Cognitive-behavioral Therapy, or CBT, represents a family of intervention styles and strategies that target thinking and behavioral patterns. CBT works to identify the patterns of events and consequences, and the thoughts, feelings and beliefs that exist in-between. Specifically, CBT explores how feelings and behavior are influenced by thoughts.

The ABC Model is used within CBT to describe how external stimuli lead to subconscious thought, which has conscious effect.

An Activating Event is the combination of a situation or moment that provokes a response, either conscious or subconscious, and our perception of that situation or moment. While both the objective facts of the event and our perception of it are part of the Activating Event, evaluation of that event is not.

Beliefs are evaluations of reality. They filter Activating Events through one's thoughts, attitudes, judgments, values and “self-talk.” Beliefs can be rational or irrational, and they have a powerful effect on both how we perceive events, and how we respond to them.

Consequences are the emotional, physiological or behavioral responses that form out of the evaluations of one's Activating Events. Consequences can be experienced in terms of positive or negative outcomes. Consequences often function as reinforcements for future Activating Events and Beliefs; in other words, Consequences can trigger a new Activating Event.