

A - B - C

ABC Quick tutorial

A = Activating Event

- *What do you think happened?*
- *What would a camera see?*

B = Beliefs about Activating Event

- *What did you tell yourself?*

C = Consequences

- *How did you act?*
- *How did you feel?*

While it may seem odd at the beginning, you want to start somewhat backwards. Start with the (C) column.

The Consequences are what you feel about/from (A). So it makes sense to start there because that's what you actually feel first.

So, you'll now want to give your emotion a label: depression, guilt, anger, anxiety, etc.

Okay, now that you've identified the emotion (the C) and put it **in the C (Unhealthy Consequences) box, go back and describe what was happening (put that in the A box)**. Note where you were, who was there, what was going on, etc. This is the (A) on the chart.

Next, think about all the stuff **was happening with you when you were in the (A) situation. Write down all of the things you were saying to yourself**. This is the **first B in your chart, your Irrational Beliefs**. Now you can see how your thoughts affect your emotions. Your thoughts about (A) lead to what you felt (C).

Okay, now you've got it all written out and you can look further at your thoughts. you can really examine those thoughts. Ask yourself some questions:

Is this stuff true to the best of my knowledge?

*Does it **help** me to think this way?*

Now that you've given your thoughts some examination, **come up with some alternatives and record them in the B box under Rational Beliefs**. These are **thoughts that are going to help you rather than hinder you**. Make sure they're true; no fair trying to fool yourself with false rationalizations. These Rational Beliefs have to be provable to be true, even though they were not the thoughts that first occurred to you.

Just as your original Irrational Beliefs led quite naturally to the Unhealthy Emotions,

the new Rational Beliefs will lead to a more constructive reaction. If you really believed those alternative Rational Beliefs, what would your new emotional reaction be? Make some notes in the C box, under Healthy Consequences.

Your job is to then critically examine your interpretation (*Disputing*). If it doesn't hold up, or does not work for you, **come up with some interpretations that are workable (Rational Beliefs)**. Finally, see how the new interpretations (Rational Beliefs) would naturally lead to a more tempered, effective, and appropriate emotion (Healthy Emotion)

(A) ACTIVATING EVENT -- Situation that results in my feeling frustrated and upset

(B) BELIEFS (Thoughts)

1) Irrational Beliefs that lead to C

2) Rational Beliefs

(C) CONSEQUENCES (Emotions/Feelings) of A -- Frustrating reaction-- anger, anxiety, depression, guilt, self-loathing, feelings of worthlessness, "awfulizing," "horriblizing," low frustration tolerance, etc.

(D) DISPUTE Where is the evidence? Is my thinking logical? Is it true?