Unhelpful **Thinking Styles**

Which ones do you need to watch out for?

All or nothing thinking

Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Over-generalising

*"everything is **always** rubbish"*

*"**nothing** good **ever** happens"*

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

Mental filter

Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.
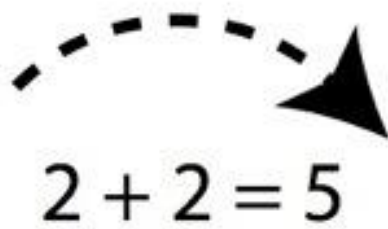
Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

Disqualifying the positive

Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count

Jumping to conclusions

$2 + 2 = 5$

There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:
- **Mind reading** (imagining we know what others are thinking)
- **Fortune telling** (predicting the future)

Magnification (catastrophising) & minimisation

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

Emotional reasoning

Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

should must

Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed

If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration

Labelling

STUPID

Assigning labels to oursleves or other people

I'm a loser
I'm completely useless
They're such an idiot

Personalisation

"this is my fault"

Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.

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Ask yourself: "Has there ever been a time when it was NOT that way?"
"Is what I'm saying 100% TRUE?"
"Things aren't totally black or white. Where is this on the grey zone spectrum?"

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Ask yourself: "Can I find an example of a time when this was NOT true?"
Remember that we tend to see what we want to see, so we have to look on purpose.

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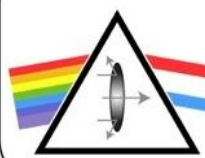
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Ask yourself: "What could the 'silver lining' be?"
Make sure you are counting BOTH the positives & negatives. Make a list.
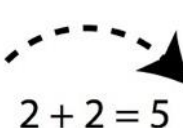
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Accept compliments with a "thank you" rather than disagreeing or debating them.
Purposefully look for the positive. Remember life is a mix of positives & negatives.

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Ask yourself: "How do I know that will happen? How likely is it really?"
Remind yourself that no one can predict the future with 100% accuracy.

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Ask yourself: "Am I exaggerating the negative? Am I minimizing the positive?"
Acknowledge the worst possible case, then imagine the best & most realistic ones.
Think about what you would tell a good friend who was thinking the same thing.

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Remind yourself: "Feelings are NOT facts."
"Just because I feel something is true doesn't make it true."

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Ask yourself: "What rule says it 'should' be..? Do ALL people agree on this 'should'?"
Try substituting "could" or "would" for your "should."
Remember that "shoulds" are really just preferences disguised as demands.

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Ask yourself: "What could be another way of looking at this?"
Be specific, NOT general, when describing someone or something.

Personalisation
"this is my fault"

Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.

Ask yourself: "Realistically, how much of this problem is really my responsibility?"
"Who or what ELSE is involved in this problem?"

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Examples from your life:

All or nothing thinking
Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

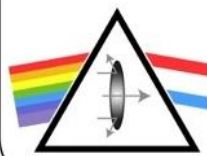*If I'm not perfect I have failed*

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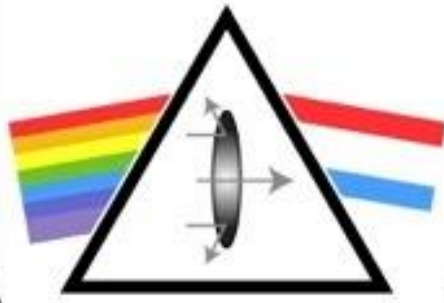
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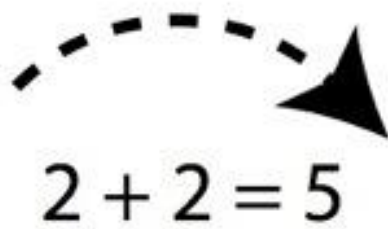
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