

Guaranteed Ways to Make Yourself Miserable

- Make assumptions or jump to conclusions without first collecting enough evidence. This will help you feel upset or slighted by others even when you have no legitimate reason to feel that way.
- Personalize every negative thing that happens to you by assuming that daily frustrations and irritations were meant to disrupt your life.
- Confuse your thoughts and feelings with facts. Assume that how you think and feel must be an accurate reflection of the way things really are.
- Use all-or-nothing approach to thinking. Reframe everything as being all black or all white without stopping to appreciate the shades of grey in between. At the very least this approach will make you feel like you are on an emotional roller coaster ride.
- Use lots of “shoulds”, “haves”, or “must” in your thinking and speech. If everyday life does not feel harried and in a constant state of crisis, then it soon will if you think and talk in this manner. This style of speech also has the benefit of helping others to feel harried.
- Minimize the positive and maximize the negative. This will allow you to overlook, or ignore, positive feedback and to personalize and catastrophize negative experience.
- Catastrophize any mistake or slip that you or others make, no matter how small. This will ensure that you feel surrounded by lots of crisis and will guarantee a low self-esteem.
- Be perfectionistic. Insist that you and others be absolutely perfect. Be intolerant of all mistakes, no matter who makes them. If you work hard enough at this one you will waste time trying to achieve an impossible goal (perfection) and be both miserable and lonely.
- Insist that your view of the world is the only one possible. Ignore all other perspectives and opinions. This will help to maintain an impenetrable sense of self-righteousness and keep others at a distance.
- Condemn yourself, or others, on the basis of a single mistake. Assume that 1 or 2 mistakes accurately reflect the entire character of yourself or another person.
- Develop a mental filter that permits only unpleasant, angry, depressing, or condemning information into your mind. This will help to make misery chronic.