

# Field Guide to ANT'S

It's not what you think



## **Wave your wand - it's time to turn ANT's into KAT's**

You've been having Automatic Negative Thoughts (or ANT'S) for, probably, most of your life.

It may take a while to get good at recognizing them and it may take time to get good at turning them into something else. The first step is to identify the ANT's...

Then we find ways to go from negative to neutral, before attempting positive.

**Automatic Negative Thought (ANT)**

*"I look horrible"*

**Neutral Acceptable Thought (NAT)**

*"I don't like the way I look today"*

**Balanced Alternative Thought (BAT)**

*"Body image is a tricky business; I'm working on it"*

**Krazy Amazeballs Thought (KAT)**

*"I am fierce AF and it shows!"*

NAT's, BAT's and KAT's are in a different guide.

All or Nothing Thinking

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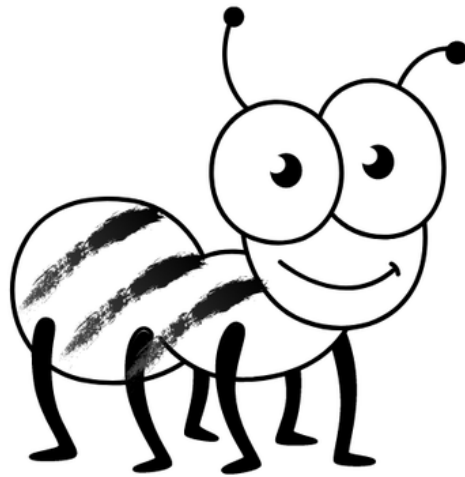
## the black & white ANT

Things are right or wrong, good or bad.

*"Just polished off a bag of potato chips. Might as well not bother with trying to be healthy today."*

*"I won't be able to get all of this done, so I may as well not start it."*

*"This job is so bad...there's nothing good about it at all."*



## Overgeneralizing

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### know it all ANT

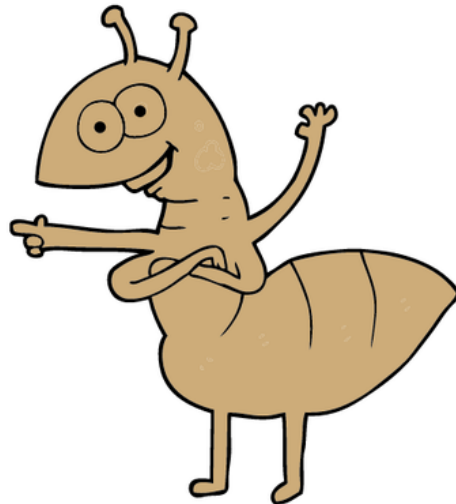
Comes to general conclusions based on a single event or one piece of evidence. Because something bad happened once, it is bound to happen again and again.

Likes the words "always", "never", "every time", and other absolutes.

*"I forgot to finish that project on time. I **never** do things right."*

*"He didn't want to go out with me. I'll **always** be lonely."*

*"I skipped a workout this week. I have **zero** willpower at all."*



## □ Magnification and Minimization

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### Telescope ANT

Exaggerates or minimizes the importance of events.... like depending on which end of the telescope you look through, things will seem way bigger or way smaller. Believes achievements are unimportant, and/or mistakes are excessively important.

*"Anyone who works here long enough, gets a raise."*

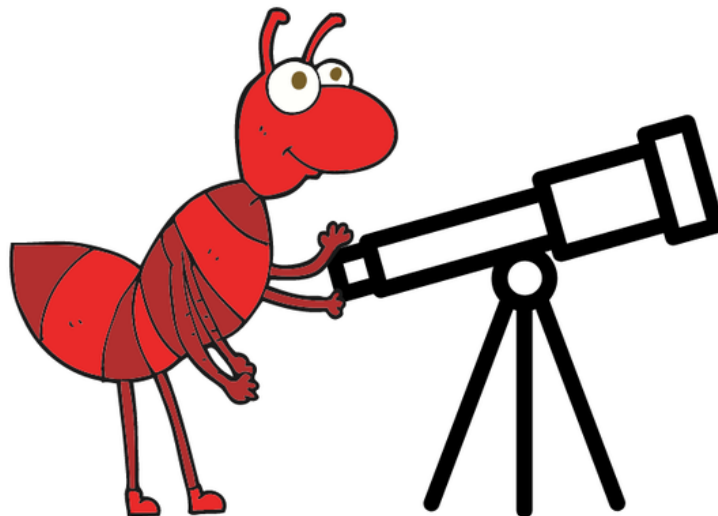
*"Nobody is going to hire someone who forgets to spell check!"*

**Catastrophizing ANT is a common sub-species:** Sees only the worst possible outcomes of a situation.

*"I'm going to come in last and let everyone down."*

*"What if I haven't turned the iron off and the house burns down?!"*

*"If I don't do well at this meeting, I'll get fired, for sure."*



# □ Jumping to Conclusions

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## the leaping ANT

*I always picture it as athletic...lol*

Interprets the meaning of a situation with little or no evidence.

There are two sub-species of this ANT:

**the Mind Reader:** Makes assumptions about other people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours without checking the evidence.

