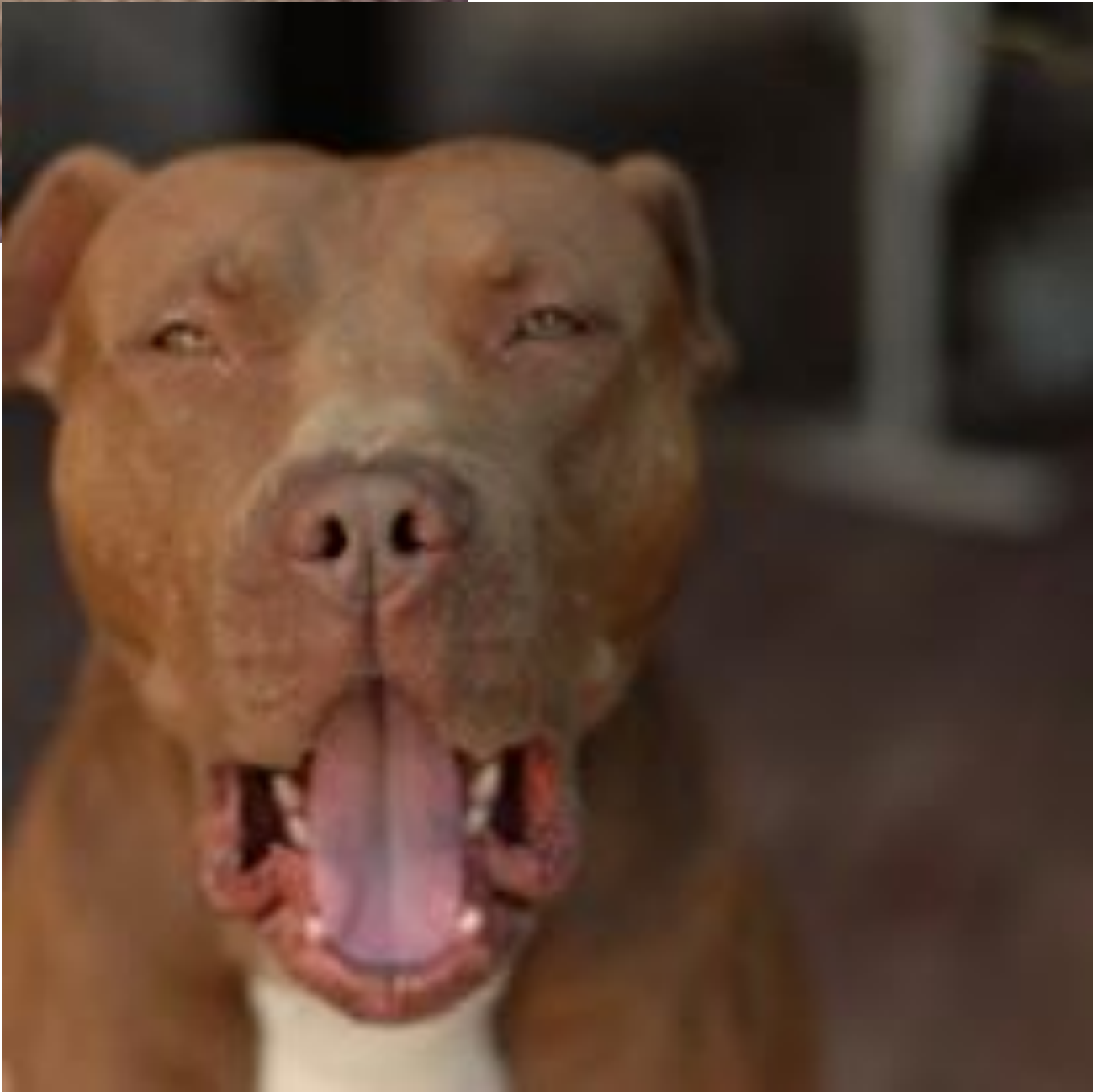
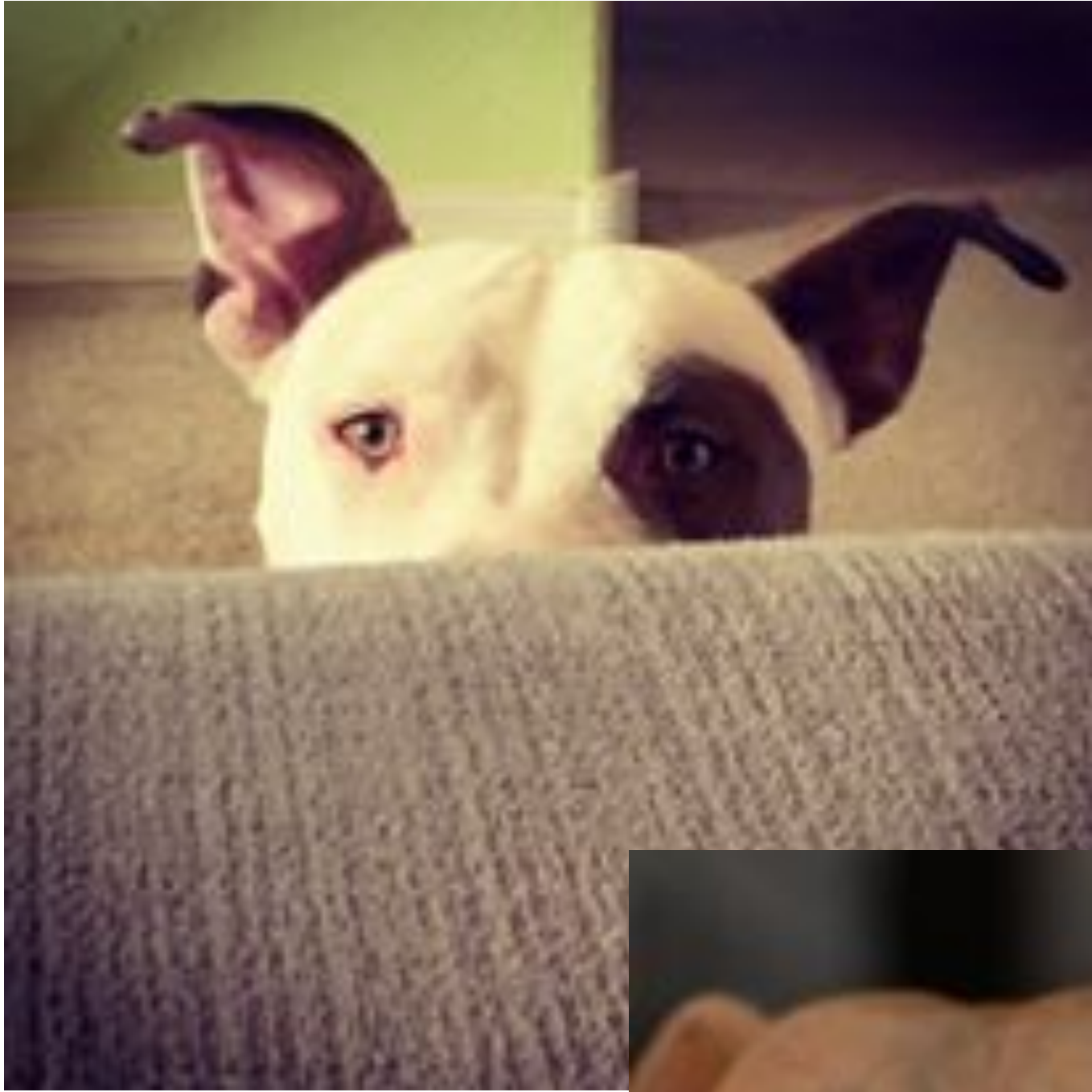


