

**COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY:  
SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL  
REGULATION WITH CHILDREN  
AND TEENS**

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# INTRODUCTIONS

- My work with children and teens: inpatient, outpatient, schools, and clinics
- Trained in Cognitive-behavioral therapy, as well as behavioral, biofeedback, and solution focused modalities
  
- What contexts do you work in?
  
- Who uses Cognitive-behavioral therapy?
  
  
- Disclosures: No financial connections to any of the apps/ resources mentioned in this presentation

# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Define Cognitive-behavioral therapy
- How Cognitive-behavioral therapy supports emotional regulation
- emotional regulation skills: individual
- emotional regulation skills: caregivers
  - Practice & generalization

# COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

- “CBT”
- Evidence based therapy for anxiety, depression, ptsd, behavior (APA, AAP)
  - <http://childtherapy.wpengine.com/> (Effective Child Therapy: society of clinical child and adolescent psychology)
- Goal driven: target behavior
- Time limited: monitoring/ evaluating progress
  - Skills can be taught in 4-6 sessions
- Investigations/ discoveries/ projects.....“Homework”
  - Generalization (typically takes more than 4-6 session)
- Collaborative with parents/ children
- Developmentally modifiable

# CBT TRIANGLE

**Situation: Test**

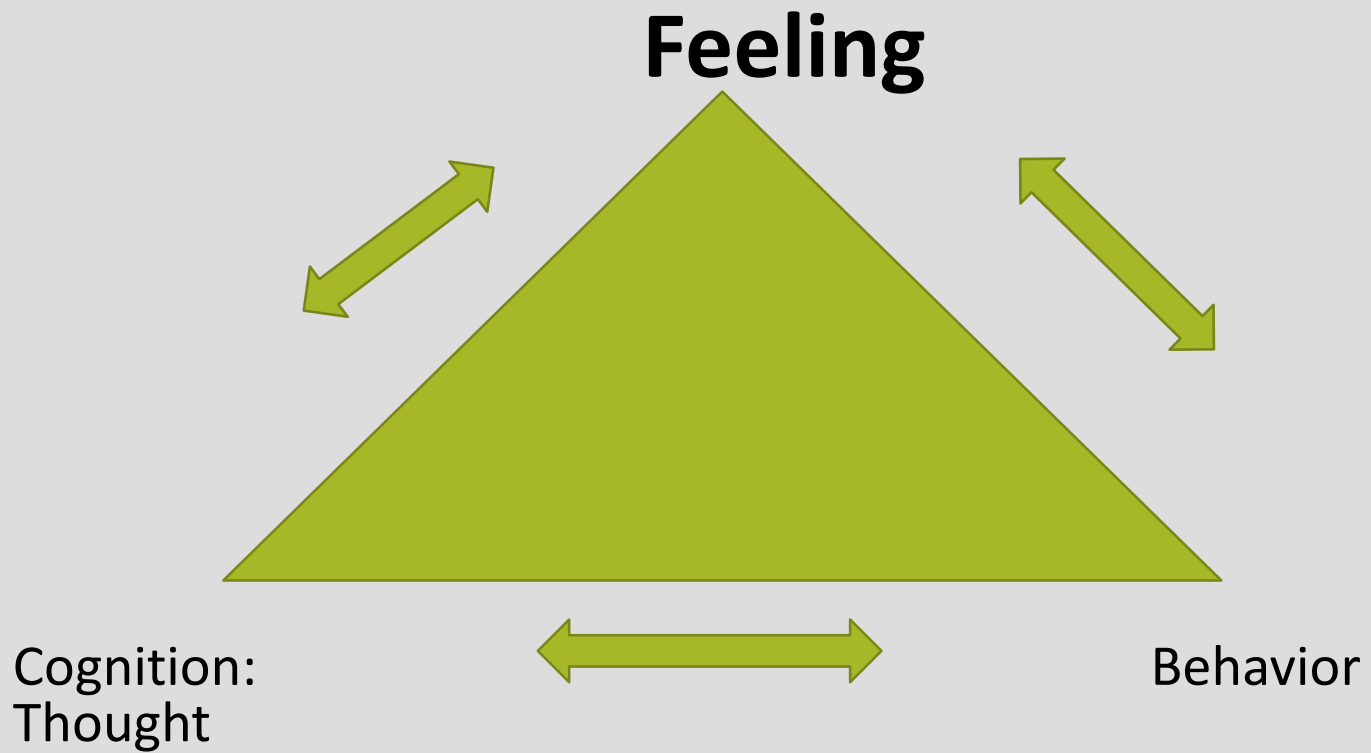