*"She would not go on a date with me. She probably thinks I'm ugly."*

**the Fortune Teller:** Anticipates an outcome and assumes the prediction is an established fact. Can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

*"This relationship is sure to fail."*



## Emotional Reasoning

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### drama queen EMO ANT

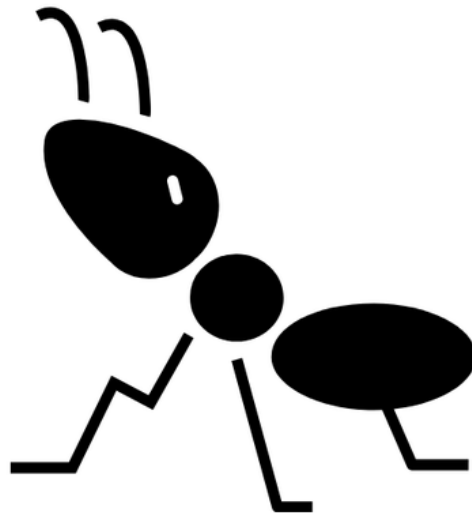
Assumes that emotions reflect the way things really are; mistakes feelings for facts. Negative things you feel about yourself are believed to be true because they feel true.

*"I feel like a bad friend, therefore I must be a bad friend."*

*"I feel hopeless... this situation is obviously hopeless."*

*"I feel like such a failure; loserville is my home."*

*"I feel ugly, therefore I am ugly."*



## □ Disqualifying the Positive

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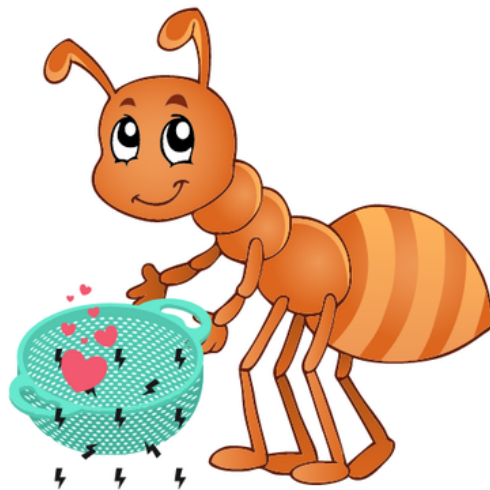
### the filtering ANT

Concentrates on the negatives while ignoring the positives, plus ignores important information that might contradict a negative view. It might receive many compliments on an evaluation, but focus on the single piece of negative feedback. Uses the word 'but' a lot

*"I know my trainer said I worked hard during the session **but** she also had to correct a lot of stuff ...she must think I'm hopeless"\*\**

\*\*a mindreader ANT joined the team there, too!

*"I can do 10 push ups ...**but** only from my knees so that doesn't really count."*





## Personalization

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### the magical thinking ANT

Believes that actions will influence unrelated situations.

*"I am good —bad things shouldn't happen to me."*

**the personalization ANT is a sub-species:** Takes responsibility for things, and other people's reactions or emotions, in unnecessary ways.

*"John's in a terrible mood. I wonder what I did to piss him off."*

*"My mom is always upset. She'd be fine if I did more to help her."*



## □ Labelling and Shoulds

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### the blame and shame ANT twins

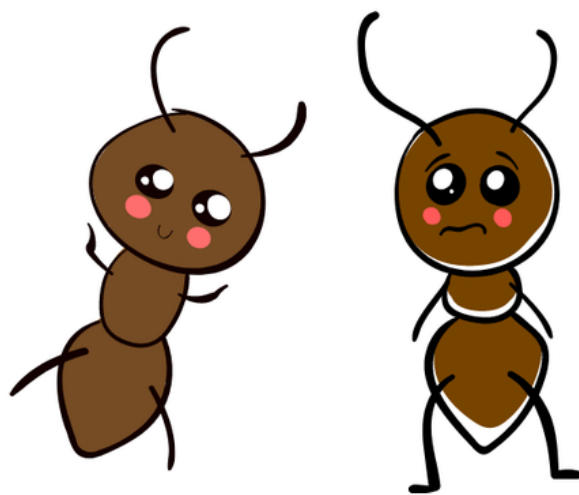
**The 'should'ing twin that shits out shame:** Believes that things should be a certain way. *"I should always be friendly."*

**The labelling twin that shits out blame:** Blames others for problems and takes no credit for successes and failures. Uses negative terms to label.

*"It is your fault I'm out of shape because you will not go with me to exercise."*

*"How was I supposed to know..."*

*"I'm a loser"; "I'm a failure"; or "I'm lazy."*





Hope you enjoyed!

# How do we turn ANT's into KAT's?

It's a 3 step process:

- 1) Identify the ANT
- 2) Investigate and get curious about the ANT
- 3) Talk back or challenge the ANT (aka wave your wand and turn it into a NAT, BAT, or KAT)

Of course, that is oversimplified, but it's all I've got room for on this PDF lol. Just remember, it won't happen overnight, but with practice, it will get easier.

If you need a quick dose of a slightly sarcastic, (but still positive) thought, click this fun link below

**EMERGENCY COMPLIMENT BUTTON**