Habitual negative self-thinking

Content ("I'm a failure, people don't like me, I'm ugly") → Low self-esteem ← process (frequent, automatic, in response to cues)
- measured – content = questionnaires, thought-listing, low self-esteem = explicit and implicit self-esteem, process = habit index of negative thinking.
- Habit index of negative thinking (HINT) e.g. thinking negatively about myself is something...
  'I do frequently, automatically, unintentionally.

Verplanken & Velsvik (2008) – Body image
- Body image dissatisfaction in 12-16 year olds.
- Bidirectional link between habitual negative thinking and low self-esteem and eating disorders.

Mental Habits: interventions
- content → cognitive behavioural therapy
- process → mindfulness based interventions
- mindfulness increases stress tolerance (Verplanken & Fisher 2014 in press)

Bas Verplanken – Habit: From Overt Action to Mental Events
- usually not even aware of habits
- great value in modelling antecedent of behaviour but don’t fully account for relationship between past and later behaviour.
- Past behaviour as powerful predictor of later behaviour – known as the residual variance effect.
- Dual processes account for influence of past behaviour - when behaviour is infrequent experiences from past likely to feed into belief systems and guide future behaviour through intention. When behaviour is frequent this loop doesn’t occur anymore – no need to consciously review past experiences.
- instances of negative thinking can be useful, when we critically evaluate and learn from previous experiences, but when it occurs frequently and automatically it may become dysfunctional by contributing to low self-esteem.