

What thinking errors are being made in these appraisals/judgements?

Below are a number of examples of triggers, along with the appraisal/judgement that was made by the recipient. After each example is a list of the five thinking errors people may typically make in their appraisals/judgements. Your task is to underline all the errors which apply to each example (sadly, one appraisal can exhibit several of the errors). You may wish to circle the error which you think is the main one in each case.

The first three examples have been done for you:

1. *Trigger:* Justin has noisy neighbours playing music loudly next door. This happens every week or so and normally lasts for an hour or two.

Justin's appraisal: 'They do that deliberately to annoy me – they don't give a damn about what I think.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

2. *Trigger:* Marius's neighbours' kids are playing football in the street outside. This happens every few days and normally their game lasts for about forty-five minutes.

Marius's appraisal: 'They're a bloody nuisance, they've got no respect for anybody, it makes it not worth living here.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

3. *Trigger:* A fifth man comes into the bar where Omar is sitting with Carlos and Ryan and leaves a door open (four others having done so previously).

Omar's appraisal: 'They just don't give a damn about anybody.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

4. *Trigger:* Aisha's husband eats food noisily and talks to her at the same time.

Aisha's appraisal: 'I just can't stand the way he eats, it just shows how he's not my type of person.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

5. *Trigger:* Lola's teenage son Nathaniel drops a china mug on the floor and it breaks. (Note: we know that Nathaniel takes great care over his homework.)

Lola's appraisal: 'He doesn't take any care about anything, he just doesn't give a damn.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

6. *Trigger:* Nicole has to wait a long time in the outpatient department with her five-year-old daughter. Having witnessed the doctor and nurse working carefully with a number of patients, she then sees them having a tea-break after an hour and a half, relaxing and chatting to each other.

Nicole's appraisal: 'They don't care about any of us, all they are interested in doing is relaxing and flirting with each other.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

7. *Trigger:* Out at a party, Errol's wife contradicts him several times in front of others.

Errol's appraisal: 'She's doing it deliberately to show me up and make me look small – I just can't stand her any longer.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

8. *Trigger:* Brandon's otherwise fair boss asks him to do another task towards the end of the day which will take him over his normal finishing time.

Brandon's appraisal: 'He always treats me unfairly, he's just a lousy bastard.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

9. *Trigger:* Danny has told his long-time partner Vicky something he took to be in confidence. Vicky, however, has told several other people about this.

Danny's appraisal: 'That's totally out of order – she has got absolutely no sense of what's right and wrong.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

10. *Trigger:* Lemy and Ella have been married several years. Ella has never had an extra-marital relationship and is generally a very good partner for Lemy. However, she does sometimes laugh and joke with other men.

Lemy's appraisal: 'She's got no loyalty whatsoever; if I turned my back on her she'd be off like a shot.'

Error(s): selective perception / mind-reading / all or nothing thinking / emotive language / overgeneralising.

The answers I would give are as follows:

4. *Trigger:* Aisha's husband eats food noisily and talks to her at the same time.

Aisha's appraisal: 'I just can't stand the way he eats, it just shows how he's not my type of person.'

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5. *Trigger:* Lola's teenage son Nathaniel drops a china mug on the floor and it breaks. (Note: we know that Nathaniel takes great care over his homework.)

Lola's appraisal: 'He doesn't take any care about anything, he just doesn't give a damn.'

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Nicole's appraisal: 'They don't care about any of us, all they are interested in doing is relaxing and flirting with each other.'

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7. *Trigger:* Out at a party, Errol's wife contradicts him several times in front of others.

Errol's appraisal: 'She's doing it deliberately to show me up and make me look small – I just can't stand her any longer.'

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Brandon's appraisal: 'He always treats me unfairly, he's just a lousy bastard.'

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Danny's appraisal: 'That's totally out of order – she has got absolutely no sense of what's right and wrong.'

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10. *Trigger:* Lemy and Ella have been married several years. Ella has never had an extra-marital relationship and is generally a very good partner for Lemy. However, she does sometimes laugh and joke with other men.

Lemy's appraisal: 'She's got no loyalty whatsoever; if I turned my back on her she'd be off like a shot.'

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