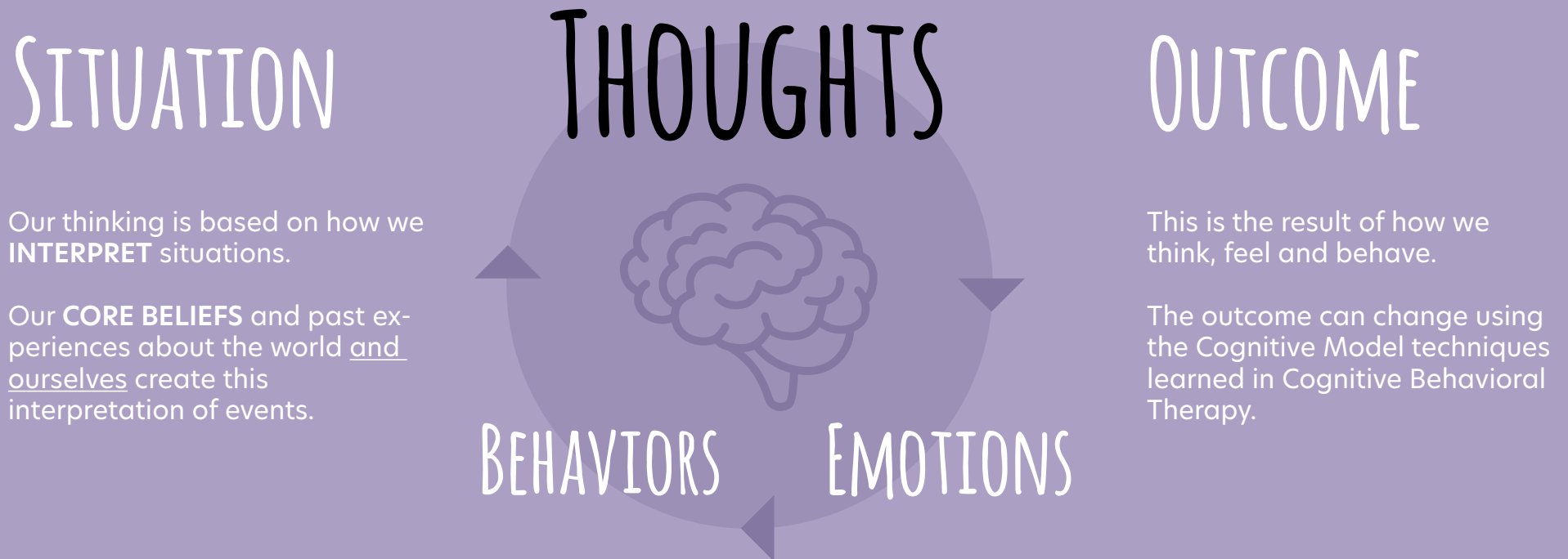


The Cognitive Model

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Core Principles

Our thoughts have a profound impact on how we feel and act. By understanding and altering our thought patterns, we can influence our emotions and behaviors in beneficial ways. This is the core principle used in CBT.



Triggers are strong emotional reactions to situations. If you want to change negative feelings you're experiencing, the Cognitive Model gives you a pathway to do this.

The Cognitive Model

How to use this resource to better understand the model

The Cognitive Model. Dive into the heart of cognitive-behavioral therapy with this worksheet, designed to help you understand and map the intricate dance between your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

Instructions:

Review the Provided Examples:

Before you begin with the exercises, review the detailed examples provided. These examples will help you understand how situations can lead to various interpretations based on individual beliefs and experiences.

Reflect on Each Situation:

When you come across a situation in the exercises, take a moment to place yourself in the character's shoes. How would you feel if you were in their situation?

Identify the Negative Thought:

Every exercise provides an initial negative thought, emotion, and behavior. Understand how this thought process may have influenced the character's emotional response and actions.

Rationalize the Thought:

Your task is to come up with a rational, balanced thought that the character could adopt. This should be a thought that's not overly optimistic but is rooted in reality and helps shift the perspective.

