

9 Cognitive Distortions Quick Reference

Instructions: *Use this guide to spot unhelpful thinking patterns that can fuel stress, overwhelm, or avoidance. Awareness is the first step toward reframing thoughts in a more balanced, supportive way.*

- ✓ Review this list when you feel stuck, discouraged, or emotionally flooded.
- ✓ Highlight or circle any patterns you notice in your own thoughts.

Tip: Pair this with a journal page or reflection tool to practice reframing.

9 Common Cognitive Distortions

1. **All-or-Nothing Thinking:** Seeing things in black-and-white terms; if it's not perfect, it feels like a failure.
2. **Catastrophizing:** Expecting the worst possible outcome, or seeing small issues as huge disasters.
3. **Overgeneralization:** Believing that one setback means a pattern will always repeat.
4. **Mental Filtering:** Focusing only on the negatives and ignoring positives or neutral facts.
5. **Mind Reading:** Assuming you know what others are thinking (usually in a negative way).
6. **Fortune Telling:** Predicting the future negatively, as if it's a certainty.
7. **Labeling:** Assigning harsh, global labels to yourself or others ("I'm a failure," "They're useless").
8. **Should Statements:** Judging yourself (or others) by rigid rules: "I should do this," "I must always..."
9. **Personalization:** Blaming yourself for things outside your control, or assuming everything relates to you.

👉 Pair this guide with our *Small Wins Journal* or *Thought Reframe Journal Page*.

👉 Try jotting down alternative, kinder thoughts when you spot a distortion.