"How to Use Our Thoughts Compassionately Toward Self with CBT"

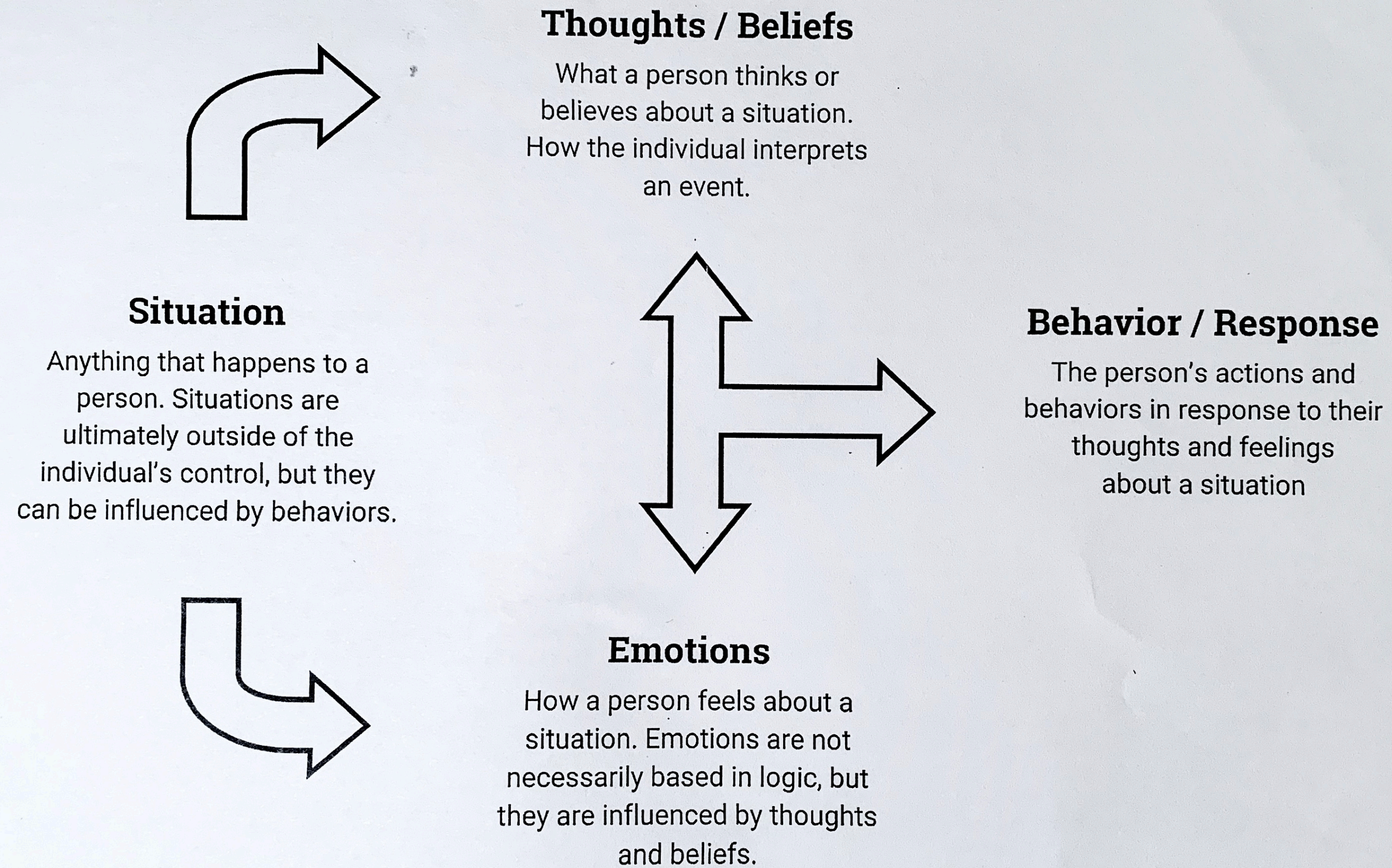
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The Cognitive Behavioral Model



