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

- **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

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

- **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”

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Burns, David (1980)
Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy

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