

# THINKING ERRORS

EXAMPLES OF COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

THAT SKEW OUR PERCEPTION AND  
DECISION-MAKING

## EXAMPLES OF THINKING ERRORS

- 1. All Mine:** "It's my right. I'm entitled to it".
- 2. All or Nothing:** Thinks in extremes of black and white. No moderation.
- 3. Anger:** Uses anger to control, manipulate, or intimidate others.
- 4. Assuming:** Believes they know how others think and feel without asking them.
- 5. Building self up:** Puts others down to avoid being put down.
- 6. Clinging Vine:** Overly dependent on others. Relies on others for reassurance.
- 7. Closed Channel:** Filters out any messages which contradicts their way of thinking.
- 8. Concrete Thought:** Oversimplifies or overgeneralizes ideas or experience.
- 9. Corrosion and Cut Off:** Blanks out empathy or conscience to avoid dealing with sense of wrongfulness of one's behavior.
- 10. Deferment:** Puts off constructive or corrective action to avoid discomfort.

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- 11. Denial:** Claiming no issue or problem exists, or reducing its importance.
- 12. Disqualifying:** Rejects experience through discounting its importance or value.
- 13. Doormat:** Sub-assertive, submissive, passive-aggressive.
- 14. Excuses:** Unwilling to take responsibility or devises a 'good' reason(s) for bad behavior.
- 15. Fact Stacking:** Arranges information selectively for one's own benefit.
- 16. Failure to Assume Obligation:** Commitment seen as weakness and vulnerability to other control.
- 17. Failure to Assume Responsible Initiative:** Afraid to take on tasks due to anticipation of stress or boredom. Fails to acquire information to succeed at anticipated task.
- 18. Failure to Consider Injury to Others:** Considers costs only to themself. Refusal of empathy.
- 19. Failure to Endure Adversity:** Escapes into criminal or narcissistic thought to avoid dealing with problems.
- 20. Fear of Fear:** Sees fear as failure, since acknowledging fear requires considering consequences, and might stop them from getting what they want.

## EXAMPLES OF THINKING ERRORS

- 21. Feeding Others:** Pushing the listener away by telling him or her what they want to hear.
- 22. Fortune Teller:** Convinced that their prediction is already a fact.
- 23. Fragmentation:** Dismisses emotions or morals when they do not fit current plans.
- 24. Grandiosity:** Extreme self-centeredness or overvaluation of needs.
- 25. Great Expectations:** Optimism to the point of absurdity. No critical thought.
- 26. Helplessness:** Avoids responsibility through primitive behaviors.
- 27. Hop Over:** Diverts conversation to a more comfortable issue.
- 28. I Can't:** Equals "I Won't".
- 29. Jumping to Conclusions:** Negative or overly positive conclusions drawn without objective examination of the facts.
- 30. Justifying:** Claims higher authority or logic to support conclusions made emotionally.

## EXAMPLES OF THINKING ERRORS

**31. Keeping Score:** Stays on top of others through illegitimate criticism or claims.

**32. Labeling:** Uses negative or global terms, e.g. "You're a loser" instead of describing the error specifically. Intellectually lazy conclusions.

**33. Lack of Interest:** Loses interest unless immediate gain or recognition is perceived.

**34. Lack of Time Perspective:** Does not make realistic plan or preparations for one's future.

**35. Lack of Trust:** Demands trust from others, yet will not invest trust in others.

**36. Later, man:** Puts things off due to laziness or to control other, a.k.a. Procrastination.

**37. Lies of Omission:** Tells only part of the truth, selectively leaving out parts they don't want you to know.

**38. Triangulation:** Brings two or more other people into conflict and maintains an innocent posture

**39. Lonerism:** Feels apart from the world; maintains a secretive, non-involved lifestyle. Usually a sign of social incompetence.

**40. Lying:** Confuses others or oneself by intentionally distorting the truth.

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**41. I'm Special and Unique:** "I'm different." "I have special wants." "I'm the most important." Exists at about the five-year-old level of maturity.

**42. User:** Takes advantage of others' good-naturedness or generosity. No guilt.

**43. Vagueness:** Avoids challenge by being nonspecific.

**44. Victim Stance:** Presents self as victim to avoid dealing with perpetrator issues.

**45. Who Cares:** Indifferent, apathetic, detached. Masks anger well.

**46. Worry Wart:** Anxious, obsessive focus on fear, distress, or anticipated negative outcomes.

**47. I'm OK – You're OK:** Gives compliments or uses humor or minimization to avoid conflict, anxiety, or disclosure.

**48. Zero State:** Not aware of emotions; feels like nothing, worthless. Avoids healthy stimulation. Emotional denial.

**49. Blaming:** Uses false assignment of responsibility primitively. Avoids accountability.

**50. Discounting:** Rejects value of experience, positive or negative, by insisting that it "doesn't' count". A special form of minimization AND denial.