



UNDERSTANDING THE COGNITIVE TRIANGLE AND HOW IT CAN HELP YOU

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a talking therapy that focuses on how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours interact. The CBT cognitive triangle is one of the simplest ways to explain that link.

The triangle shows that:

- Your thoughts affect how you feel
- Your feelings affect how you behave
- Your behaviour affects your thoughts



These three things work together in a cycle. Sometimes that cycle keeps you stuck. But when you understand the pattern, you can start to change it.

How to use this worksheet

Page 2: Your current triangle

Think of a recent situation that felt difficult. It might be something that made you anxious, sad, or frustrated.

Fill in each part of the triangle:

Thoughts: What went through your mind? (e.g. "I'll mess this up" or "No one likes me")

Feelings: What emotions did you notice? (e.g. anxious, sad, angry)

Behaviours: What did you do? (e.g. avoided the situation, rushed away, stayed quiet)

Page 3: Your new triangle

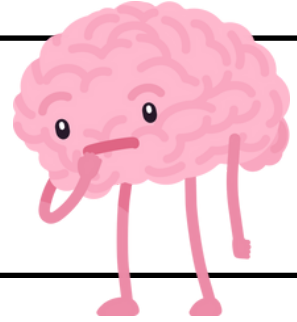
Now imagine a different way the situation could go. Pick one part of the triangle to change, usually a behaviour, because that's often easiest to control.

Fill in what might happen if you tried something different:

- Thoughts: What might you think instead?
- Feelings: How might you feel?
- Behaviours: What small change could you try?

Small changes add up, especially when you practise them regularly.

COGNITIVE TRIANGLE



EVENT OR SITUATION

What happened?

THOUGHT

What was I telling myself when the event was happening?

T

B

E

BEHAVIOUR

What was my response to the situation?

EMOTIONS

How did it make me feel?

HOW COULD I ADAPT MY THOUGHT?

Is it completely true? Is there another way to view things?

COULD I CHANGE MY BEHAVIOUR NEXT TIME?

Could I take a different action that might help me think and feel different?

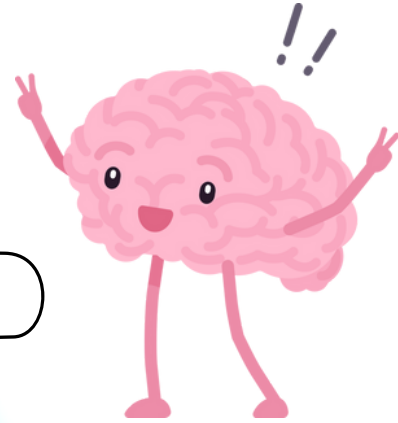
COGNITIVE TRIANGLE

MY NEW (MORE HELPFUL) TRIANGLE!

THOUGHT

What was I telling myself when the event was happening?

T



B

E

BEHAVIOUR

What was my response to the situation?

EMOTIONS

How did it make me feel?



REFLECTION: LOOKING BACK AT YOUR NEW TRIANGLE

After trying out your new triangle in real life, take a moment to notice what happened.

- Did anything surprise you?
- Was the outcome different from what you expected?
- What did you learn about the connection between your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours?
- Is there another small change you could try next time?

Remember, change takes practice. Even if things didn't go perfectly, you've learned something valuable about how your mind works.

