# Helpful thinking to reduce teenage stress

How you think about things affects how stressed you get by them. Like adults, teenagers can develop unhelpful thinking that makes it harder to deal with stress. Unhelpful thinking can get out of control, particularly if it becomes the normal way you think about things.

Some **common unhelpful thinking patterns** are:

- mind-reading, or expecting other people to have a bad opinion of you – for example, 'They think I'm stupid', 'She thinks I'm no good at anything'


- thinking things will always go wrong – for example, 'Things never work out for me', 'Everyone is always against me', 'I'll never be able to …'


- labelling yourself – for example, 'I'm no good', 'I'm stupid', 'I'm hopeless'


- absolute thinking – for example, 'I have to do it this way – I have no choice', 'This will never work'

- fortune-telling or expecting the worst – for example, 'I'm sure to mess this up', 'It's not going to work out anyway', 'I'm going to feel awful when it doesn't happen'

- all-or-nothing thinking – for example, 'He does everything right, and I always get it wrong', 'It has to be perfect', 'If only I had done it that way, it would be OK'.