Therapy Care
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The cognitive model

Thoughts ➜ Emotions ➜ Behaviours

The idea at the heart of **cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)** is that **what you think shapes what you feel and what you do.** The picture and the example below show how.



Something takes place, *big or small.*

You make sense of it with your thoughts.

Those thoughts bring up emotions.

What you think and feel leads to your behaviours.

Example: Sam

Situation: Sam's manager asks for a quick word at the end of the day.

Sam's thoughts: "I'm in trouble. They're going to let me go."

Sam's emotions: Worried and on edge.

Sam's behaviours: Sam can't settle to anything, and spends the afternoon going back through old emails, looking for a mistake.

Sam has heard a few words and jumped to the worst ending. A quick word could be about almost anything: a new project, next week's rota, or even a thank you.

Everyone has **irrational thoughts** like this from time to time. True or not, they change how we feel and what we do. Here is the same afternoon if Sam had thought something else:

Thought ➜	Emotion ➜	Behaviour
"They're always springing things on me!"	Annoyed	Sam is short with everyone all afternoon.
"It's probably about the rota."	Calm	Sam gets on with the day.

With the cognitive model, you can start to notice patterns in what you think, feel and do. In time, you can see how much your thoughts colour your feelings, and the difference that makes to your life.

Once you can spot your irrational thoughts, you can begin to change them. Thoughts that have fed low mood, worry or anger can make way for fairer, kinder ones, and how you feel becomes something *you* have a say in.