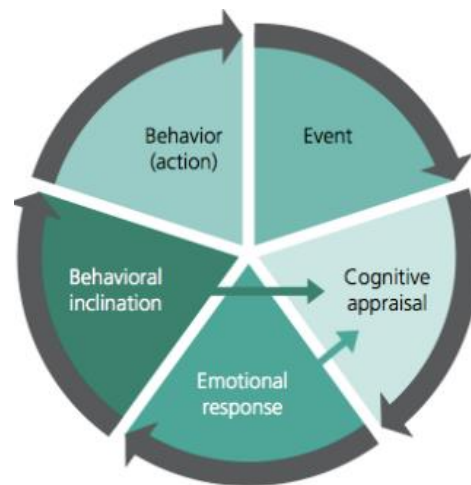


*What is something that has given a sense of restoration or gratitude during difficult times?*

### What is CBT?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is an evidence-based therapeutic approach to develop coping strategies by examining the relationship between our thoughts and behaviors. It is based on the idea that behavior can be understood in sequence - an **activating event** precipitates **thoughts**, which result in **emotions, bodily sensations** and **behaviors**. The main links in this process include one's core beliefs and automatic thoughts. **Core beliefs** comprise our value system and serve as the framework through which we interpret experiences; these are often consolidated through childhood experiences and family values and may be difficult to change. These underlying beliefs predispose us to reacting in a particular way to external stimuli, which may cue **automatic thoughts** to pop into our head. For example, an activating event is that *a lab test is delayed*, an automatic thought might be *"Everyone at this hospital is incompetent"* stemming from an underlying belief that *"If I want things done right, I have to do them myself."* The resulting emotion might be *anger*, sensation of *tension* and *disorder* may arise, and a behavior might be to *yell at the tech* and *take the sample to the lab yourself*. Within this sequence are intrinsic feedback responses that can serve to reinforce both adaptive and maladaptive behaviors. For example, the reassurance associated with *taking the lab sample yourself* can reinforce the belief that *one must take on responsibilities*, and *yelling at a lab tech* might temporarily relieve the anger, but these actions could also lead to downstream effects that reinforce unwanted consequences (i.e. unclear delegation of roles in the workplace, taking time away from other clinical responsibilities, which might further fuel anger). This process can be understood graphically in the CBT circle outlined to the right.<sup>i</sup> The goal of CBT is to identify steps in these pathways and to re-appraise thinking and behavior patterns in order to make functional change. In short, understanding our thought patterns is the first step to addressing unwanted behavioral and emotional consequences. This can be remembered with an acronym, the **ABC's**:



1. Activating Events (not necessarily in our control)
2. Beliefs / Thoughts (framework to notice events in real time)
3. Consequences (emotions, bodily sensations, behaviors)
4. Dispute maladaptive beliefs & thoughts
5. Examine the Result

### Beliefs and their Consequences

The following table outlines common patterns of beliefs and associated underlying belief, thought and behaviors.

Belief	Thought / Cognitive Appraisal	Emotional Response	Behavior / Action
Loss	<i>I have lost something.</i>	Sadness	Withdrawal
Danger	<i>Something bad might happen.</i>	Anxiety	Agitation
Trespass	<i>I have been harmed, my rights have been violated.</i>	Anger	Aggression
Inflicting harm	<i>I have caused harm.</i>	Guilt	Apologizing
Negative self-worth	<i>I don't measure up, I am damaged.</i>	Shame	Hiding
Positive contribution	<i>I contributed in a positive way.</i>	Pride	Planning future achievements
Appreciation	<i>I have received a gift that I value.</i>	Gratitude	Giving back, Paying forward
Positive future	<i>Things can change for the better.</i>	Hope, Energizing	Taking action
Vastness & Spirituality	<i>I'm in the presence of something greater than me.</i>	Awe (Fear + Surprise)	Pro-social behavior

### Things to Think About

*What activating events have come up for you in your day-to-day life recently? If it's helpful, write down a list of things on your mind.*

*How have you been responding to these particular events? Take note of any reactions, including relevant feelings or behaviors.*

*How do you typically manage negative emotions that inevitably arise, such as anxiety, anger or insecurity? Is your approach different between work and your personal life?*

*Can you identify recurring patterns (thoughts → consequences)? How might these serve you? How have they been unhelpful?*

*How has your style of responding to stress changed over time? Since starting residency? In your personal life? At work?*

How might values (as explored in the “PEERS Living by your Values Exercise”) inform the way you relate to stress? (We are often activated by things that take us away from our values, and we can use our values to reframe how we respond to stressors.)

### Exercise

The exercise involves examining behavioral patterns as **events, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings** using the acronym ABC’s as a framework. Activating events trigger **Beliefs**/Thoughts and result in **Consequences** (emotions, bodily sensations, and behavior). We can then **Dispute** maladaptive beliefs and thoughts and **Examine** the result.

#### Activating Event

*What was the stimulus?*

#### Belief

*What is your underlying belief about the situation?*

#### Automatic Thought

*What are you thinking in the moment?*

#### Consequences

*What are the resulting emotions, behavior, and physiology?*

#### Bodily Sensations

#### Emotion

#### Behavior

#### Dispute

*What evidence do I have to support my thoughts?  
Is there another way to look at the situation? (How can I  
balance these thoughts to better serve me?)*

#### Examine

*What do you feel like after disputing your thoughts?  
How do you want to act moving forward?*

## Common Thinking Traps

Thinking Trap	What it Involves
<b>Jumping to Conclusions</b>	Ready, fire, aim: Believing one is certain of the meaning of a situation, despite little evidence to support it
<b>Catastrophizing</b>	“We’re all going to die!” The tendency to believe that the worst-case scenario is the likely scenario
<b>Overgeneralizing</b>	Character assassination: Taking one event and blowing it up; settling on a global belief about one’s general lack of worth or ability on the basis of a single situation
<b>Magnifying &amp; Minimizing</b>	“Wrong side of the binoculars:” Over-valuing negative aspects of a situation and undervaluing positive aspects of a situation
<b>Personalizing</b>	Me, Me, Me! Tendency to automatically attribute the cause of an adversity to one’s personal characteristics or actions
<b>Externalizing</b>	Them, Them, Them! Tendency to automatically attribute the cause of an adversity to other people or circumstances
<b>Mind Reading</b>	Assuming we know what another person is thinking, or expecting another person to know what we’re thinking
<b>Tunnel Vision</b>	Making assumptions only based on the negative or positive aspects of a situation; Ignoring the full picture
<b>Emotional Reasoning</b>	When we ‘reason’ that what we are believing is true based on how we ‘feel’ without questioning its validity