**Feeling: Anxiety**



**Cognition / Thought:**  
**I'm going to fail**

**Behavior: Stomach ache, not  
studying, rushing through test**

# CBT SKILLS: FEELINGS



# FEELINGS

- Feelings are reflexive
  - Quick; can't always anticipate / little control
  - Balloon
- Individual differences
  - Emotional responses post TBI (fear, guilt, insecurity, adjustment, anger, ptds....).
  - Don't assume....ask.
- General acceptance of all feelings
  - Have to stay safe and respectful
- Validate
  - “there's no need to worry”.... don't sweep aside or tell them not to worry

# FEELINGS: MIND-BODY CONNECTION

- Minds and bodies are connected
  - Feelings can create physical responses
  - Create language for feeling sensations
- Diagram/draw the connection of mind-gut/ mind- head
  - Discuss locations of feeling locations
- Creates awareness of triggers



# QUANTIFY FEELING

- common language for abstract feeling
- check in with child: “what’s your anxiety like today?”
- Validates the emotion
  - I see your anger is really hot today
- Tool to recheck emotion after coping skills



# CAREGIVER HOMEWORK

## Keys to Generalization

- **Label:** when you see big emotions
  - “I can see your anger is really hot right now”
  - Create awareness/ language/ check in
- **Validate**
  - “I feel angry too when something doesn’t go my way”
- **Empathize**
  - I understand this makes you feel anxious.

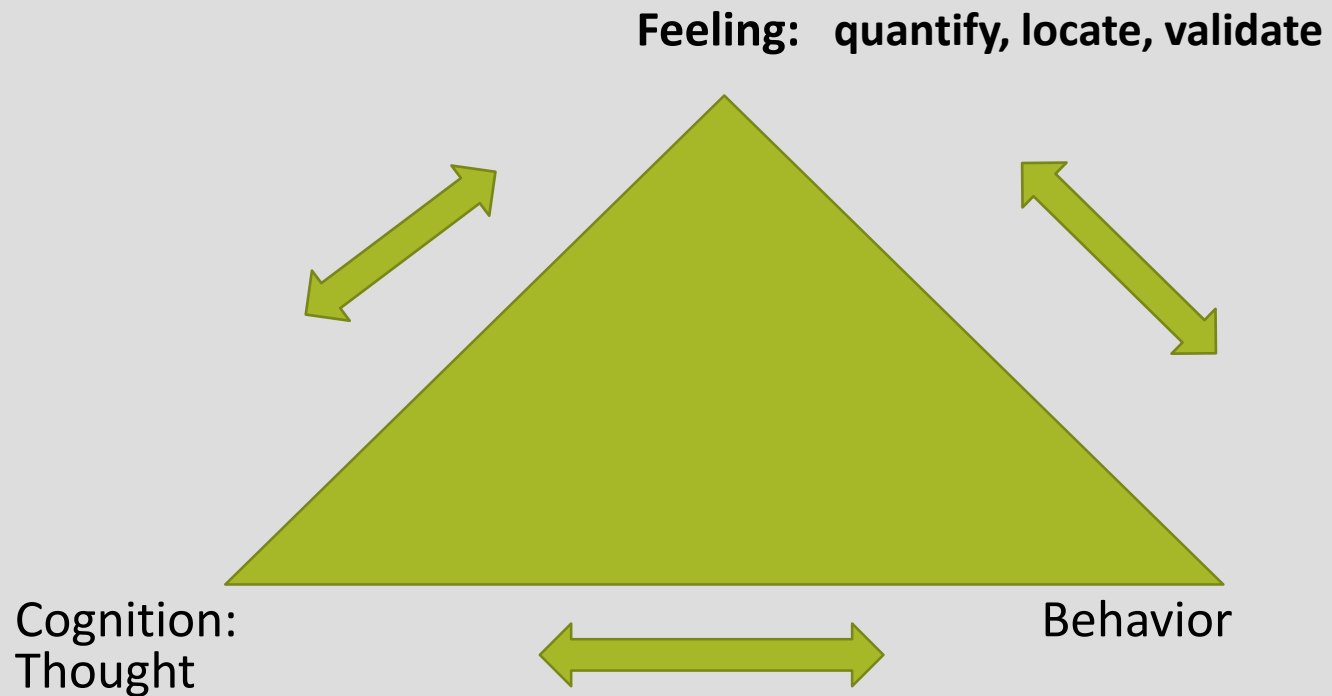
\*\*Be aware of avoidance/ issues pertaining to functioning: accommodate, but emotions don’t rule functioning

