



## Cognitive Therapy: Common Thinking Errors

Anxiety thrives on distorted thinking patterns — quick shortcuts your brain takes that feel true but aren't accurate. These thinking errors make situations feel more threatening than they really are. By spotting them, you can slow down and reframe your thoughts more realistically.

### Step 1: Review the List Below

Circle or check the thinking errors you notice in yourself most often:

- **Catastrophizing:** expecting the absolute worst outcome.
- **All-or-Nothing Thinking:** seeing things in black-and-white categories (success/failure, good/bad).
- **Overgeneralization:** assuming one event means “always” or “never.”
- **Mind Reading:** assuming you know what others are thinking.
- **Fortune Telling:** predicting the future without evidence.
- **Should Statements:** rigid rules for yourself or others (“I should always...”).
- **Emotional Reasoning:** assuming feelings = facts (“I feel anxious, so it must be dangerous”).
- **Personalization:** blaming yourself for things outside your control.
- **Labeling:** reducing yourself/others to a negative label (“I’m a failure”).

### Step 2: Apply It to Your Recent Thoughts

Go back to your catastrophic thoughts from last week. For each thought, identify which thinking errors were at play.

Catastrophic Thought	Thinking Error(s) Involved
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### Step 3: Reflection

- Which 1–2 errors do you notice showing up the most?
- How does naming the error change how you feel about the thought?
- How could you remind yourself in the moment: “This is just my \_\_\_ error talking”?