

Six Broad Categories of Fusion

- Past
- Future
- Self
- Rules
- Reasons
- Judgments
- These all overlap and interconnect

Fusion with the past includes:

- Rumination, regret
- Dwelling on painful memories – e.g. of failure, rejection, hurt, loss
- Blame/resentment (over past events)
- Flashbacks
- Idealising the past (my life was wonderful before XYZ happened)
- I can't do A (important action) because of the way B (bad past event) has effected me

Fusion with the future includes:

- Worrying, catastrophizing,
- Predicting the worst, hopelessness
- Anticipating failure, rejection, hurt, loss etc.
- Idealising the future (my life will be wonderful when XYZ happens)
- Assuming a bad outcome and using that as a reason for inaction: I can't do A (important action) because B (bad outcome) will happen

Fusion with self includes:

- Negative self-judgment: I am bad, unlovable, worthless, dirty, damaged, nothing, broken
- Positive self-judgment: I am wonderful, always right, better than you (feeds narcissism, arrogance, discrimination etc.)
- Over-identifying with a role – e.g. a parent role, a sick role, an occupational role
- Over-identifying with a label – e.g. I am borderline, I am depressive
- I don't know who I am!!

Fusion with judgments includes:

- Positive or negative judgments about:
- Past, future,
- Self, others
- My own thoughts and feelings
- My body
- My life
- The world
- N.B. fusion with positive judgments can be just as problematic as fusion with negatives (e.g. narcissism)

Fusion with reasons includes:

- All the reasons why I can't or won't change: I can't do X (important action) because ...
- I'm too Y (depressed, tired, anxious, etc.)
- Z might happen (Z = bad outcomes e.g. failure, rejection, making a fool of myself)
- I shouldn't have to (it's his/her/their/your fault)
- I've tried before and failed
- It's pointless, It's too hard, It's scary
- I don't have A (money, time, energy etc.)
- I am B (borderline, shy, a loser, or other self-concepts)
- C says I shouldn't (C =parents, religion, the law, cultural beliefs, workplace etc.)

Fusion with rules includes:

- All the rules about how I, others, or the world should be
- Identified by words like: *should, have to, must, ought, right, wrong, fair, unfair*
- Identified by conditions like: *can't until, shouldn't unless, mustn't because, will not tolerate, refuse to allow etc*
- E.g. I must not make mistakes; she shouldn't treat me like that; my children should be more respectful; I will not tolerate that kind of talk.

These all interweave and overlap

- E.g. Because bad things have happened to me (past), I am damaged (self) which means I can't do X (reason) so I will never be able to have Y (future).
- These are not the only categories of fusion, but they account for the vast majority of fusion we will encounter in clinical practice.