

Affirmations the Easy Way

Positive affirmations are often the very first step in a larger process of change, they are an acceptance and a mantra for change and help to maintain focus on what you want to achieve. To be effective it is necessary to keep them at the forefront of your consciousness, in this way, your new perspective and attitude can be absorbed into the subconscious and become a part of your new reality. But for many - it is not so easy, because it takes patience and practice—lots of practice.

I worked on "Retaining my Brain," by reading my Affirmation out loud, in front of a mirror. In this way, reading the words with my eyes, moving my lips, hearing the words and watching myself do this all reinforce the Affirmation. I would do one at a time, daily for weeks, until I could believe the truth of it down in my bones—I internalized it. I made it become a Reality in my life.

Positive Affirmations work! Most people know this, but the truth is that they are not always easy to do in an effective way. We have to remember to do them and if we are even slightly resistant to the changes that they might evoke and are uncertain of change, our subconscious may try to find a way of avoiding doing them - and of course - by the very nature of Affirmations - what we REALLY want - we get.

As I sit here working on my computer, now and again I relax and notice the Affirmations posted near my computer screen. One of my favorite Affirmations is here, "I Value and Respect Myself as I Value and Respect Others." When an Affirmation like this slip into my consciousness, it cannot help but be effective because if it feels true - it leaves a warm sense of gratitude and if in that moment it does not feel true - it prompts me to change things and make it true. It is so simple, totally unobtrusive and completely effective!

Behavioral Experiment

Prediction

What is your prediction?

What do you expect will happen?

How would you know if it came true?

Rate how strongly you believe
this will happen (0-100%)

Experiment

What experiment could test this prediction? (where & when)

What safety behaviors will need to be dropped?

How would you know your prediction had come true?

Outcome

What happened?

Was your prediction accurate?

Learning

What did you learn?

How likely is it that your predictions will happen in the future?

Rate how strongly you agree
with your original prediction
now (0-100%)

Behavioral Experiment

(Example)

Prediction

What is your prediction?
What do you expect will happen?
How would you know if it came true?

If I speak in public I will shake so much that people will notice and laugh at me

Rate how strongly you believe this will happen (0-100%)

90%

Experiment

What experiment could test this prediction? (where & when)
What safety behaviors will need to be dropped?
How would you know your prediction had come true?

Speak up at the next meeting on Monday - I could present some of the data that I have been meaning to show.

*Would need to gesture with my hands, and not hold on to the table
I could ask my friends if they noticed me shaking when I talk*

Outcome

What happened?
Was your prediction accurate?

*I was really nervous and was very aware of my hands
My friends said I spoke well and that they could not see me shake*

Learning

What did you learn?
How likely is it that your predictions will happen in the future?

Although I feel nervous when speaking it's not as obvious to other people

Rate how strongly you agree with your original prediction now (0-100%)

50%

Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts

Take a specific thought and test it. Ask questions to test if the belief has any real basis.

Unhelpful Thought



Challenges

What is the evidence that contradicts this thought?

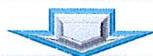
What would you say to a friend who had this thought in a similar situation?

What are the benefits and costs of thinking this way?

- Benefits:

- Costs:

What are other ways of looking at this situation?



