

# 4 Steps to Clear Thinking

**Step 1: Describe a trigger event.**

**Step 2: Record your feelings about this event.**

**Step 3: Four Column Technique**

Initial Event	First Thoughts	Distortion	Clear Thinking

**Step 4: Reevaluate Your Feelings**

- I feel no better.                       I feel a little better.
- I feel quite a bit better.               I feel a lot better.

## Thought Distortions (Bad Thoughts)

### 1. All or Nothing

You say	But Really
Everything is black and white	Some things are clearly right and wrong, some are not important
Important words like "ought", "should", and "must" are used for everything	Some events "should" be important, others should be lower priority.
Make a mistake and call yourself names like "loser" or "stupid"	You are simply directing anger at yourself

Remember: *Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 24:35*

*Messing up supper is not the same as murder or adultery!*

### 2. Negative Nellie (or Nelson) Ecclesiastes 2:17-18

You say	But Really
Everything that happens to me is always bad	Bad things do happen; so do good events as well
The good things I do never amount to the bad events	All things work together for good... if you are a Christian

Remember: *Romans 8:28; Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

*Bad things happen. But so do good things! You are not worthless! Jesus died for you!*

### 3. Jump to Conclusions Proverbs 25:8-10

You say	But Really
They said this, but really meant that	You cannot read minds
I know what will happen if I try	You cannot predict the future

Remember: *1 Corinthians 2:11; 2 Peter 1:20-21*

*You don't know the thoughts of others, and ONLY GOD KNOWS THE FUTURE!!!*

### 4. Out of Proportion

You say	But Really
This single event is the most important thing ... ever	It may be important, but is only one event in your life
This good thing I do means nothing ... ever	Your actions do make a difference

Remember: *Proverbs 16:32; 1 Corinthians 16:13*

*Did something bad? Repent. Do something good? Be happy and thank God!*

### 5. Emotions on Your Sleeves

You say	But Really
I feel like an idiot so I must be one	How you feel has nothing to do with how smart you are
I don't feel like doing anything, so I won't	Your feelings do not determine if you can perform work

Remember: *Galatians 5:22-23; Proverbs 25:28*

*This really comes down to a lack of self-control...*

### 6. Personalization or Not

You say	But Really
I am to blame for things I had nothing to do with	If you didn't do it, you aren't to blame
I did it, but it was not my fault	You need to take responsibility for your actions

Remember: *John 3:16-17; Romans 2:1*

*It is not your place to carry the sins of others, Jesus already did that. You should take responsibility for your own actions and help others regardless of whose "fault" it is.*