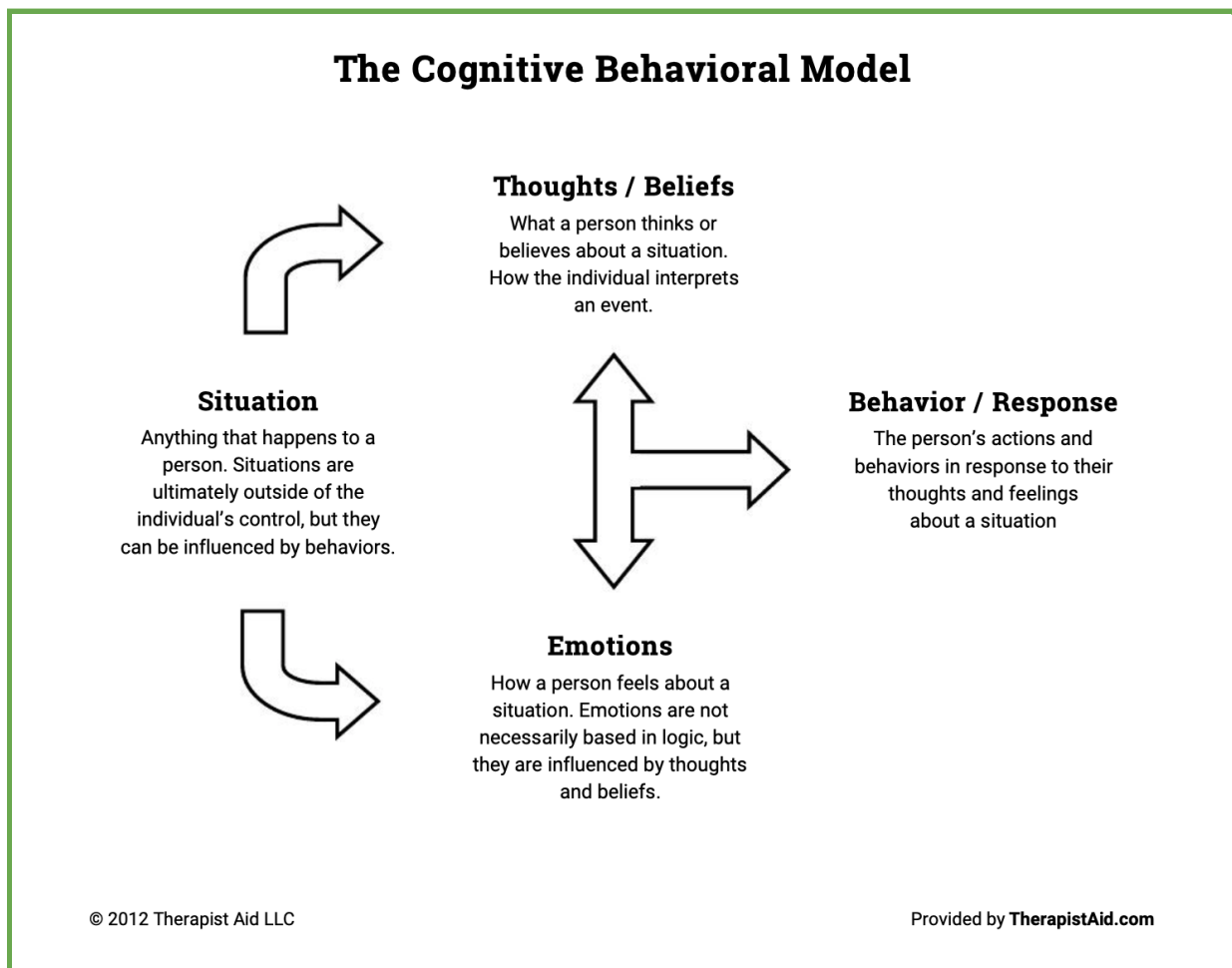


## Applying Cognitive Reappraisal Skills

The **Cognitive Behavioral Model** describes the relationship between situation, emerging emotions and thoughts, and behavioral responses. By better understanding this relationship, we can think about points during our thought process that allow us to intervene and address emotionally challenging situations. **Cognitive reappraisal** gives us the opportunity to rethink and reframe the meaning of events, which can change our emotional responses and reduce the event’s emotional impact.



## Cognitive Reappraisal: Reflective Exercise

In order to support BCNY youth with coping with uncontrollable situations, staff can help facilitate the emotion regulation process. Before this can take place, staff can practice applying cognitive reappraisal in situations they have personally experienced. This will allow staff to become more familiar with cognitive reappraisal, what situations they are effective in, and when to apply them. This insider insight will support staff as they support youth with this process.

**PROMPT: Think through the events of this past week.**

- What was an emotional/challenging situation that came up for you?



### STEP 1

**Take this time to describe the emotional situation:**

- What were some thoughts that you had when you were going through this emotional situation?