- **Reinforce/ Praise:**
  - Kids use of labeling; rating; mind-body awareness

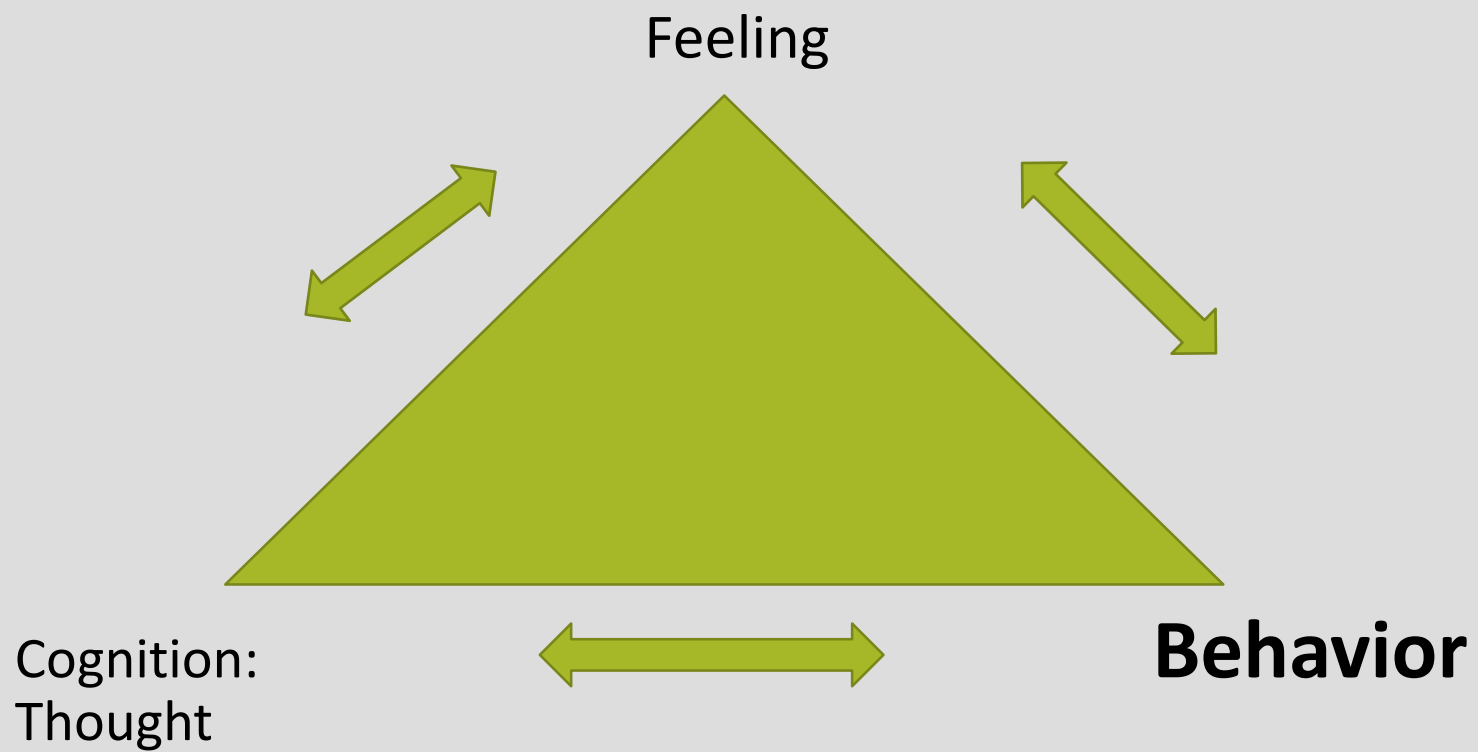
# CAREGIVER HOMEWORK

- **Collaborative problem solving**
  - After a big feeling takes control, when everyone is calm, revisit situation.
  - No shame, discipline or anger
  - Opportunity to learn from the big emotion....tell me what happened? Help me understand?
    - Did they recognize big emotion?
    - Can they label/ quantify big emotion?
    - Did their body tell them anything?
    - Do they see any triggers?

