

# TEN COMMON UNHELPFUL APPRAISAL STYLES



AND HOW  
TO  
CHALLENGE  
THEM!

Unhelpful Appraisal Style	Example	More Helpful Alternatives
<b>1. Mental Filter</b> Only focusing on part of the situation and ignoring the rest. This can often be focusing on the negative parts and ignoring the positive parts.	<i>"She's late... she's not coming."</i>	<b>Consider the whole picture:</b> <i>"Wait, she also readily texted with me over the whole week. She seemed pretty keen to meet."</i>
<b>2. Jumping to Conclusions</b> When we assume that we know what someone else is thinking ("mindreading") and jump to conclusions about what might happen next.	<i>"She's late... I bet she couldn't care less about me."</i>	<b>Ask yourself how you know this:</b> <i>"Wait, how do I know this? All I know is that she's a bit late. I don't yet know why she is late."</i>
<b>3. Personalisation</b> Blaming yourself for everything that goes wrong.	<i>"It's my fault she's not coming. I'm just not an interesting person."</i>	<b>Find all the causes:</b> <i>"Maybe it has nothing to do with me. Maybe Apple Maps just sent her the wrong way."</i>

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<p><b>4. Catastrophising</b></p> <p>Blowing negative things out of proportion.</p>	<p><i>"I'm waiting here like an idiot. This is the worst thing ever."</i></p>	<p><b>Put it in perspective by consider all possible outcomes:</b></p> <p><i>"Well... it's not ideal but it could be worse."</i></p>
<p><b>5. Black and White Thinking</b></p> <p>Only seeing one extreme or the other, while ignoring the shades of grey in between.</p>	<p><i>"Being late is inconsiderate, full stop."</i></p>	<p><b>Find the shades of grey in between:</b></p> <p><i>"Ok, maybe being late isn't always because they're inconsiderate. Sometimes you can't help it."</i></p>
<p><b>6. Shoulding and Musting</b></p> <p>Putting unreasonable expectations on yourself with "I should..." and "I must..." statements. These statements are not always unhelpful, but they can often create unrealistic expectations.</p>	<p><i>"I should have picked a better bar to meet. I must be more charismatic with women."</i></p>	<p><b>Be flexible:</b></p> <p><i>"No one's perfect. I guess I picked a decent place, and she kept replying to my messages so I couldn't be that uncharismatic."</i></p>
<p><b>7. Overgeneralisation</b></p> <p>Taking one instance and applying it to all present, past or future situations.</p>	<p><i>"No one wants to date me. I'll always be alone."</i></p>	<p><b>Be specific:</b></p> <p><i>"Right now I'm single, waiting for a date. That doesn't mean it will always be like this."</i></p>
<p><b>8. Labelling</b></p> <p>Making global statements based on behaviour in specific situations. This can often lead to ignoring things which do not fit with the "label" we have given it.</p>	<p><i>"Only a selfish person would be late like this."</i></p>	<p><b>Consider the whole picture:</b></p> <p><i>"Just because you're late doesn't necessarily mean you're selfish. Sometimes it can't be helped."</i></p>

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<p><b>9. Emotional Reasoning</b></p> <p>Basing your appraisals of a situation on how you feel.</p>	<p><i>“I felt a bit weird and jittery before leaving the house for this date. I knew this was my body telling me that something bad like this would happen.”</i></p>	<p><b>Consider the evidence of the situation regardless of how you feel:</b></p> <p><i>“It’s ok. I felt a bit anxious before, but there was no reason to expect that this date will end badly.”</i></p>
<p><b>10. Magnification and Minimisation</b></p> <p>Magnifying the positive attributes of other people and minimising your own positive attributes.</p>	<p><i>“She was so funny and smart when we were talking earlier. I barely had anything interesting to contribute.”</i></p>	<p><b>Consider your positives:</b></p> <p><i>“Sure, I’m no Ryan Gosling eating his cereal, but then, who is? I’m interesting enough to have been messaging her back and forth over the last week. Even made her lol a bunch.”</i></p>