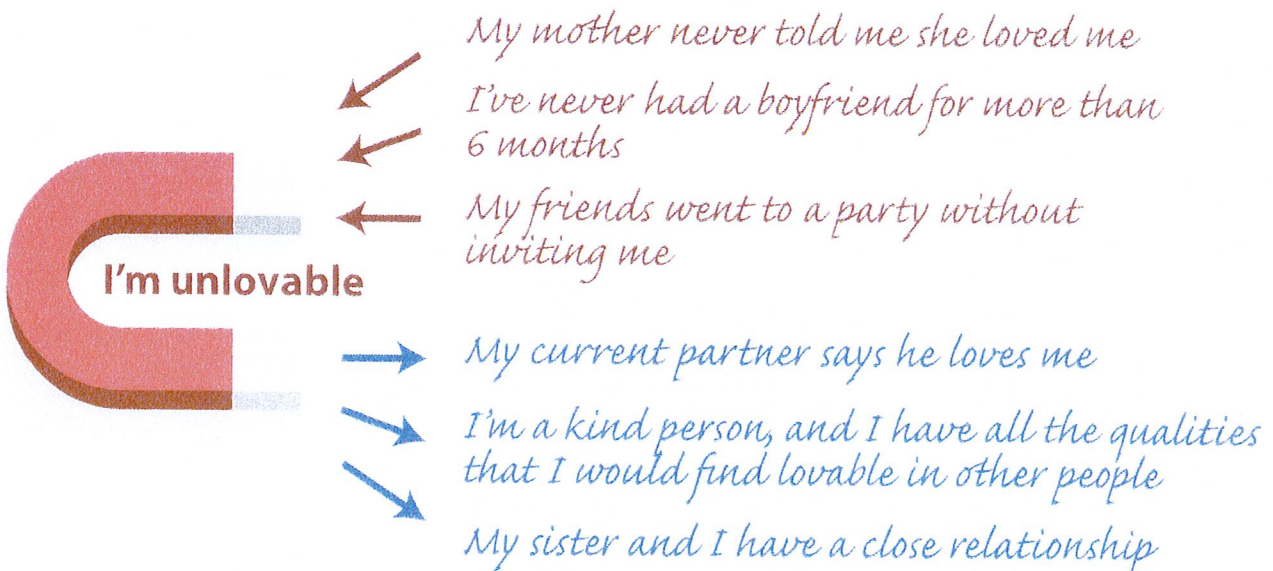
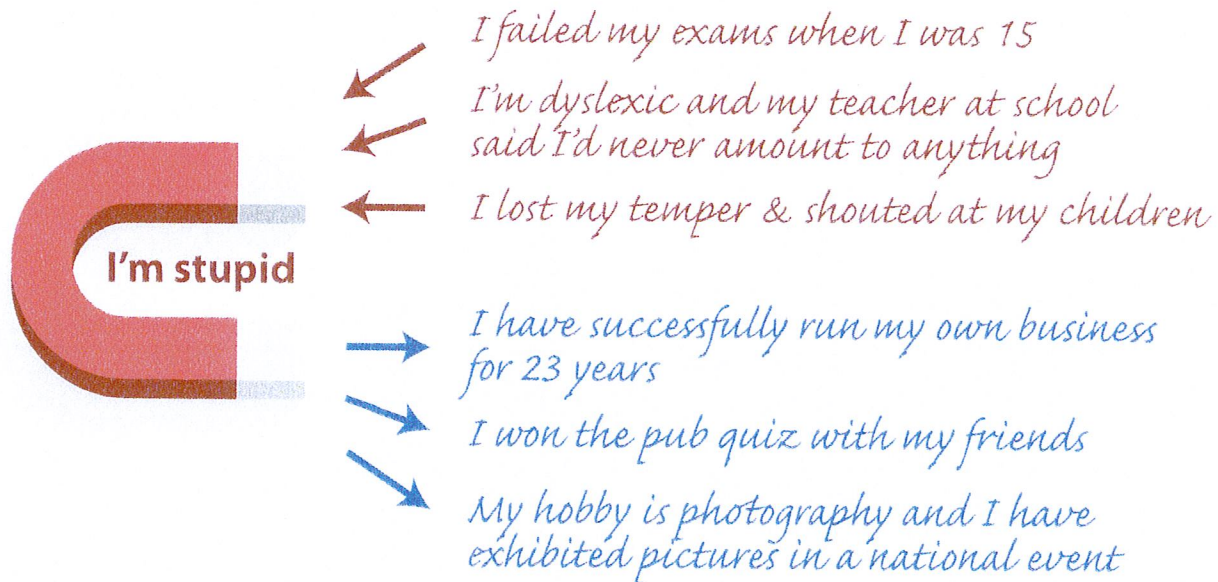
Balanced Thought

Core Beliefs

Core beliefs are like magnets. They are always waiting to **attract** evidence which confirms them. The more evidence they collect, the stronger they get.

Unfortunately they **repel** anything which does not 'fit' with the belief. This makes it hard to 'see' or believe anything which would contradict or undermine them.

Core beliefs are not facts. With persistence they can be altered.



Decatastrophising

What is the catastrophe that I am worried about?

Clearly state: What am I worried will happen? What am I predicting will happen?

