



JARGON BUSTING: COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

The term 'Cognitive Distortion' refers to patterns of thinking where your mind convinces you that something that isn't true is true. For example, you may convince yourself that your reason for not going out is completely rational, when truly it is not. There are many types of distortions, here are some common ones that we look out for in therapy.

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1 BLACK & WHITE THINKING

This is when our view of something or someone becomes polarised as either all good, or all bad.

2 CATASTROPHISING

This is when we become fixated on the very worst possible outcome of a situation. Becoming consumed by the worst outcome possible is highly anxiety provoking and yet research shows the worst outcome rarely happens when we catastrophise.

3 FILTERING

This is where we filter out parts of our experience that do not match our negative expectations. It is the reason some people hold on to minor criticisms over and above praise.

4 OVER GENERALISING

This is where we come to broad and general conclusion of a situation, person or collective based on limited experience.

5 PERSONALISATION

This is the experience of giving a greater gravity to other persons perception of you than is just. A common example is believing that people are judging you when you walk past, where in reality most people are too consumed in their own world to notice.

6 FALLACY OF FAIRNESS

This is where you hold a strong belief in a sense of fairness, yet others from a different view point disagree with you. Fairness feels like a fact, yet in truth it is an subjective experience with each of us having our own unique truth about what we see as being 'fair'.

7 BELIEF IN 'SHOULD'S'

Life would be much easier if there was one big rule book that we all followed consistently. But as there is not, we often try to create rules about how things 'should' be. This helps us in many ways, but leads us to feel angry, confused and hurt when life just isn't the way it 'should' be.

