

## **8 Critical Thinking Errors Common in all Unethical Behavior**

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**Mollification-** Downplaying the seriousness of past unethical conduct and current interpersonal conflicts by blaming problems on external circumstances, making excuses for behavior, pointing out the unfairness of the world, or de-valuing victims

**Cutoff-** Eliminating normal feelings which deter unethical action through a simple phrase (“forget it”), image, or musical theme. In some cases the offender uses drugs or alcohol to cut off fear, anxiety, guilt, or other common deterrents to unethical activity

**Entitlement-** A belief that a person is entitled to violate the laws of society and the rights of others by way of an expressed attitude of ownership (“it’s mine”), privilege (“I’m above the law”), or by labeling wants as needs.

**Power Orientation-** Choosing power and external control over self-discipline and internal control, one attempts to exert power and control over others. Consequently, they feel weak and helpless when not in control of a situation. They attempt to alleviate this feeling by manipulating, intimidating, or physically assaulting others.

**Sentimentality-** Even though displaying unethical behavior, they have an interest in being viewed as a “nice person”. However, this creates a dilemma, given the amount of interpersonally intrusive activity they have engaged in. Consequently, they may perform “good deeds” with the intent of cultivating a “good-person” image.

**Super Optimism-** Experience has taught that they get away with most of their unethical actions. This leads to a growing sense of overconfidence in which they believe that they are invincible. This belief usually leads to their downfall.

**Mental Laziness-** As lazy in thought as in behavior, they take short-cuts which inevitably lead to failure, low self-evaluation, and poor critical reasoning skills.

**Discontinuity-** Having difficulty maintaining focus over time because of being easily influenced by events and situations around them. As a result, they have difficulty following through on initially good intentions