Cognitive Distortions Survey

Using the last handout with a list of 15 distortions identify the correct cognitive distortion for each.

1. If you are having a debate, opinionated discussion, or argument with someone else, can you admit it when you are wrong, or will you continue to insist that you are right, right to the very end and beyond, both to others and yourself? How problematic is it for you to be wrong, in an action you take or a choice you make? Is it more important to you to always be right than to be fully honest with yourself and/or others involved? What is a situation or an example where you or someone else was like this?

2. When driving, I get extremely upset when I let someone in from a side road and they do not give me a wave to thank me for it. How rude! Do you have a lot of rules like this in your head, rules you apply to yourself, and/or rules you apply to others? Do you spend a considerable amount of time stewing in anger over people (or yourself) breaking these rules? If so, what is an example of one of these rules?

3. How much does it upset you when, by chance, life doesn't turn out fairly, when you are really nice to someone but they don't always return the favor, when you study harder than someone else on a test but that person does better than you, when the person you like goes for a "lesser being," when you have worked harder and played better than someone else on the team but that person gets more playing time than you? What is an example that fits your life?

4. How often do you worry about the "worst case scenario?" When you are performing a solo on your instrument, do you stress out about completely messing it up, making an idiot out of yourself, and losing your spot in the orchestra or band? When a test comes up, do you worry about failing it, and then that test being the difference that causes you to not get into your top-choice college, and everyone thinking you're a loser and an idiot? Do you worry that you will mess up a conversation with someone you are "interested in" so badly that the person will never want to talk to you again, and this person will tell everyone else how much of a loser you are? What example in your life fits this?
   - or… do you make mountains out of molehills? Make a huge deal out of things that really are not?
   - Or do you say "my life will be over" if a particular event occurs?

5. How often do you think you know that someone else is thinking something negative about you, or at least worry about this? "That teacher thinks I'm not that smart." "Those people just pretend to like me but really they don't." In what situations are you most likely to do this?

6. How often do you relate a situation to yourself that really or most likely has nothing to do with you? When two people are whispering to each other, do you assume, or worry that, they are whispering about you? When a friend seems to be in a bad

mood, do you assume or worry that it was something YOU did or said? When someone else accomplishes something, do you immediately start to compare yourself to that person? In what type of situation do you fall in this trap?

7. Are things all one way or the other for you? A person is either completely awesome or an absolute jerk? You are either perfect or a failure? A situation is either just right or absolutely horrible? A person either loves you or hates you? You are either completely satisfied or completely dissatisfied with a new purchase? When/ what is an example of this for you?

8. Does every bad thing that happens need to be someone's fault? Your fault? Someone else's fault? Examples of times you have done this?

9. There is a person in my life who I feel is always trying to control me. Every conversation ends with some sort of request for me to do something or commit to something. This person is also often upset because someone else isn't acting the way she wants. It's as if she is saying, "if everyone would simply do what I want them to do, I wouldn't be miserable and I could be happy." How might you be this person sometimes? In what situations?