
AUTOMATIC NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

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Always Thinking

Thinking that something is absolute. EX: “I always get frustrated when”... “I will never be able to ”...” Alicia is always complaining”...

Mind Reading

Believing that you can read minds and know what others think or feel even if they have not spoken to you EX: “I am not liked because I do not use technology”... “My boss thinks I am stupid”... “She only did that to show us up.”

Fortune Telling

Predicting the worst possible scenario or outcome.

EX: “I am not going to use a computer because it will crash and” . . . “I and not going to use email because it always wastes my time” . . . “Everyone will laugh at me because” . . . Oscar is acting out because he is jealous of his new sibling.

Labeling

Using negative labels for yourself or others use Ex: “Alicia will not be able to do this because” . . . “African American boys are more physically aggressive because. . . “I’m stupid” . . . Hispanic children will not perform as well as other because...

Blame

Blaming others or circumstances your difficulties.

EX: “If they would just go back to the way things were, there would not these problems” . . . “I can’t learn to use a computer because I am poor and we do not have one at home.” I hate the way she makes me feel.

Thinking with Feelings

Believing all the negative self- talk without challenge Ex: “I will never figure this out”... “I quit, this is just impossible to figure out” . . . “These instructions are stupid”

Focus on the Negative

Seeing only what is bad or wrong in a situation

Ex: “See, I told you that the instructions were lousy” . . . “This won’t work. We have tried it before and it failed.” “They will never pay preschool teachers what they are worth.”

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Guilt

Thinking in words like, **should, must, ought to or have to** Ex: “They should be doing” . . .”I ought to at least be able to” . . .”I shouldn’t have” . . .

Consciously Talk Back to Irrational Thoughts!

For Example:

- **A.N.T-** Thinking in “always” or “never” terms
- **A.N.T. Response-** “ I’m always a failure at crowd control. I always get anxious when it is time to have students go outside.”

BETTER THINKING RESPONSE-“I get anxious when the children all crowd around me when we are getting ready to go outside. Usually a fight begins and then there is pushing and shoving.” I know that stress will prevent me from thinking clearly and managing the situation so I am going to take it step-by-step and begin by being prepared and inviting a few children to get ready to go outside by holding our games and others will get to choose our “going outside” song.

Practice makes permanent so, over time, practicing responding to A.N.T.s will lay down brain pathways to solve problems differently.

Source: Daniel Amen, Ed.D- Making a Good Brain Great- Amen Clinics, Newport Beach, CA