Change any "what if..." statements into clear predictions about what you fear will happen

Rate how awful you believe this catastrophe will be (0-100%)

How *likely* is this event to happen?

Has anything this bad ever happened to you before?

How often does this kind of thing happen to you?

Realistically, is this likely to happen now?

How *awful* would it be if this did happen?

What is the worst case scenario?

What is the best case scenario?

What would a friend say to me about my worry?

Just supposing the worst did happen, what would I do to *cope*?

Has anything similar happened before? How did I cope then?

Who or what could I call on to help me get through it?

What resources, skills, or abilities would be helpful to me if it did happen?

What positive & reassuring thing do you want to say to yourself about the 'catastrophe' now?

What would I like to hear to reassure me?

What tone of voice would I want to hear that reassurance in?

Rate how awful you believe this catastrophe will be now (0-100%)

What is the catastrophe that I am worried about?

Clearly state. What am I worried will happen? What am I predicting will happen?
Change any "what if ...?" statements into clear predictions about what you fear will happen

What if something bad happens?

☹️ Too general

What if my health never gets better?

😐 "what if ...?"

My health will never get better

😊 Specific

Rate how awful you believe this catastrophe will be (0-100%)

90%

How likely is this event to happen?

Has anything this bad ever happened to you before?
How often does this kind of thing happen to you?
Realistically, is it likely to happen now?

Unlikely - I've been ill before and got better

Unlikely - the doctor said most people recover fully from this condition

How awful would it be if this did happen?

What is the worst case scenario?
What is the best case scenario?
What would a friend say to me about my worry?

It would be bad if it did happen - I would have to give up work, and would struggle to look after my family. My husband and I might be able to find a way to manage

Just supposing the worst did happen, what would I do to cope?

Has anything similar happened before? How did I cope then?
Who or what could I call on to help me get through it?
What resources, skills, or abilities would be helpful to me if it did happen?

We coped when I was ill before. I could still do some things, and family helped us. We've got savings, and have made changes to our lifestyle before

What positive & reassuring thing do you want to say to yourself about the 'catastrophe' now?

What would I like to hear to reassure me?
What tone of voice would I want to hear that reassurance in?

It's scary being ill, but what I'm afraid of is unlikely to happen. It's never happened before, and things never stay at their worst forever.

Rate how awful you believe this catastrophe will be now (0-100%)

30%

Decatastrophising

Specify the catastrophic consequence clearly

Change any "what if ...?" statements into concrete declarations of fact

Challenge the truth of this statement

Has anything this bad ever happened before?
How often does this kind of thing happen?
Is this likely to happen now?

What would a friend say if I told them this worry?
Is this statement likely to be completely true?
Are there any reasons to doubt this statement?

Come up with three positive alternative statements

Decatastrophising

(Example)

Specify the catastrophic consequence clearly

What if something bad happens?

✗ Very general

What if my health never gets better?

✓ Specific

Change any "what if ...?" statements into concrete declarations of fact

My health will never get better

Challenge the truth of this statement

Has anything this bad ever happened before?
How often does this kind of thing happen?
Is this likely to happen now?

What would a friend say if I told them this worry?
Is this statement likely to be completely true?
Are there any reasons to doubt this statement?

My health is bad now, but I've been ill before and got better
The doctor said most people recover fully from this condition
My husband said he would help even if things stayed bad

Come up with three positive alternative statements

My health will probably get better
I'm at my worst now - even if I don't recover fully I'm likely to get better than this
Even while I'm ill I'm able to do some things I enjoy

FEAR - What is it? False Evidence Appearing Real

Did you know that over 87% of the world's population lives their life ruled by FEAR? Isn't that scary!! (couldn't help that sorry :-))

The research done by Dr. David Hawkins for his best selling book *Power vs. Force* shows us that this is a reality of not only the times in which we are now living, but a representation of the whole of human existence.

The question I would like to pose is how do you see FEAR? We all have it, in many different forms, yet it is how we *think* about fear that determines whether we are able to crush through the barrier or not.

Let's say that we use either an image of a brick wall to represent FEAR or an image of perhaps.... a frosted glass window?