# CBT SKILLS TAKE-HOME



# CBT SKILLS: BEHAVIOR



# BEHAVIOR

- Does your action make you feeling better or worse? Keep you out of trouble?
- Self efficacy: who's in charge of your behavior?
  - Don't let emotions drive the bus
- Inventory current coping skills. What works/ what doesn't
- Have them show you.
  - "They told me to take deep breaths, that doesn't work".

# BEHAVIOR

- Teach range of coping skills.....
  - No right was to relax or regulate the body in time of stress
- Transportable: anywhere coping without props or others noticing
- Ask about creativity:
  - Imaginative
  - Physical and active
- Joys, hobbies
- Cultural, spiritual tools



# BEHAVIOR - YOUNGER

- **Breath:**
  - Finger breathing
  - Bunny
  - Snake
  - 7/11 breathing
  - Sesame Street Breath (app)



## BEHAVIOR - YOUNGER

- Progressive Muscle Relaxation (describe sensation of muscles/ body in hold and after hold)
  - Turtle
  - Hand press



## BEHAVIOR - YOUNGER

- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
  - Safe hands
  - Super hero



## BEHAVIOR - YOUNGER

- Visual distractions (tool to interrupt big emotion; move from emotions to body )
- Samurai eyes
- Rainbow room



## BEHAVIOR- OLDER

- Visualization story (grounding with 5 senses)
  - Favorite place activity: see, hear, taste, touch, smell
- Body scans: in relaxed position, looking for tension
- PMR head to toe: create tension/ relaxation

# BEHAVIOR- OLDER

## CBT Apps:

- Adjustable pace of breath, tone and visual to follow:
  - My Calm Beat
  - Breathe Deep
- Guided breath with combo cbt skills
  - MindShift
  - Companion

# KID HOMEWORK

- “can’t just show up for the game/ recital/ test”: skills won’t work well for big emotions if you don’t practice when calm
- Set a mutually agreed upon goal for the week
- Child teaches parent skills/ goals in session
- Set expectation that homework will be reviewed next session (reinforcement)

# HOMework EXAMPLES

Stress/stomach aches

Big emotions

**Exercises for Stress & Stomach Aches**

Day	Situation that Stressed me out (angry, worried) / Stomach	Finger Pull	Shoulder Roll	Hand Push	Swirl	Pretest	Finger Breathing

**Calming Strategies**

	Swirl	Play with clay	Squeeze Eyes	Pretest	Finger Pull	Positive Thought - When something doesn't go the way, focus on something I am good at	Pain Massage
Monday							
Tuesday							
Wednesday							
Thursday							
Friday							
Saturday							
Sunday							

Confidence Bonus Practice: Positive Thoughts About Myself, As I Get Ready To Make New Friends In My New School

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Practice 4 days a week: 3 strategies



