

Appendix X

Thinking Biases

Catastrophising

When the worst possible outcome is predicted and magnified

If I make a mistake I will lose my job.

I can feel my heart beating fast. I am going to die.

Mind reading

Guessing another person's thoughts

They thought I looked stupid.

She didn't really want to meet up with me.

Fortune telling

Predicting a bleak future, without evidence for it

There is no point, I will just fail at it.

I am always going to be like this.

No one will ever love me.

All-or-nothing (black-and-white) thinking

Only seeing the extremes, being unable to see the 'grey' area

If I don't get 100 per cent I am a failure.

If he doesn't phone me every day he doesn't love me.

Discounting the positive

When positives are viewed as worthless or meaningless

He was just saying that to be nice.

Anyone could have done that.

Note: look out for 'yes buts' in response to positive information.

Over-generalisation

A single negative event is viewed as affecting everything, or as a signal that everything will go wrong

The bus didn't turn up, everything is going wrong.

I burnt the cake, the whole party is a disaster.

Personalisation

Feeling responsible when not at fault

It's my fault no one is enjoying themselves.

They cancelled the trip because they don't want to go with me.