Predict the Emotion and Behavior:

Based on the rational thought you provide, try to predict how the character would feel and how they might behave differently. Think about how changing one's perspective can have a cascade effect on emotions and behaviors.

Cognitive Model Examples

How the same situation can be interpreted differently

This is a simple example that helps you see how similar situations can be **interpreted** differently by using two different people showing how they may think, feel and act differently based on their unique beliefs and experiences.

Tommy

Was raised in a home where every mistake was heavily criticized by both his parents, deep down, Tommy carries the core belief that he's never quite good enough.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth's parents always emphasized the importance of learning from mistakes and considered constructive criticism as an opportunity for growth.

Situation

At a monthly team meeting, both Tommy and Elizabeth presented their individual projects. After their presentations, the team lead provided constructive feedback, highlighting numerous areas where each of them could improve their work. The room was filled with their colleagues, all listening and providing constructive feedback as well.

Tommy

Thoughts

I messed up again. I can't seem to do anything right. I am so embarrassed as nobody likes what I did. I'm a failure.

Emotions

Ashamed, guilty, overwhelmed, embarrassed.

Behaviors

Avoids eye contact with colleagues, withdraws from the meeting early, doesn't participate in further discussions, considers quitting.

Outcome

Tommy becomes more reluctant to share in future meetings, fearing further criticism. Avoids new projects if a review is part of it.

Elizabeth

Thoughts

Okay, I have areas to improve. This feedback will help me refine my project and make it even better. It's not personal, it's constructive.

Emotions

Motivated, curious, slightly anxious.

Behaviors

Jots down the feedback, asks questions for clarity, thanks the team lead for the pointers. Prepares to make the changes.

Outcome

Elizabeth revisits her project with the feedback in mind and makes necessary improvements, showing resilience and adaptability.

Cognitive Model Examples

How the same situation can be interpreted differently

This is a simple example that helps you see how similar situations can be **interpreted** differently by using two different people showing how they may think, feel and act differently based on their unique beliefs and experiences.

Lisa

Lisa’s past experiences involve being ghosted after dates. She often feels she’s the common factor in unsuccessful relationships.

Angela

Angela believes in compatibility. She’s had both good and bad dates in the past and thinks it’s about finding the right match rather than forcing a connection.

Situation	Lisa and Angela, both single for a while, decide to give online dating a try. Each connects with someone online who seemed like a match, but in person, there’s a lack of chemistry, and they find they don’t share many common interests. Each of their dates makes minimal eye contact, constantly checks their phone, and shows little interest in them.	
Lisa	Angela	
Thoughts	I knew it. There’s something about me that just turns people off. Maybe I’m just not meant for love.	ThoughtsThat was awkward. I guess we didn’t click. It’s okay, not every date will be a winner. I’ll try again.
Emotions	Rejected, despondent, self-critical.	EmotionsSlightly disappointed, hopeful, pragmatic.
Behaviors	Spends the evening overanalyzing the date, avoids discussing it with friends, hesitates to schedule another date.	BehaviorsShares a laugh about the awkward date with a friend, updates her dating profile, and plans another date with someone new.
Outcome	Lisa takes a break from dating, reinforcing her belief that relationships might not be for her.	OutcomeAngela continues her dating journey with optimism, understanding that finding the right partner takes time and patience.

Cognitive Model Examples

How the same situation can be interpreted differently

This is a simple example that helps you see how similar situations can be **interpreted** differently by using two different people showing how they may think, feel and act differently based on their unique beliefs and experiences.

Derek

Derek has always been the top of his class and excelled academically. This job is the first place where he hasn't been the standout performer.

Sarah

Sarah has faced multiple setbacks in her career but believes in perseverance and the idea that every experience teaches something valuable.

Situation

Both Derek and Sarah are up for a promotion at their respective jobs. Both have put in long hours and shown commitment. When the decision day arrives, neither is promoted.