Now which image conjures up feelings of whether we are able to 'break through the fear barrier' or not? Do you agree that if you use a brick wall as the symbol of your fear, then it stands to reason that you probably may NEVER attempt to break through it? Actually let's be honest here, if the subconscious mind has been trained to just *accept* that the brick wall exists, and then there has probably never even been a single conscious thought to bring awareness to its existence.

Before we get into that on a deeper level, let's go back to the image of a frosted glass window. This may actually represent at least an acknowledgement that the fear exists. It would be

like feeling it, knowing there is something on the other side, but you can't see it. The glass is cold to touch, yet kind of exhilarating when you do touch it. If you were to break the glass, you may get hurt, there may be cuts and some blood - but you know that you can heal. This image is a more appropriate "wall to break through" - do you agree?

So if **Fear is False Evidence Appearing Real**, that means *we* create it and it usually comes from the unknown. Here's a thought...it has been said that we are only aware of less than 10% of everything that exists, can be or is.... so does that mean we are facing FEAR everyday? YES IT DOES!

Here is a quick checklist of how to identify what your fears are, discover if they are actually YOUR fears (not just the residual effect of someone else), finally a few steps to start overcoming them.

Overcoming Fear:-

- Acknowledge it. Become fully aware of what is stopping you from moving forward.
- Identify what's behind the fear
- Talk yourself through the what if's
- be objective, the fear is only there to test you

**The feeling that you have when you break through Fear
Is Utter Joy.**

You Can Do It!

Green Eggs and Ham

By Dr Seuss

Do you like green eggs and ham?
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.
I do not like green eggs and ham.

Would you like them here or there?
I would not like them here or there.
I would not like them anywhere.
I do not like green eggs and ham.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

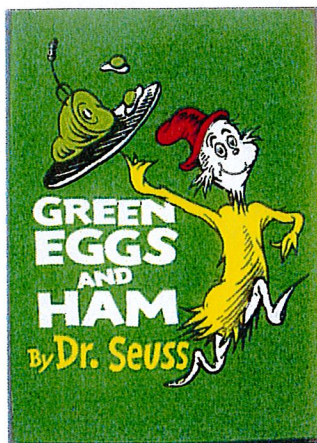
Would you like them in a house?
Would you like them with a mouse?
I do not like them in a house.
I do not like them with a mouse.
I do not like them here or there.
I do not like them anywhere.
I do not like green eggs and ham.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

Would you eat them in a box?
Would you eat them with a fox?
Not in a box. Not with a fox.
Not in a house. Not with a mouse.
I would not like them here or there.
I would not like them anywhere.
I do not like green eggs and ham.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

Would you? Could you? In a car?
eat them! eat them! Here they are!
I would not, could not, in a car.

You may like them. You will see.
You may like them in a tree.
I would not, could not in a tree.
Not in a car! You let me be!
I do not like them in a box.
I do not like them with a fox.
I do not like them in a house.
I do not like them with a mouse.
I do not like them here or there.
I do not like them anywhere.
I do not like green eggs and ham.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

A train! A train! A train! A train!
Could you, would you, on a train?
Not in a train! Not in a tree!
Not in car, Sam! Let me be!
I would not, could not, in a box.
I would not, could not, with a fox.
I will not eat them with a mouse.
I will not eat them in a house.
I will not eat them here or there.
I will not eat them anywhere.
I do not like green eggs and ham.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.



How *many* times does
the responder say
"NO" to Sam-I-am?

Modifying Rules & Assumptions

What is the rule (or assumption) I live by that I would like to modify?

How does this rule (or assumption) affect me in my day to day life?

What are the origins of this rule (or assumption)?

Where did I learn it? What was going on in my earlier life that meant this may have been a helpful rule at the time?

What are the advantages of this rule (or assumption)?

What are the disadvantages of this rule (or assumption)?

Is there an alternative to my rule (or assumption) that would be more flexible?

This may take more words to express than the original rule. Is there a new rule (or assumption) that would allow you to get most of the advantages with fewer of the disadvantages? How can you put this new rule (or assumption) into practice?

Modifying Rules & Assumptions

(Example)

What is the rule (or assumption) I live by that I would like to modify?

If I'm not the best or I'm a failure (assumption)

How does this rule (or assumption) affect me in my day to day life?

It means I try really hard at whatever I do. I set myself incredibly high standards which are tough to live up to. I'm always worried up slipping up and making mistakes.

