

# THINKING **ALTERNATIVE THOUGHTS**

Negative thought	Thought error	Alternative thought
My life used to be perfect before I had tinnitus, now it is horrible	All or nothing thinking	Life is never perfect, I had some problems before, and I still have some good things about my life now (like my grandchildren)

# LIST AND EXAMPLES OF COMMON THOUGHT ERRORS

- All or nothing thinking = no shades of gray; “My life used to be perfect before I had tinnitus, now it is horrible.”
- Mental filter = one aspect of a complex situation is the focus of attention, while others are ignored; “I was having a good time at the party, but hearing my tinnitus ruined everything.”
- Mind reading = assuming others’ thoughts without evidence, “People think I’m stupid when I ask them to repeat things I don’t hear because of my tinnitus.”
- Jumping to conclusions = assuming negative expectations about future events as established facts, “I am bound to have a miserable day when I hear my tinnitus first thing in the morning.”
- Emotional reasoning = assuming emotional reactions reflect the true situation, “My tinnitus makes me feel hopeless, there is no hope.”
- Overgeneralization = an event is characteristic of life in general, as opposed to specific, “Because of my tinnitus I was awake all night. Every night is the same.”
- Disqualifying the positive = positive experiences that would conflict with negative views are discounted; “I didn’t think much about my tinnitus today, but that was a fluke.”
- Catastrophizing = negative events are treated as intolerable rather than in perspective, “My tinnitus is louder, I must be going deaf.”
- Should statements = using should and have to statements to provide motivation or control, “I should never have listened to rock music, I did this to myself.”
- Personalization = assuming one is the cause of a particular event when in fact other factors are responsible; “I ruined everyone’s evening because I was miserable.”
- Labeling = attaching a global label to oneself rather than to specific events or actions; “Having tinnitus (and hearing loss) makes me a disabled person.”