Derek

Thoughts

No matter how hard I try, it never seems to be enough for them. Maybe I'm not cut out for this.

Emotions

Frustration, self-doubt, resentment.

Behaviors

Avoids interaction with the new hire, becomes more reserved in meetings, begins casually searching for job opportunities elsewhere.

Outcome

Derek's isolation grows, and his once vibrant work enthusiasm diminishes. His performance suffers slightly due to lack of motivation.

Sarah

Thoughts

This is hard to swallow, but it's a sign. I need to find out why they went external and how I can be the better choice next time.

Emotions

Disappointment, curiosity, determination.

Behaviors

Seeks feedback actively, approaches the new hire to learn and collaborate, joins an advanced management training program.

Outcome

Sarah's proactive approach enhances her skills and strengthens her position in the company, giving her better odds for future opportunities.

Cognitive Model Exercise

Help create a different way of thinking for each situation

This is an exercise where you can apply your skills at reframing negative thoughts to create new emotions and behaviors. In each situation, **create an alternative rational thought** and write out what you think the resulting emotion and behaviors for the rational thought would be.

Situation

Sarah is a diligent college student who has always been an overachiever. Throughout high school, she was in the top 5% of her class. Her parents often praised her for her grades, and she has internalized the idea that she must always excel academically to be valued and to feel accomplished. She's now in her first year of college. For her calculus midterm, she devoted countless hours, gave up weekends, and even attended extra tutorial sessions. After receiving the paper back, she saw a B- scribbled at the top.

Sarah

Alternative Rational Thought

Thoughts

I've let everyone down. All that effort and I still can't get grades like I did in high school.

New Thoughts

Emotions

Defeated, overwhelmed with self-doubt, sadness.

New Emotions

Behaviors

Feels demotivated, considers skipping the next class, doubts her capability of pursuing the major she's passionate about.

New Behaviors

Cognitive Model Exercise

Help create a different way of thinking for each situation

This is an exercise where you can apply your skills at reframing negative thoughts to create new emotions and behaviors. In each situation, **create an alternative rational thought** and write out what you think the resulting emotion and behaviors for the rational thought would be.

Situation

Marcus has been working in the same IT company for over six years. When he first joined, he was filled with ideas and enthusiasm, often taking initiatives to introduce innovative solutions. Over time, as the company grew, layers of bureaucracy and a hierarchy system made it difficult for him to bring forth new ideas. Marcus recently spent weeks developing a proposal for a system that would make project management more efficient. He was genuinely excited about it. After presenting it to his team lead and a few executives, they decided to go in a different direction.

Marcus

Alternative Rational Thought

Thoughts

Maybe my ideas just aren't that good anymore. I've lost my touch.

New Thoughts

Emotions

Disheartened, frustrated, undervalued.

New Emotions

Behaviors

Becomes reserved in team meetings, hesitates to share new ideas, starts to withdraw from group projects.

New Behaviors

Cognitive Model Exercise

Help create a different way of thinking for each situation

This is an exercise where you can apply your skills at reframing negative thoughts to create new emotions and behaviors. In each situation, **create an alternative rational thought** and write out what you think the resulting emotion and behaviors for the rational thought would be.

Situation

Emily and Alex have been in a committed relationship for a decade. The initial years were filled with spontaneous dates, deep conversations, and shared adventures. As the years passed, they settled into a routine, focusing on their careers, taking care of their two children, and managing household chores. Recently, Emily noticed that Alex seems distant. He's often on his phone during dinner, seems less interested in conversations, and they rarely have their once cherished date nights. One evening, after the kids have gone to bed, she finds Alex on the balcony, lost in thought.

Marcus

Alternative Rational Thought

Thoughts

He's grown tired of me. Maybe he's found someone else. It's me, I'm not what he wants anymore. He's going to leave me.

New Thoughts

Emotions

Insecurity, sadness, anxiety.

New Emotions

Behaviors

Avoids bringing up the topic, starts checking Alex's phone when he's not around, feels resentment growing inside.

New Behaviors