**Common Cognitive Errors #2 Worksheet**

Because our brains have to deal with so much information, our brains often make little errors that have big effects on our choices and our moods. This worksheet is about some of those errors. All brains make all these errors, but each of us have a few errors that we make the most. Knowing those errors makes it easier to catch them, and then we can choose to think things over again without making them.

Here are a few cognitive errors and then some stories. In each story, find the cognitive errors that seem to be going on.

**Cognitive Errors**

*Prophesying*: Jumping to conclusion about what will happen, or what will be the consequence of something.

*Blaming*: Assuming something is someone’s fault (own or other’s) before understanding the situation.

*Emotionalizing*: Interpreting what happens based on how already feeling. For example: taking everything as sad news when already sad.

*Personalizing*: Interpreting what happens around you as being specifically and personally about you.

*Should-ing*: Over-applying a moral rule regarding what you “should” do.

**Stories**

Nick is a collections agent and is calling Phil about his debt. He learns that Phil has not had a job for the last 6 months. Nick becomes frustrated with Phil being seemingly irresponsible and starts yelling at him to get a job.

What cognitive error(s) did Nick fall into? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phil has spent the last 6 months caring for his wife at home. She became severely injured in a car accident that took place while she was trying to bring Phil the lunch he had forgotten in the fridge. Phil keeps beating himself up about having forgotten the lunch. Phil’s best friend is having a destination wedding to Bahamas, and Phil feels like a very bad person for not going to his best friend’s wedding, choosing instead to save the money and care for his wife at home.

What cognitive error(s) can you see Phil have here? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Lisa is irritated this morning. Her students keep asking for more time on their project, coming up with one lame excuse after another. She later snaps at her husband when for lunch he shows up unannounced with take-out from one of her favorite restaurants.

What cognitive error(s) do you think Lisa has here? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Jim is undergoing chemo-therapy, and as a result, his immune system is very bad. His sister, Rosie, usually comes over on Sundays, but Jim’s wife has left her a message telling her not to come. Rosie feels hurt and rejected, thinking that Jim’s wife does not like her and so does not want her around.

What cognitive error(s) do you think Rosie is engaging in? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rosie was really sick with the flu yesterday, and so she was unable to send in her project for her college class that was due that day. Feeling a little better today, she would be able to finish the project, but she is thinking that the professor would probably not accept a late project anyway, so she doesn’t work on it. She considers looking up the deadline for dropping the class, but doesn’t do so, figuring that if she spent the time looking it up she would probably find that the deadline had already passed.

What cognitive error(s) do you see for Rosie here? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Self-Application**

Which cognitive error do you think causes the most problems for you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Write about a time when that cognitive error caused problems: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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What would have been different if you had caught the cognitive error and stopped yourself from believing it? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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