What are the origins of this rule (or assumption)?

Where did I learn it? What was going on in my earlier life that meant this may have been a helpful rule at the time?

*My parents were very driven. Dad's motto was "second is just a fancy word for losing".
As a child I got lots of praise for succeeding.*

What are the advantages of this rule (or assumption)?

It means that I try hard and I have achieved a lot in my life

As a child I got my parents' approval

It keeps me motivated

What are the disadvantages of this rule (or assumption)?

I'm exhausted!

I'm always checking to make sure I'm not making mistakes

I can never let myself relax - I don't think it makes me a nice person

Is there an alternative to my rule (or assumption) that would be more flexible?

This may take more words to express than the original rule. Is there a new rule (or assumption) that would allow you to get most of the advantages with fewer of the disadvantages? How can you put this new rule (or assumption) into practice?

Doing a good job is good enough in this life. Not being the best doesn't make me a failure.

Real life isn't a competition - there's no medal for being the best.

It's more important for me to have a balance in life and try to enjoy it than to beat myself about achieving all the time.

Name _____ Date _____

Self Esteem/Self Concept

Self-awareness is essential for success in our lives. We need to know ourselves from the inside out. We must develop a clear picture and understanding of our Self Esteem and Self Concept.

1. How do you see yourself?
2. What are your strengths?
3. What makes you unique?
4. What are your weaknesses?
5. What do you expect/demand of yourself?
6. What can keep you moving forward?

I Love Being Me

by Gemma Hayton

I can't run the fastest
I can't swim the sea
I can't type the quickest
but I love being me

I can't kick a ball
or even climb a tree
I can't roll in the grass
but I still love being me

You see, this is my life
as others would see
they don't know what it's like
to really be me

So next time I'm about
rolling down the street
don't think of me disabled
but someone cool to meet

I have lots I can teach you
I have loads I can share
you will never gain my wisdom
if you just point and stare

So maybe I can't run the fastest
maybe I can't kick a ball
but I wouldn't change being me
not for you, not at all

Stages of Social Anxiety

Before ○—○—○
Anticipatory anxiety

The Problem

During ○—●—○
Excessive self-focus / Effort to stay safe

After ○—○—○
Dwelling on what went wrong

Before ○—○—○
Calming down

The Solution

During ○—●—○
Notice what is actually happening

After ○—○—○
Focusing on what went well

Stages of Social Anxiety

(Example)

The Problem

Before ○-○-○ Anticipatory anxiety

- Thinking of the worst-case scenario
- Thinking about different ways it could go wrong
- Focusing on how bad it feels

During ○-●-○ Excessive self-focus / Effort to stay safe

Monitoring:

- how I think I look
- how I think I sound
- how I feel

Doing things to keep me safe

- staying quiet
- rushing
- trying to control how I look or sound
- worrying what others think of me

After ○-○-● Dwelling on what went wrong

- Focusing on parts that went 'wrong'
- Worrying about how I looked or sounded
- Thinking about what I 'should' have done or could have done differently
- Being self-critical (speaking to myself harshly / bullying)

The Solution

Before ○-○-○ Calming down

- Imaginal rehearsal
- Thought challenging
- Decatastrophising
- Relaxed breathing
- Muscle relaxation