**Name the emotions that you felt when you had these thoughts**

- After writing down your thoughts and emotions, look through **Page 6** to see examples of **Cognitive Distortions** (irrational thoughts) we may have when dealing with stressful and emotional circumstances

### STEP 2

**Now only analyze the emotional situation you identified in the beginning of the exercise by only thinking about the facts of what took place.**

- What was the reality of the situation you were in? Avoid statements of emotion and focus on the events that took place.
-

To help reframe emotional situations and think through alternative perspectives, we can take Step 3 and Step 4:



### STEP 3

**Third-Party Perspective:** Think about how someone else would assess the situation you identified in **Step 1**. They know the facts and information of the situation (including before, during, and after details), but they don't know about your emotions or feelings.

#### *Reflective Questions:*

- How would they describe your experience?
- What do they see?
- What do they think?

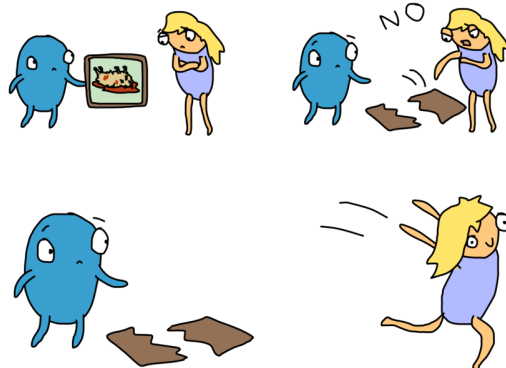
### STEP 4

**Perspective of Time:** Now think about this experience a year from now. What would you think about the experience a year after it happened?

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- How did completing this exercise affect the way you initially viewed your situation?
- What are some things you'd add to these steps based on your experience as a BCNY staff?

SO I THOUGHT IF I WANTED TO POSITIVELY REGULATE HOW I FELT, I HAD TO CONTROL SITUATIONS.



## Supporting a Teen

**Example:** You walk into the homework room and see Mark, a 17-year-old boy, overwhelmed and close to tears. He has been having a tough time adjusting to school. He is worried that he is not ready for a test and that his parents will be upset with him if he doesn't get a good grade.

How can you walk Mark through applying the following steps to his situation?

- Describe the situation
- Analyze the Emotion
- Third-Party Perspective
- Perspective of Time



## Supporting a Caregiver

**Example 1:** A caregiver, Maria, confides in you and tells you that she got into an argument with her teenager, Marko, who wants to meet up with friends. Maria told him no because she is really worried about COVID-19 infections and wants to be as careful as possible. Their relationship is experiencing a strain since he is not talking to her. She feels like she is a bad mother and she is worried that Marko will never forgive her.

**Example 2:** Stephen asks for your support because his eleven year old son, Emmanuel, has been watching the news and keeping up with COVID-19 updates. They have been following health precautions and staying safe. Emmanuel is very anxious and stressed out because he fears that he will get sick and infect his family.



**How can you walk Maria through using these steps to help her cope with her situation?**

- Describe
- Analyze the Emotion
- Third-Party Perspective
- Perspective of Time

**How can you help Stephen facilitate this process with Emmanuel?**

- Describe
- Analyze the Emotion
- Third-Party Perspective
- Perspective of Time

## Cognitive Distortions:

What are some cognitive distortions/ thinking traps that you experience when experiencing emotional situations?

Cognitive distortions are irrational thoughts that can influence your emotions. Everyone experiences cognitive distortions to some degree, but in their more extreme forms they can be harmful.

**Magnification and Minimization:** Exaggerating or minimizing the importance of events. One might believe their own achievements are unimportant, or that their mistakes are excessively important.

**Catastrophizing:** Seeing only the worst possible outcomes of a situation.

**Overgeneralization:** Making broad interpretations from a single or few events. "I felt awkward during my job interview. I am *always* so awkward."

**Magical Thinking:** The belief that acts will influence unrelated situations. "I am a good person—bad things shouldn't happen to me."

**Personalization:** The belief that one is responsible for events outside of their own control. "My mom is always upset. She would be fine if I did more to help her."

**Jumping to Conclusions:** Interpreting the meaning of a situation with little or no evidence.

**Mind Reading:** Interpreting the thoughts and beliefs of others without adequate evidence. "She would not go on a date with me. She probably thinks I'm ugly."

**Fortune Telling:** The expectation that a situation will turn out badly without adequate evidence.

**Emotional Reasoning:** The assumption that emotions reflect the way things really are. "I feel like a bad friend, therefore I must be a bad friend."

**Disqualifying the Positive:** Recognizing only the negative aspects of a situation while ignoring the positive. One might receive many compliments on an evaluation, but focus on the single piece of negative feedback.

**"Should" Statements:** The belief that things should be a certain way. "I should always be friendly."

**All-or-Nothing Thinking:** Thinking in absolutes such as "always", "never", or "every". "I *never* do a good enough job on anything."