

Fighting Lies with God's Truth¹

Philippians 4:6b-8 Pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

My Worry	Type of Negative Thought	Facts that Support the Negative Thought	Facts Against the Negative Thought (Scripture, general truth)	Realistic/Balanced Perspective (You can ask God, see what the Bible says, ask a wise, godly friend/family member for help here if you need it.)	Even if this would happen, what is still good and true?

¹ This chart has been compiled from “cognitive therapy thought record” samples that can be accessed in most online psychology resource databases.

Types of Negative Thoughts²

1. **All or nothing** – These are the negative thoughts that infest your brain when you think everything is good or all bad. It is the same as black or white thinking.
2. **“Always/Never” thinking** – This is when you think in words that overgeneralize, such as always, never, every time or everyone.
3. **Focusing on the negative** – This negative thoughts makes you see only the negative aspects of situations even when there are plenty of positives.
4. **Thinking with your feelings** – “I feel like my skin is never going to clear up.” Thoughts like this occur when you have a feeling about something and you assume it is correct, so you never question it. Feelings can lie too. Look for evidence. In this example, schedule an appointment with a dermatologist to find out if there’s anything you can do to improve your skin.
5. **Guilt beating** – Thinking in words like “should”, “must”, “ought to”, and “have to” are typical with this type of negative thoughts, which involves using excessive guilt to control behavior. (There is a difference between “conviction” and “unhealthy guilt”. Conviction is when the Holy Spirit points out sin in our lives and calls us to repentance. Unhealthy guilt is being lost in the fog of our sin. Unhealthy guilt can continue if accepting God’s forgiveness is difficult for us, particularly due to negative past experiences.)
6. **Labeling** – When you call yourself or someone else names or use negative terms to describe them, you have a labeling negative thoughts in your brain. A lot of us do this on a regular basis. You may have said one of the following at some point in your life; “I’m a loser”; “I’m a failure”; or “I’m lazy.”
7. **Fortune-telling** – Predicting the worst even though you don’t know what will happen is the hallmark of the fortune-telling negative thought. Examples include: “I just had a biopsy. I am sure it is cancer.”
8. **Mind reading** – When you think that you know what somebody else is thinking even though they have not told you, and you have not asked them, it is called mind-reading. Listen carefully to the other person before trying to predict what they say.
9. **Blaming** - Blaming others for your problems and taking no responsibility for your own successes and failures is toxic thinking.
10. **Minimizing** - Making something smaller than it really is. We may minimize negatives, positives or both.
11. **Magnification** - Making something larger than it really is. We may magnify negatives, positives or both.

² Adapted from: <https://www.collaborativeawareness.com/post/2015/12/18/9-types-of-ants-automatic-negative-thoughts-that-invade-our-relationships-and-how-to-exte>