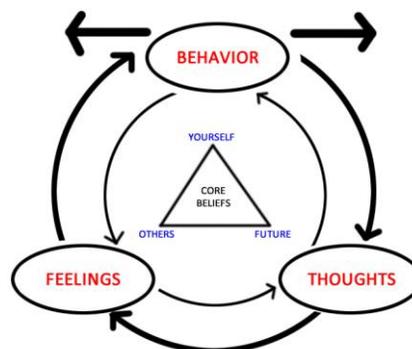


# Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Guide

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, also known as CBT, is a brief process that focuses on tackling the problems and stressors that contribute to emotional and behavioral problems. This intervention teaches you to identify and reframe your illogical thoughts and problematic behavior patterns that contribute to your distress. CBT, if used correctly, is effective in treating a variety of emotional and psychological issues, such as anxiety, depression, panic disorder, and addictive tendencies. It should be the first intervention used if you are struggling with these conditions.

## Main Principles of CBT:

- Your thoughts dictate your emotions and how you perceive the world around you. Thought processes play a significant role in the onset of emotional problems. The environment may lead to you feeling certain emotions; however, your interpretation of the situation can make your emotions more intense.
- Becoming aware of the connection between the mind, body, thought, and emotional processes reveal behavioral problems or negative thinking patterns that contribute to distress.
- CBT will teach you to identify your distorted thought patterns and then to reframe them in a more realistic manner, which will then also improve your behavior.
- An important and often missed aspect of CBT is the behavioral component. In addition to your thoughts, behaviors equally contribute to your emotional experience. This means that you must also learn to stop avoiding or acting impulsively and gain control of your sympathetic nervous system by exercising, engaging in diaphragmatic breathing and mindfulness, and placing yourself in feared or challenging situations.
- In summary, if you engage in more realistic and healthier thoughts and behaviors, then negative emotions do not stand a chance!



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## A Few CBT Self Help Interventions

- **Decide to be More Rational:** If you want to feel and think better, then you must get control of your negative emotions and thoughts and commit to altering your automatic thoughts.
- **Evidence-Based Thought Processes:** If distressed about a situation, you should objectively evaluate whether you have evidence for your belief about the situation.
- **Exploring Alternative Explanations:** If you are distressed about a situation, you should determine if there are alternative explanations for what has occurred and whether your thoughts and feelings are truly justified.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** If distressed you should conduct a cost-benefit analysis about your thought and feelings about a given situation. Examine whether there is a benefit to thinking or feeling a certain way. Are thinking and feeling this way helpful in getting what you want?
- **Compare the Possibility and Probability.** If worrying, remind yourself that certainly something bad happening is a possibility, but the probability of it happening is unlikely. Remember that math and statistics tell the truth and that feelings are not facts. Feelings are just feelings.
- **Chase the Fear to the Logical Conclusion.** Play out your fear or worry and imagine that the worst possible scenario and realize how although this event may be a struggle, it still will be survivable or manageable.
- **Move the Body and the Mind will Follow.** Have you ever noticed how often you don't feel like doing something that is scary or even healthy but after you do it you feel so much better. This is the same principle. If distressed, you can trick the mind into thinking and feeling better by engaging in the next right behavior no matter how you feel initially. Engaging in the next right behavior gives you a sense of control and satisfaction and will improve your mood. Your mind will eventually catch up to a moving body. Try it now!