Everyone has a few of these traits, which ones are yours? Identify them and see what you can do to replace them!

1. **Negative\_filtering**   
   This is when we focus on the negative, and filter out all positive aspects of a situation.  For example, you get a good review at work with one critical comment, and the criticism becomes the focus, with the positive feedback fading or forgotten. You dismiss positives by explaining them away — for example, responding to a compliment with the thought, “They were just being nice.”
2. **All-or-Nothing\_thinking**

Things are either all good or all bad, people are either perfect or failures, something new will either fix everything or be worthless. There is no middle ground; we place people and situations in “either/or” categories, with no shades of gray, or allowing for complexities.  Watch out for absolute words like “always”, “never,” “totally,” etc. as indications of this kind of distortion.

1. **Overgeneralization.**  
   We come to a general conclusion based on a single incident or a single piece of evidence. If something bad happens only once, you expect it to happen over and over again. Example: seeing one incident of rejection as part of a never-ending pattern of defeat and failure.
2. **Mind\_Reading.**  
   Without individuals saying so, we know what they are thinking and why they act the way they do. For example, you assume that somebody is having a critical thought about you, you don’t check this out, and this affects your actions and feelings towards them.
3. **Fortune\_telling**  
   We believe we know what the future holds, as if we have psychic powers. We make negative predictions, feeling convinced these are unavoidable facts.  Examples of fortune telling: “I am going to fail,” “This situation will never change.”
4. **Catastrophizing.**  
   This is a particularly extreme and painful form of fortune telling, where we project a situation into a disaster or the worst-case scenario. You might think catastrophizing helps you prepare and protect yourself, but it usually causes needless anxiety and worry.
5. **Magnifying\_or\_Minimizing.**  
   We exaggerate the importance of some things (our mistakes, a critical reaction, somebody else’s achievements, things we haven’t done). Also, we inappropriately shrink the magnitude of  other things  (for example, our good qualities, compliments, what we have accomplished, or someone else’s imperfections).
6. **Personalization.**You see yourself as the cause of some negative event for which you are not primarily responsible, and you conclude that what happened was your fault or reflects your inadequacy.  Personalization distorts other people’s reactions into a direct, personal response to you.  For example, if somebody seems upset, you immediately assume it was because of something you said or did.
7. **Comparisons.**  
   We compare ourselves to others, with ourselves coming out short. For example, “I’m not as smart (or good, competent, good-looking, lovable, etc.) as that other person.”   Or, we compare ourselves to how we think we should be, or how we’ve been before.  We might think that comparisons help motivate us, but they usually make us feel worse.
8. **Shoulds.**We have ironclad rules about the behaviors of ourselves and other people.  For example, “I really should exercise. I shouldn’t be so lazy.” A more effective way to motivate ourselves is to identify positive results, rather than whipping ourselves with guilt.  For example, “When I exercise, I feel better.”  When we use “should statements” about other people (“He shouldn’t act that way!”), we often feel frustrated, angry, and resentful, since we can’t control others’ behaviors.
9. **Emotional\_Reasoning.**We take our emotions as evidence for the truth. Examples: “I feel inadequate, so there must be something wrong with me.” “I feel overwhelmed and hopeless, therefore the situation must be impossible to change or improve.” (Note that the latter can contribute to procrastination.)  While suppressing or judging feelings can be unhelpful, it’s important to recognize the difference between feelings and facts.
10. **Blaming.**  
    We blame ourselves for every problem, or hold other people entirely responsible for a negative situation or feeling. When we focus on assigning blame and figuring out who is “at fault”, we are usually ignoring the complexity of a situation. Also, blaming can result in staying stuck in negative feelings, rather than moving towards action and solutions.
11. **Labeling\_or\_Name\_calling.**  
    We generate negative global judgments based on little evidence. Instead of accepting errors as inevitable, we attach an unhealthy label to ourselves or others. For example, you make a mistake and call yourself a “loser,” a “failure”, or an “idiot.” Labels are not only self-defeating, they are irrational, simplistic, and untrue. Human beings are complex and fallible, and in truth cannot be reduced to a label. Consider this: we all breathe, but would it make sense to refer to ourselves as “Breathers”?