

Recognizing
Self-Limiting
Cognitive
Activity





*What was unconscious and
compulsive, becomes conscious
and a matter of choice.
You are set free.*

~ Zivorad M. Slavinski



*Don't wait until you're in the middle
of a fire to practice a fire drill.*

~ Dick Olney



Manifestations of Self-Limiting
Cognitive Activity

Injunctions



Manifestations of Self-Limiting
Cognitive Activity

**Cognitive
Distortions**



Overgeneralization

- Viewing a negative experience as a never-ending pattern of defeat
- Drawing broad conclusions with limited information
- Can look like catastrophic thinking.



All or Nothing Thinking

- Thinking in absolutes
- Always / Never
- Equating mistake with failure.



Mental Filters

- Putting a negative slant on experiences
- Negative thinking and storytelling
- Filtering out the positive by ignoring or dismissing it.



Jumping to Conclusions

- Mind reading – assuming you know what others are thinking and feeling
- Fortune telling – predicting things will turn out badly
- Making assumptions based on limited information.



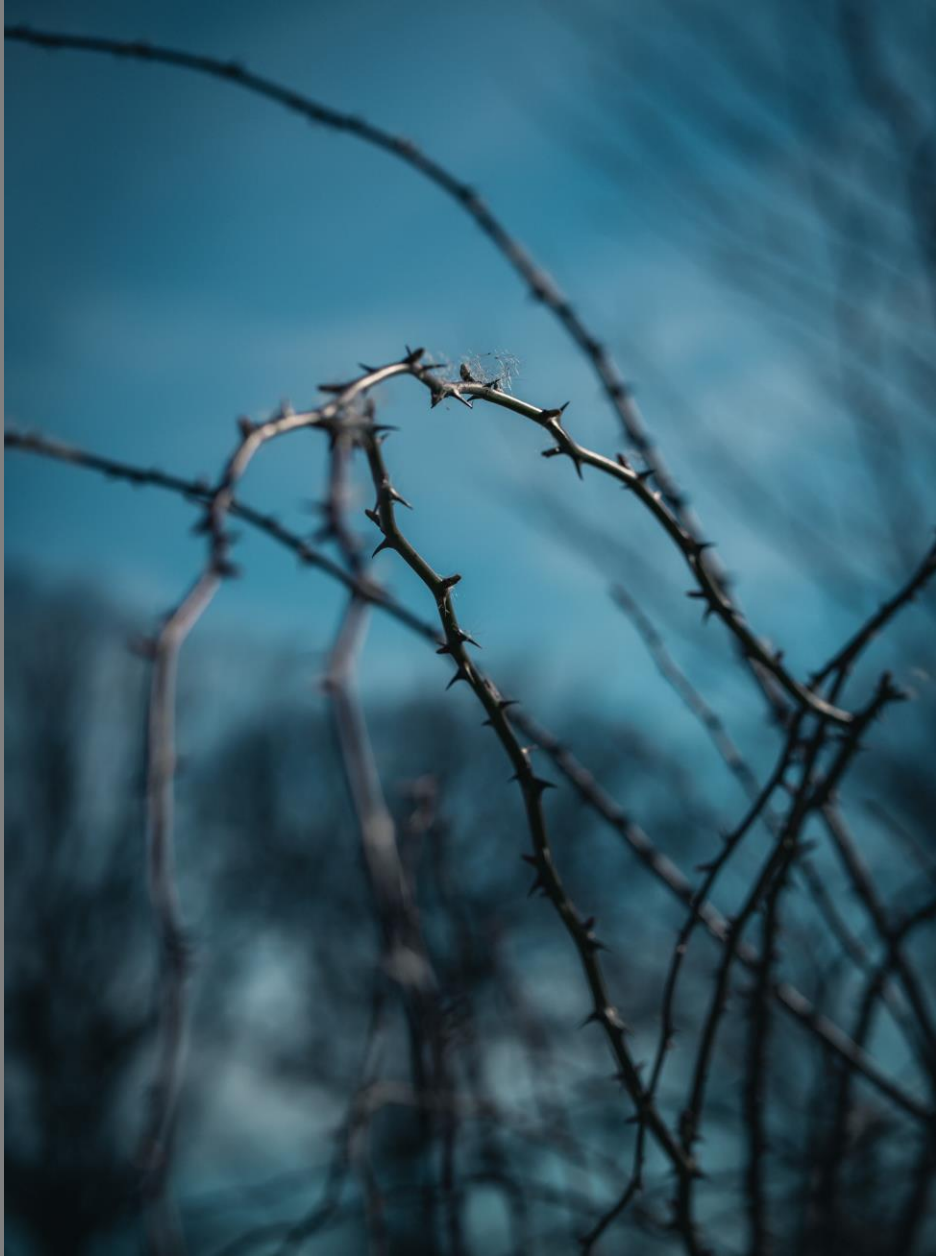
Magnification and Minimization

- Blowing things out of proportion
- Minimizing the impact of experiences for self or others
- Dramatizing experiences or dismissing their importance.



Emotional Reasoning

- Believing something is true because it FEELS true
- I feel like an idiot so I must be an idiot
- I don't FEEL like exercising, so I'm going to put it off.



Shoulding

- Criticizing yourself or others with *shoulds* or *shouldn't's*, *musts*, *oughts*, and *have to's*
- Being judgmental
- Putting pressure on self and others based on strong ideas of right and wrong.



Personalization & Blame

- Blaming
- Overlooking and avoiding looking at personal attitudes and behavior
- Taking things personally
- Mistaking requests for criticism.



Labeling

- Identifying with shortcomings, I'm a loser instead of I made a mistake.
- Name calling
- Generalizing one characteristic to indicate character of the whole person.

DISTORTING THINKING HABITS	PRACTICE
All or Nothing Thinking	UP, VRE
Overgeneralizing	EoW, DP2
Jumping to Conclusions	EoW, DP2
Mental Filters	BP, EoW, VRE
Rumination	EoW, DP2, VRE
Emotional Upset	BP, DP2, VRE
Somatic Discomfort	LSM, LMM
Dread	LSM, LMM, BP
Anxiety	EoW, BP, LSM
Toxic Positivity	EoW
Regret	EoW, BP, LSM
Unmet needs fulfillment	EoW, UP
Negative Self Talk	EoW, LSM, DP2, VRE
Shoulding	EoW, DP2, VRE
Mind-reading	EoW, VRE
What if ---	EoW, DP2, VRE





NOW What?

- Listen beyond content to discover patterns
- Identify distorting thinking in client stories
- Discover triggers for pain-filled thinking.



THEN What?

- Discover any triggers for distorting thinking
- Engage the client in collaboration for freedom from pain-filled thinking
- Measure – frequency, duration and intensity.

