

Distorted Thinking: Blaming

Let's say your friend Emma just got in trouble for cheating on an Algebra test. What feelings do you think she might be having?

You talk to Emma and she makes the following statements:

1. *"The tests are too hard and my teacher does a rotten job of teaching Algebra."*
2. *"If my parents didn't expect me to be a straight A student like my sister, I wouldn't have to cheat."*

These statements are examples of **Blaming**: Anything that goes wrong is someone else's fault. The person makes excuses, and can't own up to any responsibility for a problem.

Why are Emma's statements examples of **distorted thoughts**? Do we know that what she is saying is completely true?

Owning up to one's mistakes is not an easy thing to do. What are some **self-reflective** statements that Emma could say to counter this distorted thought?

"If my parents didn't expect me to be a straight A student like my sister, I wouldn't have to cheat."

- *"If I take the time to study and do the very best that I can do, it's OK. I don't have to be perfect."*
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Think about a situation that you are in (or have been in) where you may have blamed others rather than taking at least partial responsibility for what happened:

1. What were your feelings at that time? How did those feelings impact your thoughts?
2. What is an example of a **Blaming** thought that you had during this time?
3. Did this thought help you? In what way did it become a roadblock to feeling better, or fixing the problem?
4. What might be a **self-reflective** thought or reality statement that you could use to replace the distorted **Blaming** thought that you had?

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