

## **NEGATIVE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS - NATS**

AARON BECK

We are all prone at times to 'distorted thinking', but when we are either under excess stress, or are depressed, these distortions become more exaggerated

- **all or nothing thinking**

you think in absolutes, as either black or white, good or bad, with no middle ground. You tend to judge people or events using general labels, for example 'he's an idiot', 'I'm hopeless', 'I'll never learn to drive'. You may condemn yourself completely as a person on the basis of a single event.

- **catastrophising**

you tend to magnify and exaggerate the importance of events and how awful or unpleasant they will be, overestimating the chance of disaster; whatever can go wrong will go wrong.

- **personalising**

you take responsibility and blame for anything unpleasant even if it has little or nothing to do with you. 'It's my fault'.

- **negative focus**

you focus on the negative, ignoring or misinterpreting positive aspects of a situation. You focus on your weaknesses and forget your strengths, looking on the dark side.

- **jumping to conclusions**

you make negative interpretations even though there are no definite facts. You start predicting the future and taking on the mantle of 'mind reader'.

- **living by fixed rules**

you tend to have fixed rules and unrealistic expectations, regularly using the words 'should', 'ought', 'must' and 'can't'. This leads to unnecessary guilt and disappointment