COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

Catastrophizing: You tell yourself that the very worst is happening or is going to happen.

All-or-Nothing (Black-and-White) Thinking: You view a situation in extremes rather than on a continuum.

Foreclosure: Your thoughts jump to the end of a scenario, even to the point of imagining a negative outcome. You want to see the story end because you cannot handle the process of not knowing.

Overestimating Probabilities/ Underestimating Coping Response: You expect that something is likely to happen when in reality the chances may be relatively low. You overestimate danger while underestimating your ability to cope with the situation.

Worrying as Magical Thinking: Continuing to worry helps you feel that you will not be caught off-guard. It also feels like it could ward off the dreaded situation.

Self-Confirmatory Bias: Finding "evidence" that helps you justify or maintain your belief system.

Importantizing:

Thoughts: You ascribe credibility and meaning to senseless or random thoughts.

Sensations: You misinterpret bodily sensations as being exaggerated, life-threatening or dangerous.

Emotional Reasoning: You think something must be true simply because it "feels" true.

Fortune Telling: You predict that something is going to happen, without acknowledging the possibility of other future outcomes.

Mind Reading: You guess what others are thinking, and refrain from checking to see whether your impressions are correct.

Should Statements: Any thought or statement that suggests how you, others, or the world "should" be. This type of thinking usually accompanies perfectionism and/or a rigid style of thinking.

Beck's Cognitive Triad: Negative view of the self; negative view of the world; and negative view of the future. This type of thinking tends to accompany depression.

Note to reader: This list is a compilation of some commonly used terms that have been originated, modified and/or re-stated by many cognitive-behavioral therapists. Dr. Stone therefore does not claim authorship to these terms.