

COGNITIVE REFRAMING

Let's review some of the common "cognitive distortions." Cognitive distortions are irrational or unhealthy thinking patterns that affect the way we feel and the way we behave. Cognitive distortions trick our mind into thinking something is true when it really isn't.

1. JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

"Fortune Telling" or "Mind Reading" Believing you know how or what someone else is feeling or believing you can predict an outcome.

"I'm not going to get into college." (When there is no reliable reason to predict this outcome.)
"He didn't call me back. He's probably not interested anymore."

2. EMOTIONAL REASONING

Using emotion to make false judgments. "I feel it; therefore, it must be true."

"I'm feeling really anxious. Something bad must be about to happen."

3. OVERGENERALIZING

Creating a rule after experiencing a coincidence or a single event. The generalization usually includes words like: always, never, all or every.

"My ex cheated. All men are cheaters."

4. BLACK OR WHITE THINKING

Splitting your views or experiences into extremes. Leaving no space for anything in between. There is no middle ground.

"She's has such a beautiful body. I look like trash."

5. CATASTROPHIZING

Taking an unpleasant experience or problem and imagining it as the worst possible outcome.

"If I don't get this job, my entire career will be a failure."

COGNITIVE REFRAMING EXAMPLES

It's important to consider a different view or challenge your distortion with fact checking. Is this a judgement or assumption? Can more than one point of view be considered?

Situation	A few of my friends are going out to dinner and they didn't invite me.
Cognitive Distortion	They don't like me. They probably think I'm boring. I don't have any friends.
Feelings	Lonely, angry, jealous
Unhelpful Behaviors	Ignore my friend on purpose the next time she calls. Not invite any of them out of spite the next time I choose to hang out with other people.
Thought Reframed	It's possible they forgot to invite me or miscommunicated. It's okay for my friends to spend time without me.
Situation	My co-worker walked right by me and didn't even speak.
Cognitive Distortion	I must have done something wrong. They're probably mad at me.
Feelings	Guilt, shame, sadness.
Unhelpful Behaviors	Pretend not to see them the next time and hope they will say something to me about it.
Thought Reframed	They may not have seen me when they walked by. They may have been focused on other things.

COGNITIVE REFRAMING PRACTICE

Situation	
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Cognitive Disortion	
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Feelings	
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Unhelpful Behaviors	
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Thought Reframed	
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Situation	
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Cognitive Disortion	
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Feelings	
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Unhelpful Behaviors	
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Thought Reframed	
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