COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS
Adapted From: Feeling Good, the New Mood Therapy by David Burns

1. All-or-nothing thinking
   - When we interpret in extremes, we think in black and white, all or nothing categories.
   - Ex: If you fall short of perfection, you call yourself a failure; you’re either great or awful.

2. Overgeneralization
   - When we perceive a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat, we draw flawed conclusions based on one or few experiences.
   - Ex: He insists that she is always or never right about handling a particular situation.

3. Mental filter
   - When we select a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively, our view of all reality becomes darkened and shaded by this detail.
   - Ex: One typo in an otherwise flawlessly written 10-page paper causes a Professor to consider a student sloppy and lazy.

4. Disqualifying the positive
   - When we reject good experiences, we insist they “don’t count.”
   - Ex: Someone who I don’t respect made a suggestion you thought was reasonable, but I discounted because of the source.

5. Jumping to conclusions
   - When we make negative interpretations of events without facts or logic that support our deductions, our faulty thinking is like “fortune-telling.”
   - Ex: You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you, or you are convinced that something will turn out badly when you have not yet experienced it.

6. Personalization
   - You believe that what other people say or do is a negative reaction to you, and must be all about you.
   - Ex: When you overhear a group of students praising or complaining about a Professor, you assume they’re talking about you.

7. Emotional reasoning
   - You assume that your negative feelings logically and factually reflect reality.
   - Ex: A PhD student is feeling anxious about a presentation to Ladder faculty, assuming that means the group is expecting incompetence, inexperience and unworthiness.

8. “Should” statements
   - Using this language reinforces our negative judgment of ourselves and others, which can trigger emotions such as guilt, frustration or resentment.
   - Ex: “You should have known better,” “I should have been better prepared.”

9. Labeling and mislabeling
   - When we take one characteristic of a person and globally apply it to the whole person, we unfairly misclassify and mis-read that person.
   - Ex: Thinking of someone as “flaky,” a terrible person, “just a...”, etc.

10. Magnification or minimization
    - When we exaggerate/catastrophize or downplay the importance of something, we believe it is much worse or better than it is in reality.
    - Ex: He was so devastated when he heard himself using verbal crutches in his video that he felt was too humiliated to continue and canceled future recordings.