During ○-●-○ Notice what is actually happening

Look around and check

- what are others saying
- what are they doing

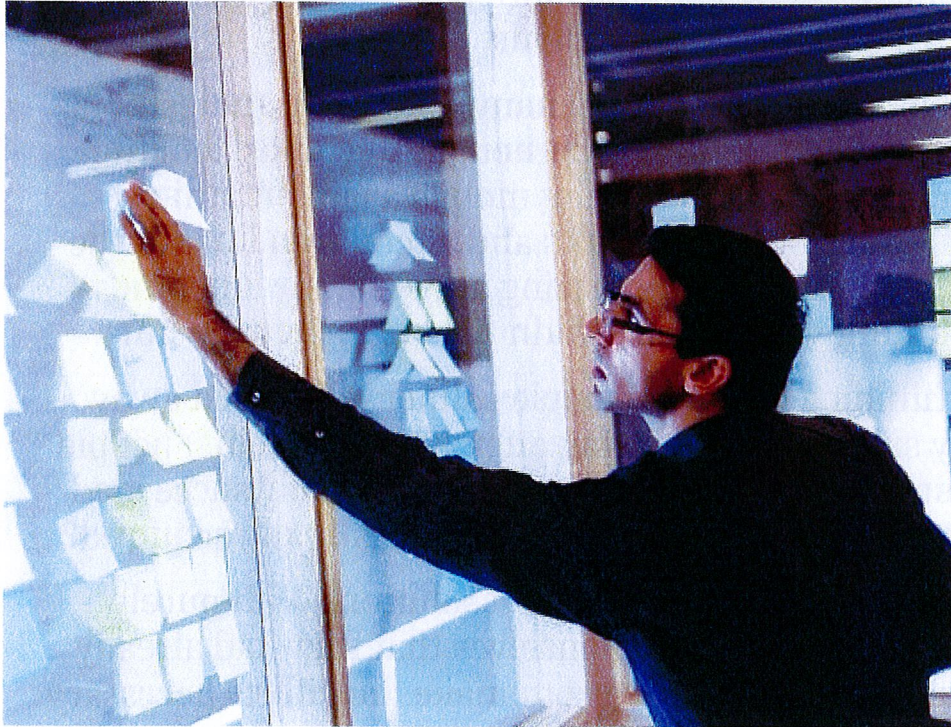
Be mindful

- stay with the anxiety
- resist / notice the urge to escape or hide

After ○-○-○ Focusing on what went well

- Write down what went well
- Commit to repeating the experience

This Easy 'Mental Contrasting' Technique Can Help You Achieve Your Goals



BY ERIK
SHERMAN, INC.

It's clear that, when used properly, [negativity can help you](#) succeed and that [positive thinking can be a trap](#). That's not to suggest positive thinking is a waste of time. If you literally expected to fail every time you started a venture, chances are that you would. Mental attitudes can have an enormous effect on psychology and even physiology. There are many from the world of business who would emphasize how important positive thinking can be.

But, according to Gabriele Oettingen, a professor of psychology at New York University and the University of Hamburg, "[positive thinking often hinders us](#)" because of an inherent flaw in the approach. The good news is it doesn't have to if you take a specific corrective step.

First, the problem. As Oettingen and her colleagues learned, positive thinking about future outcomes can, perversely, make the goals harder to achieve. For example, more than 20 years ago, she helped run a study in which women were in a weight loss program. One group of

women were told to imagine that they had succeed and lost weight-- just the type of positive thinking that we're all often told to employ. The other group was to imagine situations in which they cheated on their diets.

A year later, the women who tried to be more positive lost less weight than the ones who tried to imagine problems.

Oettingen and her colleagues have done many follow-up studies looking at other types of goal setting, whether getting dates, looking for jobs, getting good grades, or becoming mobile again after hip surgery. Different studies looked at adults and at children in both the U.S. and Germany. Each time, "[f]antasizing about happy outcomes-- about smoothly attaining your wishes--didn't help." It actually hurt.

Although positive thinking did make people calmer, it drained away the drive to actually succeed. By focusing on positive thoughts, people literally tricked their minds into thinking they had already succeeded and, so, who needed actual efforts to get something already acquired?

Completely dumping positive thinking isn't a solution. With purely negative thought, people convinced themselves that they had already lost the goal so, again, there was no need to make the efforts necessary to achieve it.

What Oettingen suggests instead is a technique called "mental contrasting." First spend a few minutes thinking of a goal and imagining that you are achieving it and then switch over to thinking about the obstacles that will get in your way. "When participants have performed mental contrasting with reasonable, potentially attainable wishes, they have come away more energized and achieved better results compared with participants who either positively fantasized or dwelt on the obstacles," she writes.

Read more: <http://www.inc.com/erik-sherman/how-to-make-positive-thinking-really-work-for-you.htmls#ixzz3bMMeKvQW>

<http://www.businessinsider.com/this-easy-mental-contrasting-technique-can-help-you-achieve-your-goals-2014-10>

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

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

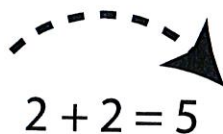
Disqualifying the positive



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

That doesn't count

Jumping to conclusions



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



Assigning labels to ourselves 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.