

Cognitive Distortions Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____

This worksheet helps you identify common cognitive distortions (thinking errors) that may contribute to emotional distress. By recognizing these patterns, you can begin to challenge them and develop more balanced ways of thinking.

Instructions

Think about a recent situation that caused emotional discomfort.

Situation

Briefly describe the situation:

Cognitive Distortions Checklist

Review the list of cognitive distortions below and check any that may have influenced your thinking.

Check all that apply:

All-or-Nothing Thinking

Seeing things in black-and-white categories with no middle ground.

Example: *"If I don't do this perfectly, I'm a complete failure."*

Overgeneralization

Drawing broad conclusions from a single event.

Example: *"I made one mistake, so I always mess things up."*

Mental Filter

Focusing exclusively on the negative while ignoring positives.

Example: *"Everyone complimented my presentation except one person, so it must have been terrible."*

Discounting the Positive

Rejecting positive experiences by insisting they don't count.

Example: *"They were just being nice."*

Jumping to Conclusions

Making assumptions without sufficient evidence.

Example: "They frowned, that must mean they're mad at me."

Mind Reading

Assuming you know what others are thinking (crystal ball thinking).

Example: *"They think I'm incompetent."*

Fortune Telling

Predicting negative outcomes as if they are facts (crystal ball thinking).

Example: **"This is definitely going to end badly."**

Catastrophizing

Expecting the worst possible outcome.

Example: *"If I make a single mistake, everything will fall apart."*

Emotional Reasoning

Believing something is true because it feels true.

Example: *"I feel inadequate, so I must be inadequate."*

Should Statements

Using rigid rules for yourself or others.

Example: *"I should always be strong."*

Labeling

Assigning global negative labels to yourself or others.

Example: *"I'm a loser."*

Personalization

Taking personal responsibility for events that are not entirely under your control.

Example: *"It's my fault everyone is upset."*

Magnification

Exaggerating the importance of problems or mistakes.

Example: *"This error ruined everything."*

Minimization

Downplaying your strengths or accomplishments.

Example: *"That success wasn't a big deal."*

Comparison Thinking

Measuring your worth against others in an unfair or unrealistic way.

Example: "Everyone else has their life together except me."

Reflection

Which distortions did you identify? List them here.

Which distortion seems to occur most often for you? Why?

How might you challenge or reframe these thoughts?

Balanced Perspective

Choose one distorted thought and rewrite it in a more balanced and realistic way.

Original Thought:

Balanced Thought:
