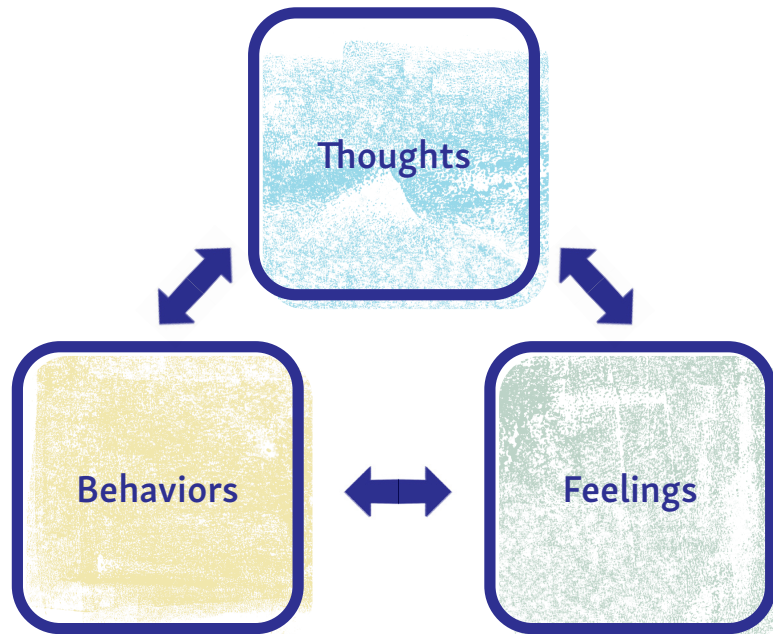


Understanding Thoughts

The Cognitive Triangle



Our thoughts, feelings and behaviors are all connected. By changing our thoughts, we can change how we feel and how we behave.

Examples

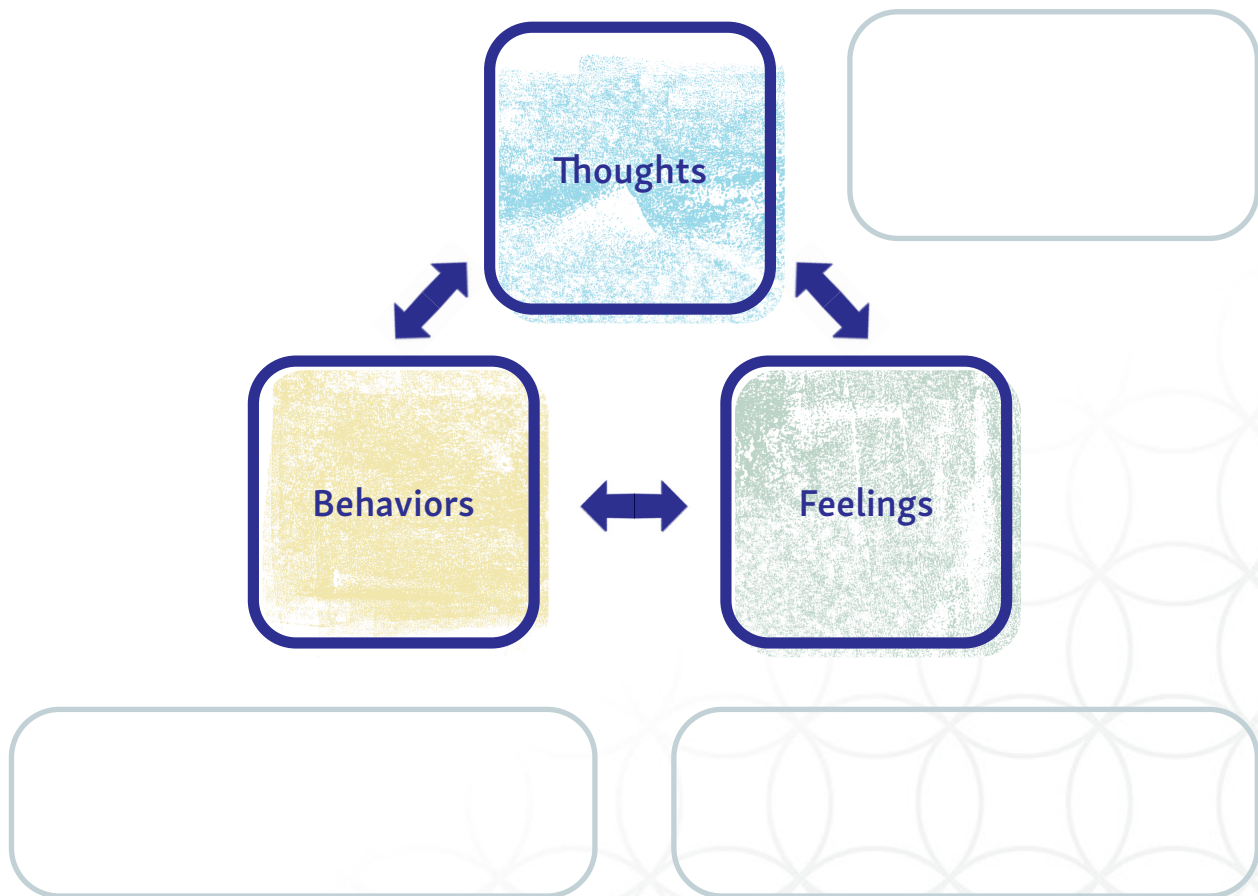
Thoughts	Feelings	Behavior
"This work is impossible"	Frustrated, Hopeless, Confused	Give up, play video games instead; Stomp into my room
"I've done hard things. I can try my best."	Hopeful, Calm, Motivated	Ask for help; Finish as much as I can

Understanding Thoughts

Cognitive Triangle Practice

Directions: Discuss or write the missing triangle parts using the event examples below.

Event



Event Examples:









1. You show up to school and realize you have a test you forgot about.
2. Your best friend is mad at you and not talking to you.
3. Your parents got into an argument.
4. You overhear kids talking about a birthday party you weren't invited to.
5. You get a bad grade on a test.
6. Someone bumps into you in the hallway and keeps walking without apologizing.

Understanding Thoughts

Reframing Negative Thoughts

Negative thoughts can lead to negative feelings and behavior choices that might make our problems worse. You can change your negative thoughts by reframing them into more realistic, helpful or positive thoughts.

Directions: Reframe the unhelpful thoughts into thoughts that are more **realistic**, **helpful** or **positive**. Write or discuss your answers with a friend or family member. What are other unhelpful thoughts that you have sometimes?

Unhelpful Thought	Reframe It!
My friend said she can't come over to my house. She must hate me!	 Maybe she has to do her homework. We're good friends. Maybe she wants to be alone right now. She'll come another day.
My dad took away my phone and video games for two days as a punishment. He's awful.	
My friend got angry at me today. Now she won't want to be my friend anymore and will stop talking to me.	
My teacher yelled at me today—he's so unfair and mean, I hate him!	
My mom left the family; I must not be lovable.	
I have a presentation to give in front of the class today. I'm going to mess it up and everyone is going to laugh at me.	
My parents got into a big fight recently, and it's all my fault.	
I always get in trouble because I'm a bad kid.	

Understanding Thoughts

Thinking Traps

It can be hard not to get stuck in our negative thoughts. By noticing what kind of thinking traps you fall into, you can help yourself get out of them more quickly.

Directions: Match the thought with the thinking trap by drawing a line from the thought to a trap. You might find that a thought falls into more than one trap. Use the next page for help.

"I can't believe I said that to him.
He probably thinks I'm such a loser."

"I'm going to make such a fool of myself and
everyone will laugh at me."

"My teacher never wants to help me!
I hate her!"

"My parents got into an argument
and it's all my fault."

"I can't believe I failed this test!
I always get A's! I might as well give up."

"What is that noise?
Is someone breaking into our apartment?"

"I know I'm just a bad kid."

Labeling



Ignoring the Positive



Black and White Thinking



Worst Case Scenario



Fortune Telling



Mind Reading



Taking Things Personally



Understanding Thoughts

Common Thinking Traps

Black and White Thinking



When we only think in terms of extremes like “great” or “terrible” or “all” or “nothing.” It can be helpful to find the middle ground!

Fortune Telling



When we predict that things will turn out badly, even though we can't actually know the future!

Ignoring the Positive



When we only pay attention to the bad things that happen and ignore the positive things.

Labeling



When we use a single negative word to describe ourselves. That kind of thinking is unfair and doesn't make us feel good!

Taking Things Personally



When we blame ourselves for things that are not our fault and may have nothing to do with us.

Worst Case Scenario



When we imagine the worst possible thing that could happen and predict we won't be able to handle it. Usually the worst case doesn't happen and we are able to cope!

Mind Reading



When we assume we know what another person is thinking, even though we really don't.