# CAREGIVER HOMEWORK

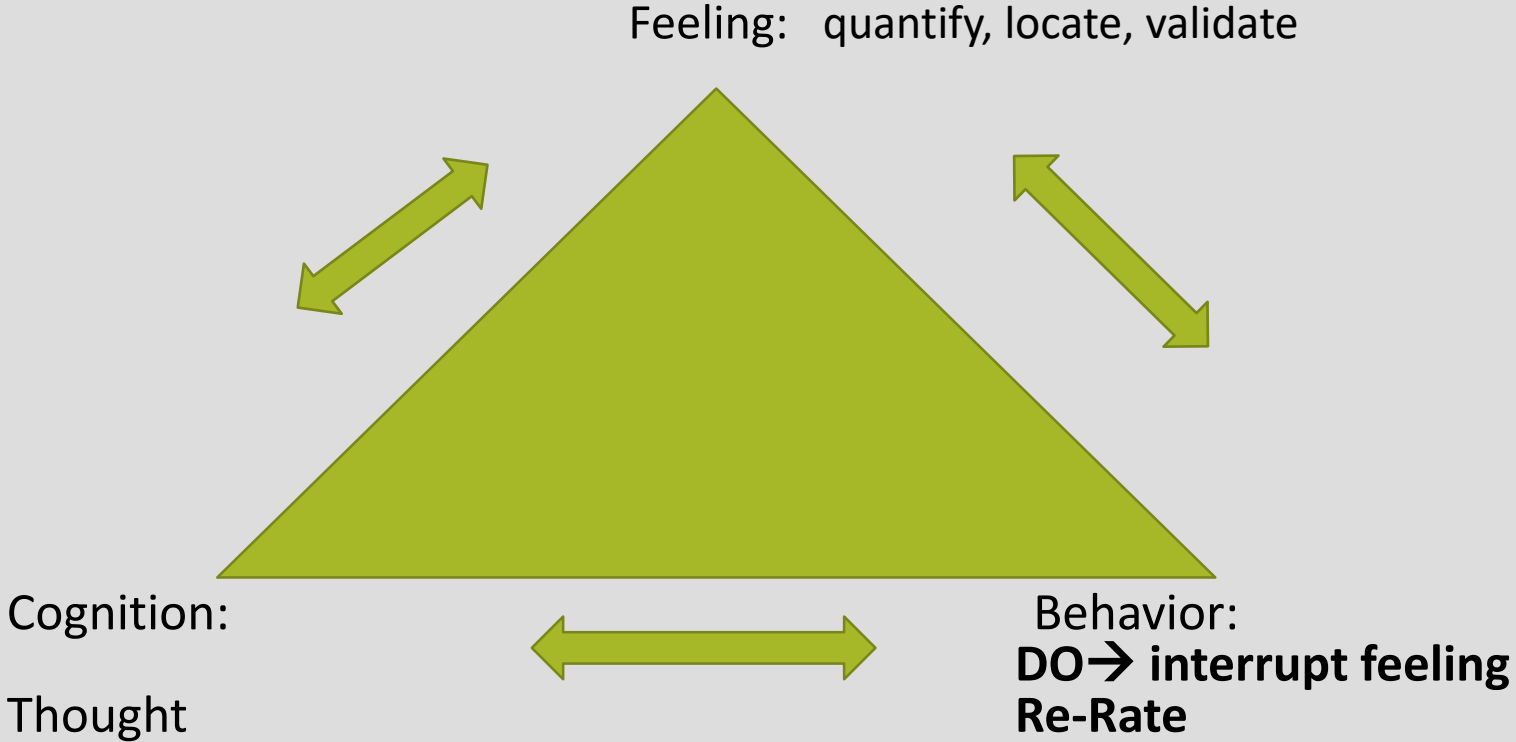
## Keys to Generalization

- Label, Validate, Empathize
- **Model:**
  - “I got really anxious today at work, so I did some finger breathing”
  - Forced choice: “I see you’re getting upset, would you like to x or y strategy?”
  - Parent choice in big emotional moment
- **Practice**
  - Visual cards/ chart
  - Practice when calm, ordinary moments (car, walks); create “muscle memory”
  - Increase awareness after positive coping: how does your body feel? How does your anxiety fee?
- **Reinforce any signs of effort!!!!**
- **Re-rate emotion:**
  - Goal to inch down, vs up

