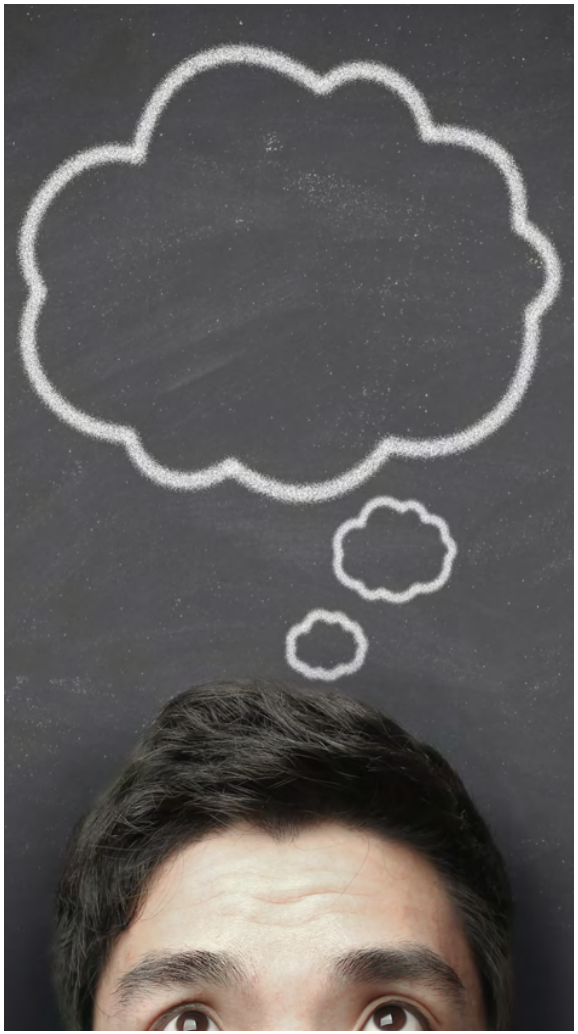
Wellness Snapshot

Overcoming negative self-talk to support behaviour change



"I missed the gym, I'm clearly not someone who can be a consistent gym-goer"
"I didn't sleep well last night. I'll never be a good sleeper"

Do any of these sound like thoughts you've had? These are examples of **cognitive distortions**, which are habitual ways of thinking that are often unhelpful and negatively biased. Since we need to make many conscious decisions each day, sometimes our brains take a short cut and use thinking patterns that are often completely inaccurate.

Here are some common cognitive distortions:

- **Mental Filtering:** A focus on the negative aspect of a situation, such as "it's too hard to find the time for a run, I'm too tired, and it's too cold"
- **All or Nothing Thinking:** Viewing a situation in absolute, black or white, such as "I missed today's workout so I've failed"
- **Overgeneralization:** A broad conclusion based on a single incident or unpleasant event, such as "I failed to get in shape in the past, I'll never be able to do it"
- **Emotional Reasoning:** Reasoning based on feelings alone, such as "I'm feeling overwhelmed so my goal of running a 5K is too much for me"

However, there are a few steps we can take to overcome cognitive distortions:

1. **Recognize and isolate the thought:** Build awareness so that you can challenge and change the thoughts that don't serve you. Try to identify the type of distortion so it will be easier to counter in the future.
2. **Challenge and reframe the thought:** Evaluate the evidence, focus on the positives, and avoid thinking in extremes. Thoughts drive our emotions, actions, and results. Reframing allows us to interpret our experiences in more positive and productive ways.