CONFIDENCE

Recognising thought distortions

There are (10) big distortions that can occur.

1. All or nothing thinking

When you see things in black and white instead of in shades of gray.
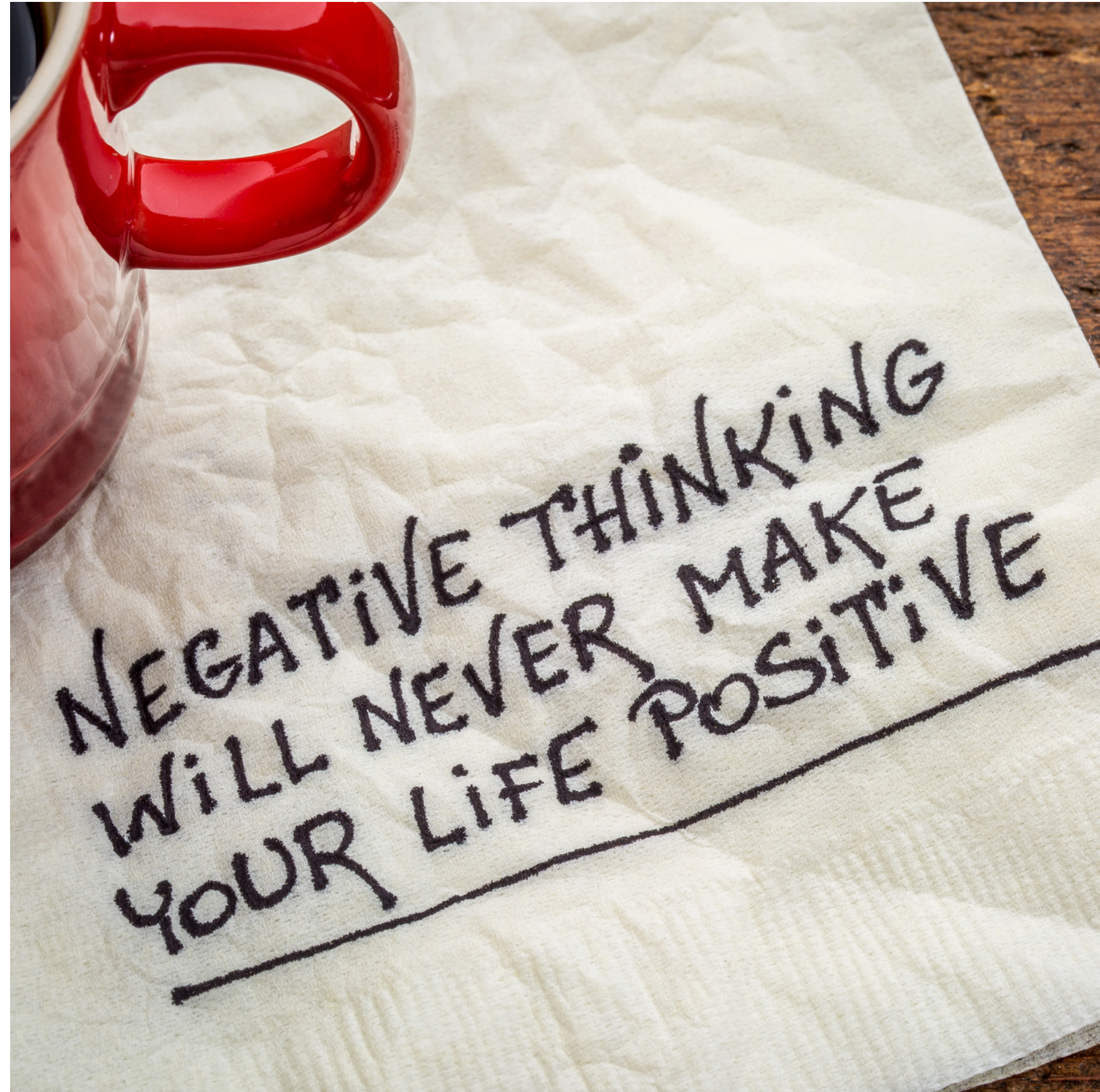
Example: I'm a bad person.

2. Overgeneralization

When you extend a negative thought so it reaches even further.

Example: I never do anything right.

3. Mental filter

When you filter out all the good stuff to focus on the bad.

Example: I didn't accomplish anything today.

4. Disqualifying the positive

When you believe a good or positive thing "doesn't count" toward your larger pattern of failure and negativity.

Example: I got an A on the test, but it was an easy exam.

5. Jumping to conclusions

When you extrapolate an even bigger and broader negative thought from a small negative experience.