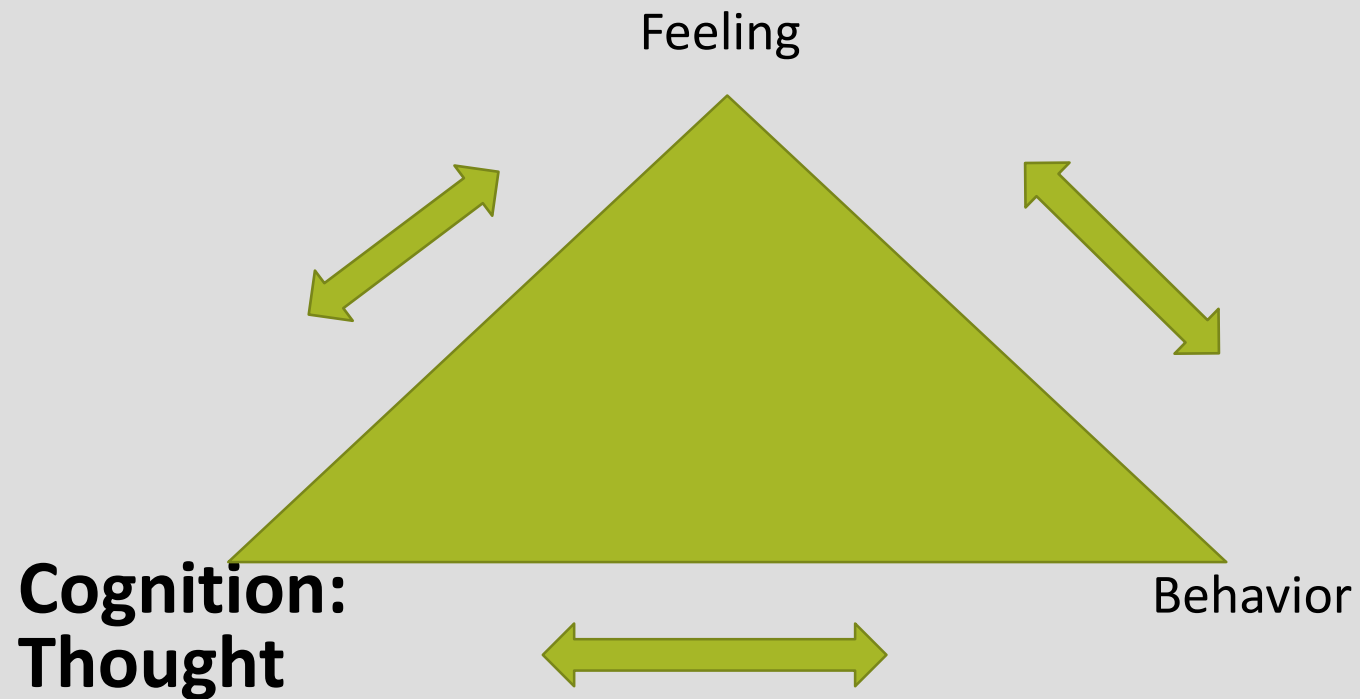
# CAREGIVER HOMEWORK

- **Collaborative problem solving**
  - After a big behavior, when calm revisit situation
  - No shame, discipline or anger
  - Opportunity to learn from the big emotion....
    - What could they do differently the next time?
    - How can you help them remember a positive coping skill?
    - How can you support them using the positive coping skill?
    - Can you have a cue/ visual reminder their emotion is getting big, time for a positive coping skill

# CBT SKILLS TAKE-HOME



# CBT SKILLS: THOUGHTS



# THOUGHTS

- What's in that thought bubble at the exact moment of a high emotion or big behavior
  - Thinking about thoughts is not innate or always developmentally easy
- Homework exercises can identify patterns in thought, situations
  - look for negative/ untrue thinking patterns

## THOUGHTS - YOUNGER

- Is my thought **kind**?
- is my thought **true**?
- is my thought **helpful**?
- does my thought help my anger...?
- Does my thought keep me out of trouble?

# THOUGHTS- OLDER

- **All or nothing thinking:** looking at things in absolute, black and white categories
- **Overgeneralization:** viewing a negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat
- **Discounting the positive:** insisting that positive/ accomplishments don't count
- **Catastrophizing:** predicting the future negatively without considering other more likely outcomes

# THOUGHTS- OLDER

- **Labeling:** placing a fixed, global label on yourself or others without considering the evidence
- **“Should” and “must” statements:** fixed ideas of how others should behave
- **Magnification or minimization:** blowing things out of proportion; shrinking their importance
- **Blame:** blame yourself for something you weren't entirely responsible for, or blame other people and overlook ways that you contributed

