



## Don't be a "Limited-Thinker"

**Filtering** The focus is on the negative details of a situation and all of the positive aspects of a situation remain unrecognized or ignored

**Polarized Thinking** This is often called black and white thinking because something is either good or bad, right or wrong, successful or unsuccessful. There is no middle ground in polarized thinking.

**Overgeneralization** This thinking belongs to the individual who has something happen to them once and they immediately draw a conclusion about a person, place, thing, or situation. A single event or action takes on a negative global label.

**Mind Reading** This thinking assumes knowledge about what a person is thinking or feeling or why someone is acting in a certain way. Usually the assumed knowledge is about how others think or feel about you.

**Catastrophizing** Just say there is a problem and this person can easily visualize every conceivable thing that could go wrong.

**Magnifying** This thinking takes a situation and exaggerates it. The situation described is bigger, more intense, has greater consequences, and is more negative than actually warranted.

**Personalization** This thinking assumes that everything others do is a reaction to something you have said or done. Thinking becomes competitive in that the person compares him or herself to others trying to decide who is smarter, more organized, or better at a given task.

**Shoulds** There are absolute rules about how you and other should act. When other people break the rules this kind of thinking creates anger in us, and when we break the rules we feel guilty.

### **Self-Insight Activity**

What is your pattern?

How can you challenge your thinking pattern?

Is what I am thinking absolutely true?

What evidence do I have that supports my thinking?

What would be an alternative or more balanced statement?

*The eight patterns of thinking outlined above are from: "Thoughts and Feelings - Taking Control of Your Moods and Your Life" by Matthew McKay, Martha Davis, and Patrick Fanning*