

# Thoughts, Feelings & Behaviours



Our thoughts affect the way we feel and how we act. When something happens, we form thoughts about the event that lead to feelings and actions. The way we talk to ourselves in our heads also affect how we feel and what we do.

Thoughts feelings and behaviours are linked and interact with each other. Learning the differences between them is important.

## What's the difference?

**THOUGHT:** Thoughts consist of ideas and what our brain tells us. We sometimes say them out loud but can often have thoughts without expressing them. We can have good and bad thoughts and you can have thoughts you are not even aware of – these are called automatic thoughts.

For example, we might think “If I make a mistake, everyone will laugh at me,” or “I know I can do this!”

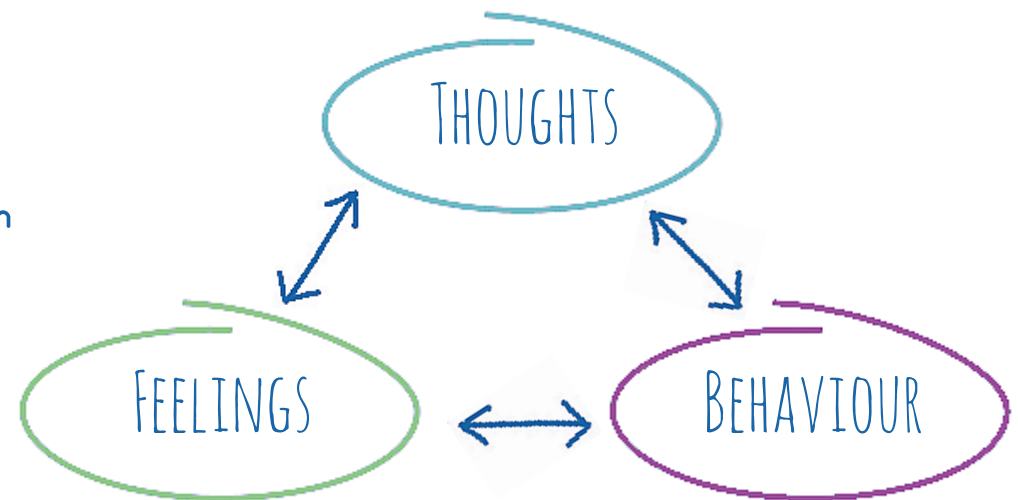
**FEELING:** Feelings are the sensations that we can experience in our bodies and hearts. There are many feelings and you can experience more than one at the same time.

Some examples of feelings are: happy, sad, confused, excited, angry, surprised.

**BEHAVIOUR:** These are our actions. They are the things we do with our bodies.

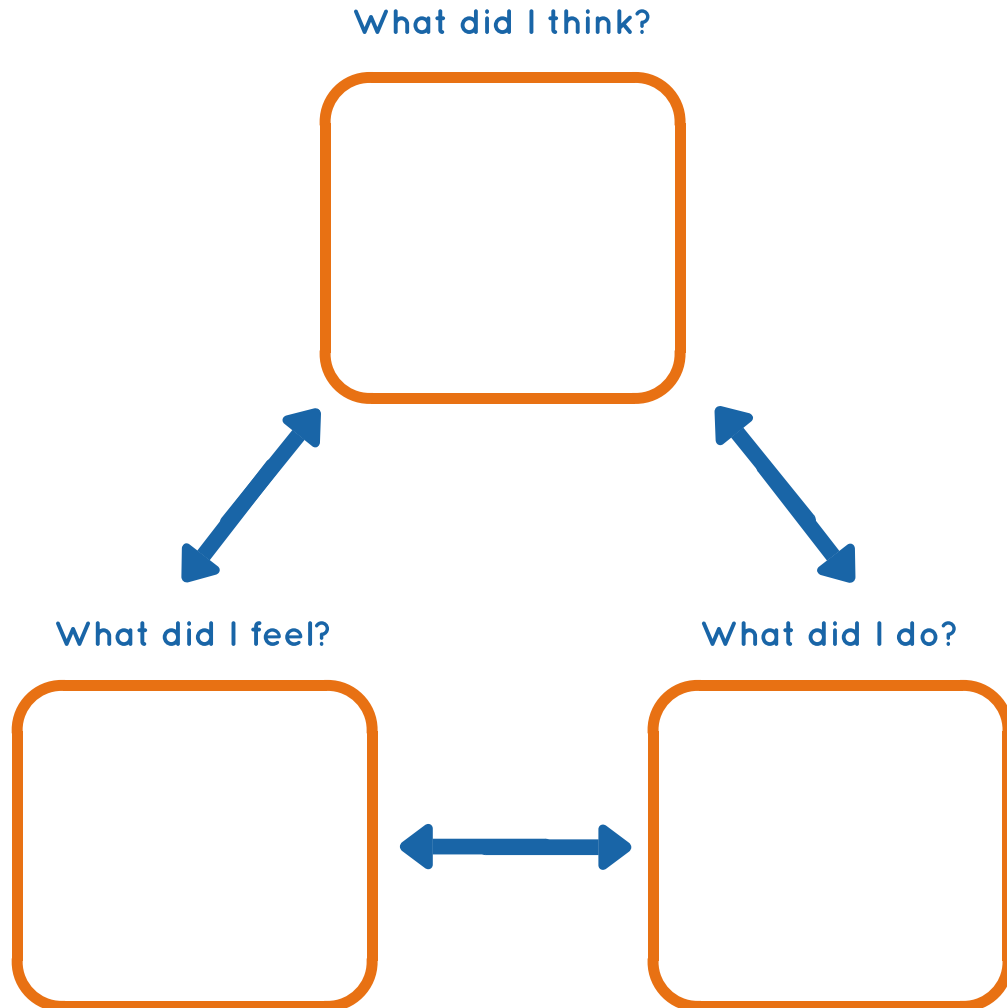
For example: we might shout at someone or go for a walk. These are actions.

## THE COGNITIVE TRIANGLE



It can be helpful to consider how you think feel and act in a variety of circumstances. There are activities below to help you identify your thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Think of a difficult situation or circumstance you have had.



## NEGATIVE

I'll never get all my work done!

If I get this wrong, I will look foolish.

I'm no good at anything.

I can't do this!

## POSITIVE

I know I can ask for help.

It's ok to make a mistake, no one is perfect.

There are things that I am good at and enjoy doing.

I can try to do this and can ask for help if I need some.

Can you think of how you would do this differently to have a better outcome? We can control our thoughts and change them from bad thoughts to good thoughts. This will have an impact on how we feel and in turn have an impact on our behaviour. Opposite there are a few examples of how we can change our thoughts. Have a go and see if you can think more positively.

It can be difficult to change the way we think but with practice it is possible. Trying to catch your thoughts and being aware of the negative can allow you to begin the process of changing your thoughts. In turn this can make you feel better about yourself and act in a more positive way!