# Cognitive Distortions Checklist

Take stock of your negative thought patterns. Think through the specific associated thoughts you have and replace the examples below. Then document if those thoughts happen in specific situations or settings. Write down as many thoughts as come to mind for each category. Leave a category blank if it doesn’t resonate.

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| **Distortion** | **Triggering Thought** | **Triggering Situation** |
| **All-or-Nothing Thinking**:  Do I see things in absolute, black-and-white categories? Do I use words like "always," "never," or "every"? | I didn't get the promotion, so I must be a total failure. |  |
| **Overgeneralization**:  Do I use a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat? Do I often use the phrase “this always happens”? | I failed this assignment. I’m just terrible at everything. |  |
| **Mental Filtering**:  Do I dwell on the negatives and ignore the positives? Do I focus on one small negative detail, allowing it to cloud my view of reality? | I received positive feedback on my work, but I made one mistake, so I'm a failure. |  |
| **Discounting the Positive**:  Do I insist that my accomplishments or positive qualities “don’t count”? Do I turn positive experiences into negative ones? | Sure, I did well on the project, but it was just luck. I'm not really competent. |  |
| **Mind Reading**:  Do I assume that I know what others are thinking, without any evidence? Do I make negative interpretations without definite facts? Do I often engage in assuming people are reacting negatively to me or anticipating that things will turn out badly? | I know my coworker thinks I'm incompetent because I was note invited to the meeting. |  |
| **Catastrophizing**:  Do I exaggerate the importance of my problems or shortcomings? Do I minimize or downplay the significance of my desirable qualities? | If I make a mistake in this presentation, my entire career will be ruined, and I'll never get another opportunity. |  |

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| **Distortion** | **Triggering Thought** | **Triggering Situation** |
| **Emotional Reasoning**:  Do I assume that because I feel a certain way, it must be true? Do I let my feelings guide my interpretation of reality? | I feel like everyone is judging me, so they must be. |  |
| **Self-Blame**:  Do I blame and criticize myself excessively, without considering external circumstances that may have contributed? Do I frequently think negative circumstances are my fault? | My relationship ended, and it's entirely my fault. I'm unlovable and always mess things up. |  |
| **Labeling and Mislabeling**:  Do I attach a rigid and negative label to myself or others based on a single event? Do I use extreme language like "loser," "fool," or "terrible"? | I made a mistake, so I'm a complete idiot. |  |
| **Personalization**:  Do I see myself as the cause of some external event for which I was not primarily responsible? Do I often blame myself for external events outside my control? | My friend canceled plans with me. It must be because I'm boring and unlikable. |  |