

Patterns of Problematic Thinking Worksheet

Listed below are several types of patterns of problematic thinking that people use in different life situations. These patterns often become automatic, habitual thoughts that cause us to engage in self-defeating behavior. Considering your own stuck points, find examples for each of these patterns. Write in the stuck point under the appropriate pattern and describe how it fits that pattern. Think about how that pattern affects you.

1. **Jumping to conclusions** when the evidence is lacking or even contradictory.
2. **Exaggerating or minimizing** a situation (blowing things way out of proportion or shrinking their importance inappropriately).
3. **Disregarding important aspects** of a situation.
4. **Oversimplifying** things as good/bad or right/wrong.
5. **Over-generalizing** from a single incident (a negative event is seen as a never-ending pattern).
6. **Mind reading** (you assume people are thinking negatively of you when there is no definite evidence for this).
7. **Emotional reasoning** (you have a feeling and assume there must be a reason).

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1. **Jumping to conclusions** when the evidence is lacking or even contradictory.
(Sexual assault victim/combat veteran) If a man is alone with a child, then the man will hurt the child.
2. **Exaggerating or minimizing** a situation (blowing things way out of proportion or shrinking their importance inappropriately).
I saw a dead body and riots but I didn't get hurt and others saw worse so my reaction to the situation was wrong. I was weak.
3. **Disregarding important aspects** of a situation.
I keep forgetting the fact that the perpetrator had a knife, which is important information about how much control I had.
4. **Oversimplifying** things as good/bad or right/wrong.
It was wrong for me to run from the dead body or hide while in Cuba.
5. **Over-generalizing** from a single incident (a negative event is seen as a never-ending pattern).
I was raped by my grandfather, so when I see old men that look like him, I think they must be like him.
6. **Mind reading** (you assume people are thinking negatively of you when there is no definite evidence for this).
My dad yells now, so I assume he must be angry. But it's not true a lot of the times, as he yells sometimes because he is deaf in one ear and going deaf in another. He yells because he doesn't know he is yelling.
7. **Emotional reasoning** (you have a feeling and assume there must be a reason).
I cried and felt guilty when dad yelled at me when I got hurt, so I must have done something wrong.