Example: He said he didn't want to go out with me. I must be an unlovable person.
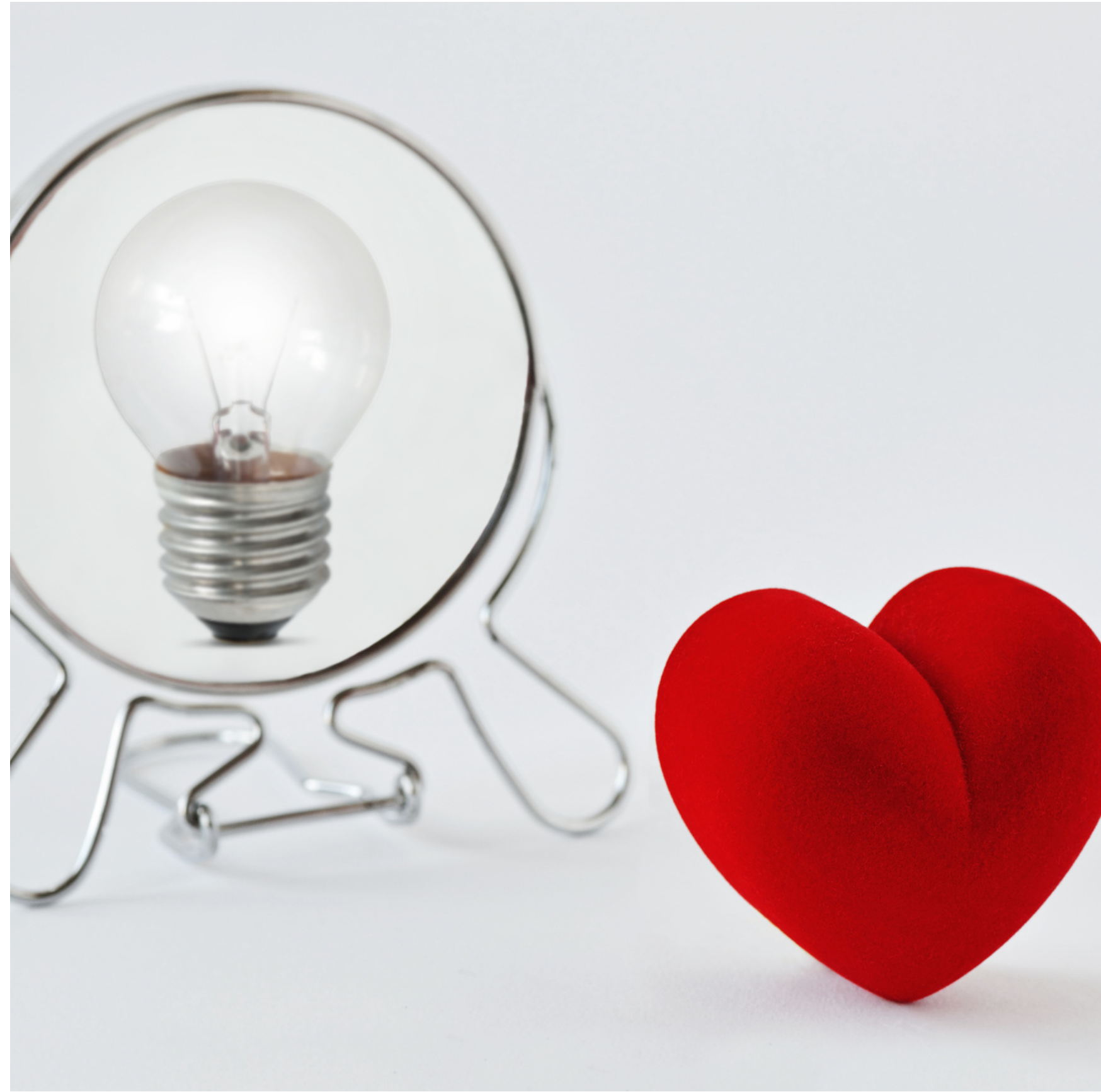
6. Magnification or minimization

When you exaggerate your own mistakes (or other people's accomplishments or happiness) while minimizing your own accomplishments and others' flaws.

Example: Everyone saw me mess up at the game, while Susan had a perfect night on the field.

7. Emotional reasoning

When you assume your negative feelings reflect the truth.

Example: I felt embarrassed, therefore I must have been acting in an embarrassing manner.

8. Should statements

When you beat yourself up for not doing things differently.

Example: I should've kept my mouth shut.

9. Labeling and mislabeling

When you use a small negative event or feeling to give yourself a huge, general label.

Example: I forgot to do the report. I'm a total idiot.

10. Personalization

When you make things personal that aren't.

Example: The dinner party was bad because I was there.

Do you recognize any of these thought distortions in the way you think? Can you start to stop these?