



THINKING TRAP	DEFINITION	FOR EXAMPLE...
Negative Mental Filter	In this thinking trap, you focus on the negative parts of a situation, and ignore the positive parts of a situation. You may only pay attention to the things that go wrong, or that you didn't get done, and don't give yourself credit for your accomplishments.	You go to a mother-baby group for the first time. During the hour you are there, you have short conversations with a number of the other mothers, but there is one mother who talks to a lot of people but not to you. You think "There must be something wrong with me because people weren't interested in meeting me". You forget that a number of the other mothers did make time to chat with you.
Overgeneralization	In this kind of thinking trap, you make up a "rule" about how things are or will be based upon one experience or event. Hint: When people are overgeneralizing, they often use words like always, never, all, every, none, nobody, and everybody. For example, "The baby never falls asleep for my partner".	If one friend spends less time with you after the baby comes, you think "Now none of my friends want to hang out with me".
All or Nothing Thinking (also known as "black and white thinking")	Seeing things or people as either right or wrong, good or bad, perfect or terrible. Everything is black or white, there are no shades of grey. People who think in all or nothing terms see a small mistake as a total failure.	One morning when the baby naps for longer than usual, you manage to tidy up the living room and sweep the kitchen floor. But even after doing all this, you say to yourself "The house is a complete mess!"



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Catastrophizing (also known as “blowing things out of proportion” or “making a mountain out of a molehill”)	Telling yourself that a minor negative event is/would be a complete disaster. Often people who are catastrophizing also fear that they would be unable to cope with the situation that they are imagining.	Your partner does not make eye contact with you during dinner and you think “He doesn’t love me anymore and he is going to leave me. I’ll be a single mother and I can’t deal with that”.
“Should” statements	Telling yourself how you “should” or “must” act or feel.	I should always be happy, cheerful and patient, even when my child is very fussy.
Labeling	Saying something very negative (and often unfair) about yourself or other people.	I am a lazy and pathetic because I haven’t exercised since the baby was born.
Mind-reading	You think you know what others are thinking, without any evidence.	If your baby cries while you are waiting in a line-up you say to yourself “Other shoppers must think I’m a horrible mother”.
Jumping to Conclusions	Making predictions about what is going to happen, with little or no evidence. People who are depressed predict that a lot of negative things are going to happen, even when the evidence suggests that this is not very likely at all.	“I have been trying for a week and I am not going to be able to potty train my daughter”.
Perfectionism	Thinking that things (or people) are only right or worthwhile if they are perfect.	You are concerned that your baby has a skin rash and won’t be perceived as lovable or cared for by others.



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Personalization and Self-Blame	You feel overly responsible for other people’s behaviours and negative events, and do not consider other factors or people who may have influenced the situation.	Your partner’s work hours are reduced and you blame yourself because you have been asking him to take on some of the night feedings.
Emotional reasoning	Thinking that bad feelings say something about how a situation actually is. You believe that your thoughts must be true or accurate because you “feel” strongly that they are, even if there is little or no evidence to support them.	“I feel sad, so my relationship must be in trouble” or “I feel scared, so something bad is going to happen”.

TIP
 Don’t worry if you find that you are falling into more than one thinking trap. This is very common. Notice how your thinking traps make you feel. Chances are that being in a thinking trap keeps you feeling depressed or sad and make it harder for you to make positive changes.

When a woman is depressed during pregnancy or after the birth, it is often very difficult for her to recognize that her thoughts may not be true or helpful or that she has fallen into a thinking trap. When this happens, these depressive thoughts can keep her “stuck” in a depressed mood. Fortunately, there are ways that you can recognize and change these thinking patterns so that you can begin to feel better. The goal is to help you to practice more **healthy thinking**.