Unhelpful Thinking Styles

Feeling stressed? Thoughts like these do NOT help ...

- **All or nothing thinking**  
  Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'
  - If I’m not perfect I have failed
  - Either I do it right or not at all

- **Over-generalising**  
  Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw
  - Everything is always rubbish
  - Nothing good ever happens

- **Mental filter**  
  Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.
  - Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

- **Disqualifying the positive**  
  Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another
  - That doesn’t count

- **Jumping to conclusions**  
  There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:
  - Mind reading (imagining we know what others are thinking)
  - Fortune telling (predicting the future)
  - 2 + 2 = 5

- **Magnification (catastrophising) & minimisation**  
  Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important

- **Emotional reasoning**  
  Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.
  - I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

- **should must**  
  Using critical words like ‘should’, ‘must’, or ‘ought’ can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed
  - If we apply ‘shoulds’ to other people the result is often frustration

- **Labelling**  
  Assigning labels to ourselves or other people
  - I’m a loser
  - I’m completely useless
  - They’re such an idiot

- **Personalisation**  
  Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn’t completely your fault.
  Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.
  - “this is my fault”