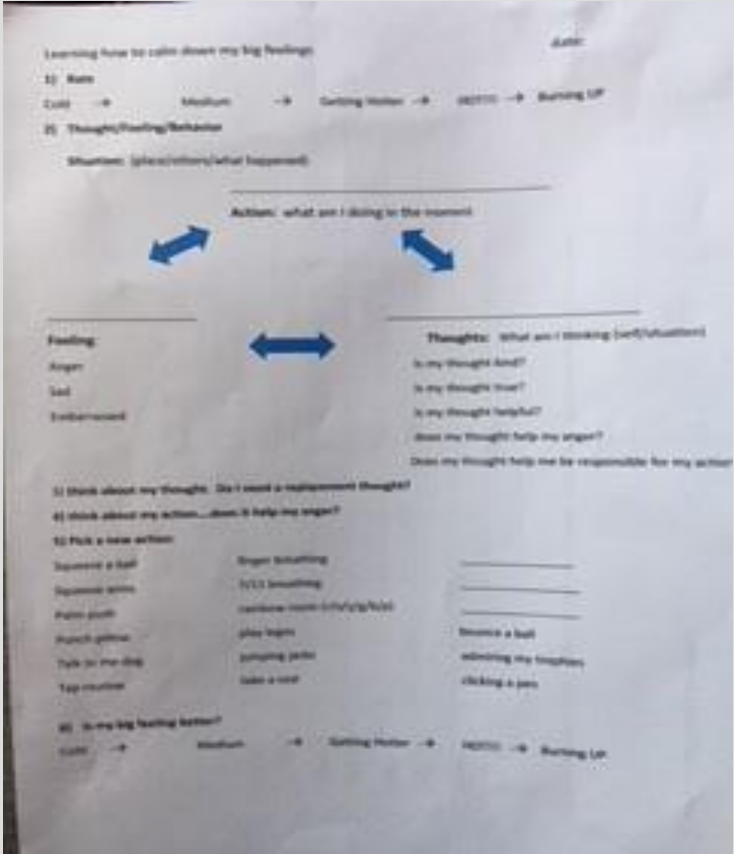


## THOUGHTS- OLDER

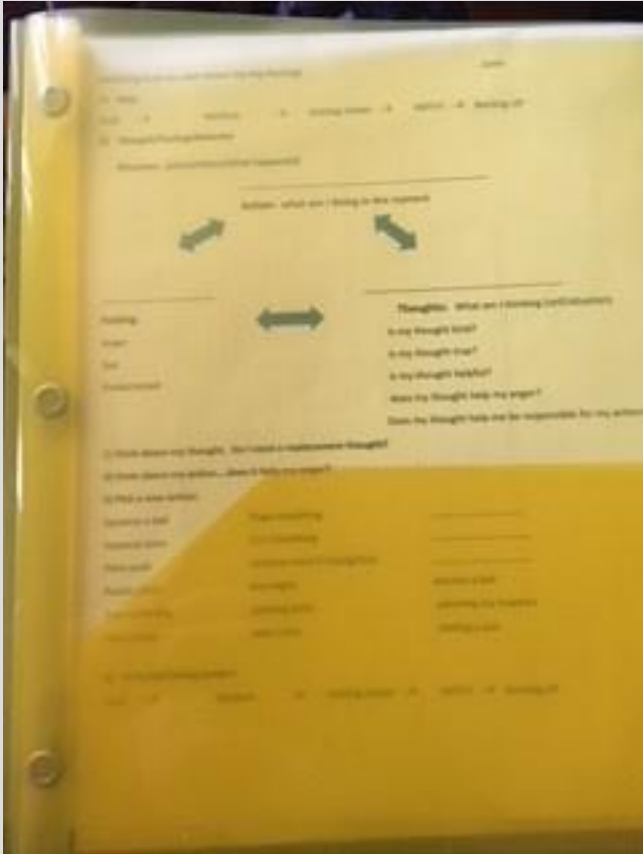
- **Mind reading:** believing you know what others are thinking, failing to consider other, more likely possibilities.
- **Personalization:** believing others are behaving negatively because of you, without considering more plausible explanations for their behaviors
- **Tunnel Vision:** seeing the negative aspects of the situation
- **Emotional Reasoning:** thinking something must be true because you “feel” it strongly, discounting evidence to the contrary

