

# Thinking Error Exercise

**Directions:** Match the Thinking Errors from the list that are used in the scenario.

1. You are a house wife, and your heart sinks when your husband has just complained disgruntled that the roast beef was overdone. The following thought crosses your mind: "I'm a total failure. \_\_\_\_\_ I can't stand it! \_\_\_\_\_ I never do anything right. \_\_\_\_\_ I work like a slave and this all the thanks I get? \_\_\_\_\_ The jerk! \_\_\_\_\_ These thoughts cause you to feel sad and angry.
  2. You are working on a community project and you have some ideas that you're excited about. You tell one of your fellow workers some of the ideas that have been on your mind. He turns around and uses one of your ideas as his own. When confronted with this he said he didn't remember you talking with him about those thoughts. You feel hurt and angry because you think, "I just know he remembers us talking about that. \_\_\_\_\_ Why does he enjoy stealing my ideas? \_\_\_\_\_ He always does things to benefit himself." \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Your date calls you at the last minute to cancel out because of illness. You feel angry and disappointed because you think, "I'm getting stood up. \_\_\_\_\_ What did I do to foul things up?" \_\_\_\_\_
  4. You've been trying to diet. This weekend you've been nervous, and, since you didn't have anything to do, you've been nibbling. After your fourth piece of candy, you tell yourself, "I just can't control myself. \_\_\_\_\_ My dieting and jogging all week have gone down the drain. \_\_\_\_\_ I must look like a balloon. \_\_\_\_\_ I shouldn't have eaten that. \_\_\_\_\_ I can't stand this. \_\_\_\_\_ I'm going to pig out all weekend!" You begin to feel so guilty you push another handful of candy into your mouth in an aborted effort to feel better.
  5. A close friend has just passed away and you're taking it hard. You feel sad and angry because you think, "I will never get to see them again. \_\_\_\_\_ They always gave me the best advice and now I won't receive it anymore. \_\_\_\_\_ Why did God allow this to happen?" \_\_\_\_\_
- A. Using names or label for people, things or situations to justify not liking them, it, or the situation.
  - B. Jumping to conclusions without taking the time to gather the facts.
  - C. Mind Reading: concluding what others think without proof.
  - D. Emotional reasoning: if it's felt, then it must be so.
  - E. Personalization: taking events and statements personally.
  - F. Polarized thinking: an event is either good or bad.
  - G. Overgeneralization: seeing events in terms of always or never.
  - H. Maximizing: blowing events and statements out of proportion.
  - I. Minimizing: making less out of events than what they merit.
  - J. Filtering out the positive in order to point out the negative.
  - K. Blaming: placing blame on others or things and finding fault.
  - L. Poor me thinking: self-pity, gloom and doom.
  - M. Controlling: attempting to control others and situations.
  - N. Being right: insisting on being right no matter what.
  - O. Heaven's reward fallacy: bad things don't happen to good people.
  - P. Should statements: using shoulds, shouldn'ts, musts and oughts to motivate yourself through guilt.

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1. A teacher at your child's school calls you and says that your kid has not been turning in his homework and is failing his tests. You're frustrated because you think, "This is all my fault. \_\_\_\_\_ I'm a bad parent and I should have been able to prevent this. \_\_\_\_\_ If I had evaluated his homework more, he wouldn't be struggling right now." \_\_\_\_\_
  2. You receive a layoff notice from your employer. You feel mad and frustrated. You think, "This proves the world is no good. \_\_\_\_\_ I never get a break. \_\_\_\_\_ Why does God continue to punish me?" \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Your boss has a meeting with you about your work performance. He says you talk too much and you're not getting enough done. You walk out of his office heated! You think, "That hypocrite! \_\_\_\_\_ He doesn't do a thing around this office but run his mouth. \_\_\_\_\_ I knew he didn't like me when I started here." \_\_\_\_\_
  4. You and your friends are going to grab a bite to eat. The three of you are trying to figure out who should drive. You say "I'll drive" and your friend says that he'll drive. This makes you mad because you think, "He must think I'm a bad driver. \_\_\_\_\_ If I drive then I can leave when I want to." \_\_\_\_\_
  5. You see your friends leave after church service to get something to eat and they didn't invite you. You're sad because you think, "They must not like me anymore. \_\_\_\_\_ What did I do to offend them? \_\_\_\_\_ I don't know why I can't keep any friends." \_\_\_\_\_
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