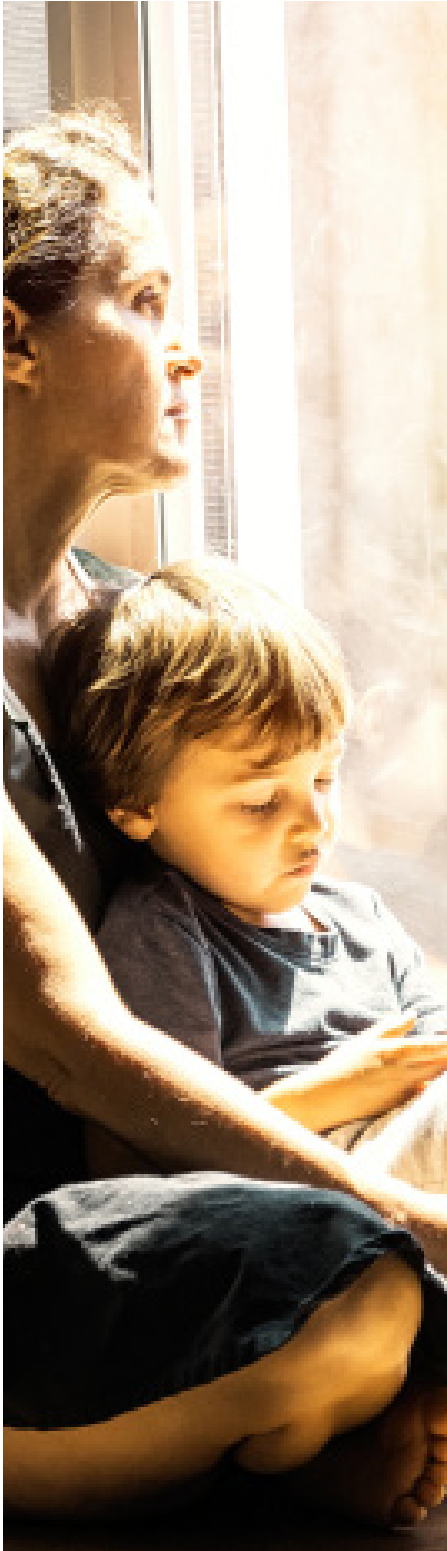


COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS



Cognitive distortions are ways of interpreting/perceiving situations that can lead you to feel more anxious or down. We all have these distortions to some degree, however when in extreme form these thoughts can be ineffective and harmful.

CATASTROPHIZING: Seeing only the worst outcome.

Ex. “My baby has had some developmental delays in crawling and I am sure it’s going to result in some serious long term consequences. I need a specialist now.”

OVER-GENERALIZATION: Broad interpretations made from a single event.

Ex. “I felt so awkward around the other moms. I am always so awkward.”

MAGICAL THINKING: Belief that acts have influence on unrelated situations.

Ex. “I am a good person; therefore, bad things will not happen to me.”

PERSONALIZATION: Belief that we are responsible for events out of our control.

“My baby won’t stop crying. He/she doesn’t seem to like me at all. I must be upsetting him/her.”

MIND READING: Interpreting thoughts and beliefs of others without facts.

Ex. “That person gave me a funny look. They probably think I am an awkward person and they know I am anxious.”

FORTUNE TELLING: Belief or expectation that the situation will turn out poorly without facts to support this.

Ex. “I won’t go to group today because I know I will be bored and I won’t have fun or learn anything.”

EMOTIONAL REASONING: An assumption that emotions reflect the facts.

“If I feel like I cannot take care of myself, I should not be a mom.”

DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVE: Acknowledging only the negative aspects of a situation and discounting positive.

“They only told me I was doing a good job because they felt bad for me.”

SHOULD STATEMENTS: The belief that things “should” be a certain way.

Ex. “I should know how to breastfeed, this should come naturally to me.”

ALL OR NOTHING THINKING: Thinking in absolutes such as “always,” “never,” and “every.”

Ex. “I can never soothe my infant. My partner/friend/family is always able to calm the baby easily.”