



THE NINE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF ANTS (AUTOMATIC NEGATIVE THOUGHTS)



ANT SPECIES #1: Always or Never Thinking

This happens when you think something that happened will ALWAYS repeat itself or something that hasn't happened to you will NEVER happen. Whenever you think in words like **always, never, no one, every one, every time, everything**, those are examples of "always" thinking and usually wrong. Here are some examples of "always" thinking: "He/she always ignores me." "I'll never get an A."

ANT SPECIES #2 : Focusing On the Negative

This occurs when your thoughts **only see the bad in a situation** and ignore any of the good parts that might happen.



ANT SPECIES #3: Fortune Telling

This is where you predict the **worst possible outcome** to a situation.



ANT SPECIES #4 : Mind Reading

This happens when you believe that you know what another person is thinking even when they haven't told you. You know that you are mind reading when you have thoughts such as, "She's mad at me. He doesn't like me. They were talking about me." I tell people that a negative look from someone else may be nothing more than they are constipated! You don't know. You can't read anyone else's mind. You never know what others are really thinking.

ANT SPECIES #5: Thinking With Your Feelings

This occurs when you believe your negative feelings without ever questioning them. Feelings are very complex, and, often based on powerful memories from the past. They sometimes lie to you. "Thinking with your feelings" thoughts usually start with the words "**I feel**." For example, "I feel like you don't love me. I feel stupid. I feel like a failure."

ANT SPECIES #6: Guilt Beatings

Guilt is not a helpful emotion, especially for your deep limbic system. In fact, guilt often causes you to do those things that you don't want to do. Guilt beatings happen when you think with words like "**should, must, ought or have to**."

ANT SPECIES #7: Labeling

Whenever you attach a negative label to yourself or to someone else, you stop your ability to take a clear look at the situation. Some examples of negative labels that people use are "**stupid, loser, or ugly**."

ANT SPECIES #8: Personalization

Personalization occurs when innocuous events are taken to have personal meaning. "My teacher didn't smile at me this morning. He must be mad at me." You never fully know why people do what they do. Try not to personalize their behavior.



ANT SPECIES #9: Blame

Blame is very harmful. When you blame something or someone else for the problems in your life, you become a victim of circumstances and you cannot do anything to change your situation. Whenever you blame someone else for the problems in your life, you become powerless to change anything and lose your personal sense of power. Stay away from blaming thoughts and take personal responsibility to change the problems you have. Typically, you'll hear statements from them like: "It wasn't my fault that..." "That wouldn't have happened if you had...." "How was I supposed to know...." "It's your fault that...."