

Mental Health & My Brain Activity Guide Grade G3-5



Know Your *Neuro*

ANTS: Automatic Negative Thoughts

Automatic negative thoughts are negative thoughts about self or others that have been practiced so often that they pop into mind immediately or automatically. These thoughts are unhelpful and often make the person thinking them feel worse about the situation. The best way to get rid of ANTS is to challenge them and come up with new positive thoughts. Below, list your negative thoughts on the left, write a challenge statement, then a positive replacement thought to be practiced.

	<i>Challenge Statement</i>	
<i>Negative Thoughts</i>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
		<i>Positive Thoughts</i>

Activities

Activity #1

Discussion: Your best friend confides in you that they have been so sad and depressed for the past month and have a lot of negative self-talk. They ask you not to tell anyone.

- 1) Do you keep their confidence, or do you talk to their parents or another trusted adult?
- 2) What might be the result of each choice?
- 3) How could you help them change their negative self-talk into positive self-talk?

Activity #2

Divide students into groups of 3-5. Have each group brainstorm as many positive coping behaviors that they can think of in a specified timeframe. Direct students to divide their list into positive and negative coping skills.

Ask students to share 1-2 of their favorite coping skills from their list and explain why they choose them. Ask if anything on their list does not work well or has negative consequences. Ask what new coping behaviors they could try instead.

Activity #3

Ask students to describe how they feel when they are anxious and what makes them feel the most anxious. Ask them to participate in this grounding activity. Then, ask them if they could use the technique to reduce anxiety.

Take a deep breathe before each step

- 1) Name 5 things you can see
- 2) Name 4 things you can hear
- 3) Name 3 things you can feel or touch
- 4) Name 2 things you can smell
- 5) Name 1 thing you can taste