

ANTs?

Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs) are those cynical, gloomy, and/or “complain-y” type thoughts that fly under radar and pop into our minds seemingly without notice.

ANTs include statements such as "Today is going to be a bad day" or "I'm not going to make rank, so why study." One of the biggest problems is that these thoughts become self-fulfilling prophecies and can severely limit your ability to enjoy life.

How you think moment-to-moment plays a huge role in how you feel, and influences how you act. When your thoughts are negative, you don't expect or believe good things will happen, and unpleasant feelings make it less likely that you'll even try to make them happen.

Some common ANTs:



- **"Always" type thinking.** This is when you think in words like "always, never, no one, every one, every time, everything"
- **Focusing on the negative.** Only seeing the bad in a situation
- **Fortune telling.** Predicting the worst possible outcome to a situation
- **Mind reading.** Believing that you know what another person is thinking, even though they haven't told you and you haven't asked
- **Thinking with your feelings.** Believing that the unpleasant emotions you experience must stem from sound or logical thought processes, or accurate appraisals of situations, the world, and people in it.
- **Guilt beatings.** Thinking or saying things like "should, must, ought or have to"
- **Labeling.** Attaching negative labels to yourself or others
- **Personalization.** Taking benign events to have a personal, negative meaning
- **Blame.** Making someone other than yourself responsible for your problems or unpleasant emotions

Tips for SQUASHING ANTs:

1. **Awareness.** Slow down...pay attention. The next time you notice an ANT creeping into your thoughts, simply recognize it and acknowledge it
2. **Challenge it.** Question your ANTs - ask yourself if what you are thinking is true, and if there aren't alternative possibilities at hand. Even if something is true, it may not be helpful to focus on it
3. **Replace it.** By replacing ANTs with more positive and balanced thoughts, you'll take greater control of your emotions and actions, and achieve the best version of yourself. Repeated positive statement them often, and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes. ***Positive and hopeful thoughts lead to positive behaviors,*** which will help you to feel better about yourself and be more effective in your day-to-day life.

I AM ENOUGH.
WHO I AM IS
ENOUGH.
WHAT I DO
IS ENOUGH,
AND WHAT I HAVE
IS ENOUGH.