Challenging Negative Thinking

**A** Is for Activating Events

Shed a Light on Your Thoughts

Thoughts Aren’t Always Realistic

**B** Is for Beliefs

Dysfunctional Beliefs

Uncovering Your Beliefs

Why Is It Important?

Change Is Possible

Activating events trigger your mind’s information processing system, which in the case of dysfunctional thoughts and beliefs lead to two types of consequences: emotional and behavioral. If, for instance, you believe that, “life is meaningless” (“B” for beliefs), you’ll probably end up feeling sad and depressed (“C” for emotional consequence). Furthermore, these negative thoughts may be a product of their own minds, rather than objective reality.

Dysfunctional thoughts interfere with the abilities (e.g. decision-making, reasoning, etc.) that allow you to pursue goals and make decisions that lead towards happiness. Sometimes, they’re not even aware of the fact that some thoughts are utterly illogical. That’s why it’s so important to become familiar with the way your mind works.

The premise of the model can be summarized in one sentence - you have to both find proof to support your beliefs and develop new ways of interpreting different situations.

Out of all the elements that constitute the vicious cycle of depression, consequences may differ as well? You may engage in excessive alcohol consumption, shop excessively, or become physically inactive.

The ABC model is specifically designed to put a spotlight on your negative thoughts by focusing on three different aspects:

- **A**: Activating events
- **B**: Beliefs
- **C**: Consequences

Knowing the exact context in which your negative thoughts occur, provides you with another opportunity to challenge them. You can increase your chances of improving your thinking and your mood by challenging the beliefs underlying those thoughts.

In order to challenge your thoughts, you have to constantly test the validity of your beliefs and assumptions about yourself, others, and the world around you.

The new emotion

Now that you’ve

... what happened?

... what was

... what emotions did you

... what consequences did you

... what was the new emotion

... hear?