Common Thinking Traps

* **All-or-Nothing Thinking**
  + Reminder: Where are the shades of grey in this?
* **Overgeneralization**
  + Reminder: There are no absolutes.
* **Mental Filter**
  + Reminder: I need to pay attention to the whole picture.
* **Disqualifying the Positive**
  + Reminder: Remember the positives.
* **Mind Reading**
  + Reminder: Stay in your own head.
* **The Fortune-Teller Error**
  + Reminder: You don’t own a crystal ball.
* **Magnification and Minimization**
  + Reminder: Use the same scale for everyone – yourself included.
* **Catastrophizing**
  + Reminder: Deal with the event, not with imaginary consequences.
* **Emotional Reasoning**
  + Reminder: Don’t believe everything you feel.
* **Labeling**
  + Reminder: Focus on the event, not the person.
* **Personalization**
  + Reminder: I am primarily responsible for how I respond to events.

Adapted From: Burns, David D., MD. (1999). *The Feeling Good Handbook*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc.

Most people use more than one of the cognitive traps/biases described. Which one(s) seem to give you the *most* trouble?

In which situations are you most likely to use this bias? Think of examples.

What would be a more realistic and helpful way of thinking in one of the situations you have listed?

Adapted from: Paterson, R. J., Aiden, L. E., & Koch, W. J. (2006). *The Changeways Clinic Core Program.* Vancouver, BC: Changeways Clinic

**5 Questions to Ask After a Setback**

1. What can I learn from this?
2. What could I have done differently?
3. Do I need to work on certain skills?
4. Where can I ask for help/support?
5. What is my next step?