Common tricky thinking styles

MENTAL FILTER

Filtering information around you, ignoring anything that doesn't 'fit' and noticing only what the filter wants you to notice.

Am I only noticing the bad bits? Am I filtering out the positives? What would be more realistic?

JUDGEMENTS

Making judgements about ourselves and others, or the world rather than describing what we can actually see and have evidence for.

Is there another way of seeing this?

PREDICTION

Believing we know what is going to happen in the future - usually predicting bad things will happen.

Can I predict the future, how likely is it that it might really happen?

EMOTIONAL REASONING

Understanding the situation based on how you feel - "I feel bad so it must be bad", "I feel anxious so I must be in danger".

Just because it feels bad doesn't necessarily mean it is bad. My feelings are just a reaction to my thoughts.

MIND-READING

Imagining what other people are thinking even though you don't know if it is true or not.

Are you assuming you know what others are thinking? What is the evidence? Those are my thoughts, not theirs.

MOUNTAINS AND MOLEHILLS

Exaggerating the risk or the negatives, and minimising the positives or odds of how likely it will turn out.

Are you exaggerating the situation? How might someone else see it?

COMPARE AND DESPAIR

Comparing ourselves negatively against others and seeing only the good in them.

What would be a more balanced and helpful way of looking at it?

CATASTROPHISING

Imagining and believing the worst possible thing will happen, and underestimating your ability to cope.

Is there another way of seeing this? What is most likely to happen?