke."



CATASTROPHIZE

Jumping to an extreme conclusion and making the situation more dramatic than it needs to be.

"I know you think you're only 15 minutes late, but date night is ruined!"