

# Expressive Therapies LLC

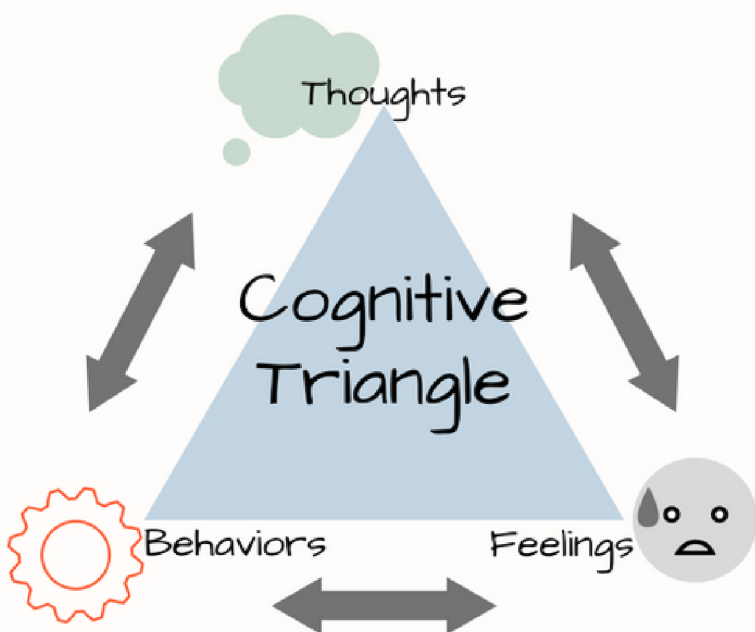
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Creating a brave and empowering space for equality with – race, gender, sexuality, age, economic status, cognitive, physical, spiritual needs and those living with mental illness – through trauma-informed care: music therapy, art therapy, dance-movement therapy and psychotherapy, to improve health and well-being.



## INTRODUCTION TO COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a psychosocial, therapeutic intervention that is an effective treatment for a variety of need areas. CBT is based on the theory that an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are all connected and will each affect how someone thinks, feels, and acts in different situations. CBT theory posits that, by changing how we think, we can impact how we feel and what we do in given situations, particularly those which are stressful or difficult. At ETLLC, therapists may use CBT interventions to address emotions, coping skills, depression, anxiety, self-esteem, negative thinking patterns, and behavior struggles.



### Thoughts - Feelings - Actions

- Thoughts are words we say to ourselves and happen all the time, often without us noticing.
- When we think a certain way, it can lead to feelings that align with those thoughts.
  - Ex: "I can't do this" --> feeling sad, upset, or frustrated because we don't think we'll be successful
- When we feel certain emotions more often or more strongly, it can then lead to thinking more often in ways that match those feelings.
  - Ex: When we're sad, upset, or frustrated, it might reinforce the thought that, "I can't do this because I'm bad at it."
- This relationship is true of both positive and negative thought patterns!

## Thoughts in Action

- When we encounter different events, situations, or problems, we all will have different instinctive thoughts about what is happening.
  - Ex: "This will never work!" or "We've got this!" or "This is the worst!"
- In addition to those thoughts, we'll also experience physiological sensations in combination with emotions/feelings as a response.
  - Ex: Sweating, muscle tension, heart racing, heavy breathing, flushed face, tears, stomach butterflies, etc.
- When we have different thoughts about that same event/situation/problem, we can help ourselves to feel and act differently!



## Changing Your Thinking

Often, negative thoughts snowball into difficult, upsetting emotions, while positive thoughts result in more preferred, manageable emotions. Negative thoughts can be overcome with practice and active engagement in changing your mindset. Try asking these questions when you have a negative thought to practice changing your thinking!

-Is this thought true or not?

-What's the evidence that this thought is true? What's the evidence that it is false?

-What's the worst case scenario? What's the best case scenario?

-Am I having this thought because something else is bothering me?

-What would a trusted person think or say about this thought?

-How can I look at this situation differently?

## Stay Tuned!

Stay tuned for more information about CBT in future newsletters, including:

- Who can benefit from CBT? (Hint: CBT is beneficial for a variety of individuals struggling with mental health!)
- How is CBT used at ETLLC? (Hint: many of the therapists at ETLLC are trained in CBT techniques!)
- How do art therapy and music therapy incorporate CBT theory or address thought patterns? (Hint: Both art therapy and music therapy are effective modalities for expressing emotions and thoughts, changing moods, and coping with stressors!)



## Thank you for reading our newsletter!

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## Take care and be well!