# KIDS HOMEWORK

Thought Worksheet



Homework Folder

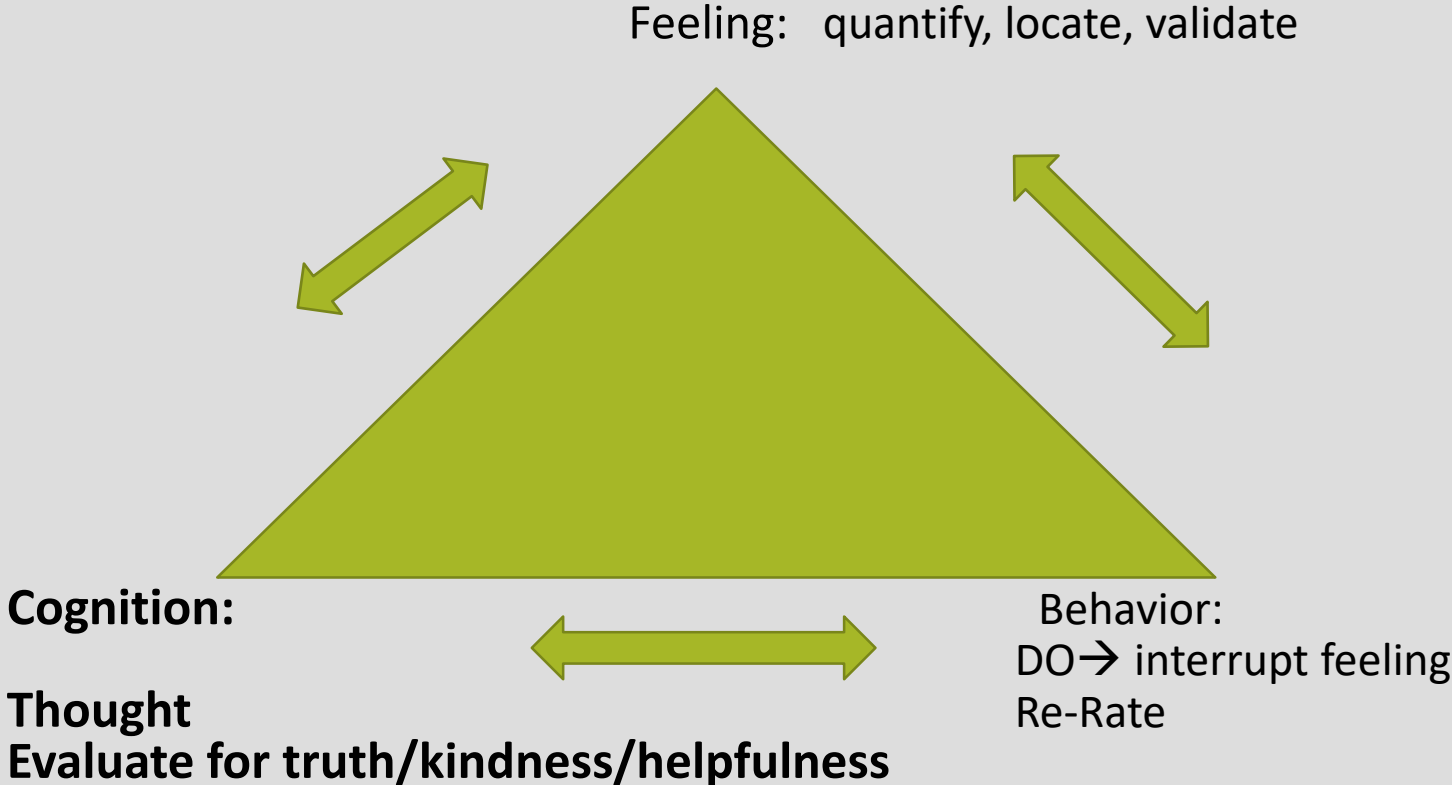


# PARENTS HOMEWORK

## Keys to Generalization:

- Label: when you see negative/untrue thinking
- Validate: “I understand this is really challenging”
- Model: “I felt critical of myself yesterday too, so I ....”
- **Connect to F-B**
  - Is this thought helping your feeling/ re-rate feelings
  - Does this thought help your actions
- **Practice**
  - Visual cards/ signs
  - Apps: Companion, MindShift (coping screen shots)
- **Reinforce** any signs of positive self-talk effort!!!!

# CBT SKILLS TAKE-HOME



# REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- Beck, J. (1995). *Cognitive therapy: basics and beyond*. New York: Guildford Press.
- Christophersen, E., & Mortweet, S. (2001). *Treatments that work with children: Empirically supported strategies for managing childhood problems*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Friedberg, R, & McClure, J. (2002). *Clinical practice of cognitive therapy with children and adolescents: The nuts and bolts*. New York: Guildford Press.
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- Stallard, P. (2002). *Think good- feel good: A cognitive behavior therapy workbook for children and young people*. T. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

## Websites:

- <http://childtherapy.wpengine.com/> (Effective Child Therapy: society of clinical child and adolescent psychology)
- <http://www.apa.org>
- <http://drchristopherwillard.com/> (mindfulness strategies )

# QUESTIONS

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