

Unhelpful thinking styles

Catastrophizing	Examples	Challenge
Perceiving that a circumstance (e.g., a GI symptom) is worse than it actually is while also underestimating your ability to cope	<p>“What if I have a heartburn flare right before my work presentation?”</p> <p>“I just know all my friends will think I’m weird for constantly having to use the restroom at dinner.”</p>	<p>What are the possible outcomes – best, worst, most likely?</p> <p>Am I jumping ahead of myself?</p> <p>How much does this matter at this very moment?</p>
Perfectionism	Examples	Challenge
Holding yourself and/or others to unrealistic and demanding standards even though it has negative consequences	<p>“If I don’t spend this time planning out all of my meals and getting it just right, then my symptoms will worsen.”</p> <p>“I can’t feel I’ve had a ‘good day’ unless I experienced no symptoms at all.”</p>	<p>Is there a middle-ground where things don’t go perfectly but still turn out okay?</p> <p>Am I being too rigid right now?</p> <p>What are some other ways to think about it?</p>
Emotional reasoning	Examples	Challenge
Viewing yourself, others, and situations based on the way you’re currently feeling	<p>“This stomach pain is really distressing and scary so I must have something seriously wrong with me!”</p> <p>“I’m very nervous right now and this must be a bad thing so I need to do something about it.”</p>	<p>How do I know something is seriously wrong with me?</p> <p>What information have I gotten from my doctors?</p> <p>Would I feel the same if my situation, mood, or location were different?</p>
Jumping to conclusions	Examples	Challenge
Drawing conclusions based on limited and/or distorted information, rather than facts	<p>“I’ve tried everything, there’s no way deep breathing is going to help me.”</p> <p>“There’s no way I can go to the beach without everyone seeing my bloated belly and thinking something is wrong with it.”</p>	<p>How do I know this is true if I haven’t tried it? Is it 100% certain – is it a 50-50 chance?</p> <p>What would I say to a friend who came to a similar conclusion?</p> <p>If I was feeling differently right now, would I still think this?</p>
Personalization	Examples	Challenge
Taking blame for something even though you had little or nothing to do with the outcome	<p>“I knew I shouldn’t have treated myself to that meal since now I’m having symptoms.”</p> <p>“No one ever wants to invite me out anymore since I have so many food restrictions.”</p>	<p>Am I responsible for how they think or feel?</p> <p>What factors about this situation are actually within my control?</p> <p>Is there any other possible explanation that is not my fault?</p>