

### ABC's of Changing Irrational Thinking to Rational Thinking

Activating Event	Belief/Thought	Consequence/Emotion	New Belief/Thought	New Consequence or Emotion

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy are both based on the belief that your thoughts are directly related to your emotions and actions. It is not so much what happens to you but what you think about it that will determine how you feel about it and how you respond.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) says that as you think in your heart you will be. What you think is incredibly important.

2 Corinthians 10:5 tells us to “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and to take captive every thought and to make it obedient to Christ.”

Your self-esteem (how you feel about yourself and how much you value yourself) are directly related to what you think about yourself (your self-image). The book *The Truth in the Mirror: A Guide to Healthy Self-Image* will challenge you to replace unhealthy and inaccurate thoughts with healthy and accurate thoughts.

Here is how to use the chart:

**Activating Event** = The event or circumstance.

**Belief/Thought** = What you think about it.

**Consequence/Emotion** = The way you feel, respond, and behave as a result of your thought/belief.

**New Belief/Thought** = The thought you have after analyzing whether the first thought was accurate. You correct the thought or belief.

**New Consequence/Emotion** = The different response, feeling, or behavior that accompanies the new thought.

Some examples that affect your self-image:

**Activating Event** = You have a physical characteristic you don't like.

**Belief/Thought** = You believe you are ugly and that people readily notice this characteristic.

**Consequence/Emotion** = You feel embarrassed and self-conscious.

**New Belief/Thought** = You change the belief to the idea that this characteristic is not that bad and that people are not thinking badly of you or focusing on it and even if they do, you are going to accept yourself.

**New Consequence/Emotion** = You feel more confident and are not embarrassed.

**Activating Event** = Your father does not approve of your choices with how you live your life.

**Belief/Thought** = You believe you are a failure as a daughter.

**Consequence/Emotion** = You feel badly about yourself and focus on how you have let him down and you keep trying to get his approval.

**New Belief/Thought** = You recognize that your father's expectations of you are not how you want to live your life and that you have a right to make choices for yourself.

**New Consequence/Emotion** = You feel sad that your father does not understand you or approve of you, but you feel good about yourself since it is not your failure but his expectation that is the problem.

**Activating Event** = You have gained 10 pounds

**Belief/Thought** = You think you look horrible.

**Consequence/Emotion** = You are very self-conscious and even though you love to swim, you won't wear a bathing suit.

**New Belief/Thought** = You recognize you have gained weight but that you are still entitled to enjoy your life and do what you want and that your worth is not tied to what you look like.

**New Consequence/Emotion** = You feel better about yourself. You attempt to work on your weight in healthy ways but you wear a bathing suit anyway.

**Activating Event** = You make a mistake.

**Belief/Thought** = You tell yourself you are stupid and you shouldn't have made the mistake.

**Consequence/Emotion** = You feel upset, you beat yourself up in your mind, and you can't stop thinking about it.

**New Belief/Thought** = You accept that you are human and you did the best you could.

**New Consequence/Emotion** = You stop beating yourself up. You let the mistake go.