Cognitive Distortions

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.

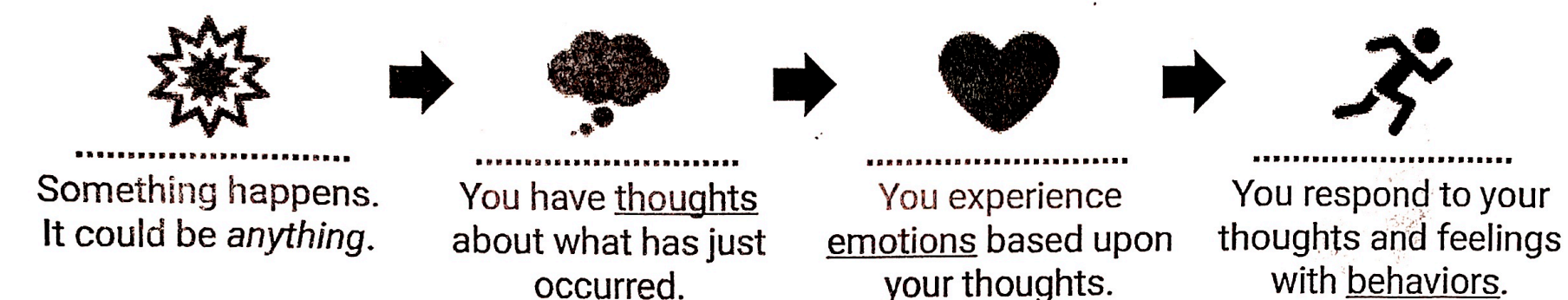
“Should” Statements: The belief that things should be a certain way. “I should always be friendly.”

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

The Cognitive Model

Thoughts → Emotions → Behaviors

Cognitive behavioral therapy (usually referred to as “CBT”) is based upon the idea that **how you think determines how you feel and how you behave**. The diagram and example below show us this process:



Example: Pharrell

Situation: A stranger scowls at Pharrell while passing him on the street.

Pharrell's Thoughts: "I must've done something wrong... I'm so awkward."

Pharrell's Emotions: Embarrassed and upset with himself.

Pharrell's Behaviors: Pharrell apologizes to the stranger and replays the situation over and over in his head, trying to understand what he did wrong.

In this example, you might've noticed that Pharrell's thought wasn't very rational. The stranger could've been scowling for any number of reasons. Maybe the stranger just got dumped, or maybe he scowls at everyone. Who knows?

As humans, we all have **irrational thoughts** like these. Unfortunately, irrational or not, these thoughts still affect how we feel, and how we behave. Consider how Pharrell might've responded to the same situation if he had a different thought:

Thought	➡	Emotion	➡	Behavior
"What a jerk!"		Angry		Pharrell shouts: "What's your problem?!"
"He must be having a bad day..."		Neutral		Pharrell walks away and forgets the incident.

Using the cognitive model, you will learn to identify your own patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. You'll come to understand how your thoughts shape how you feel, and how they impact your life in significant ways.

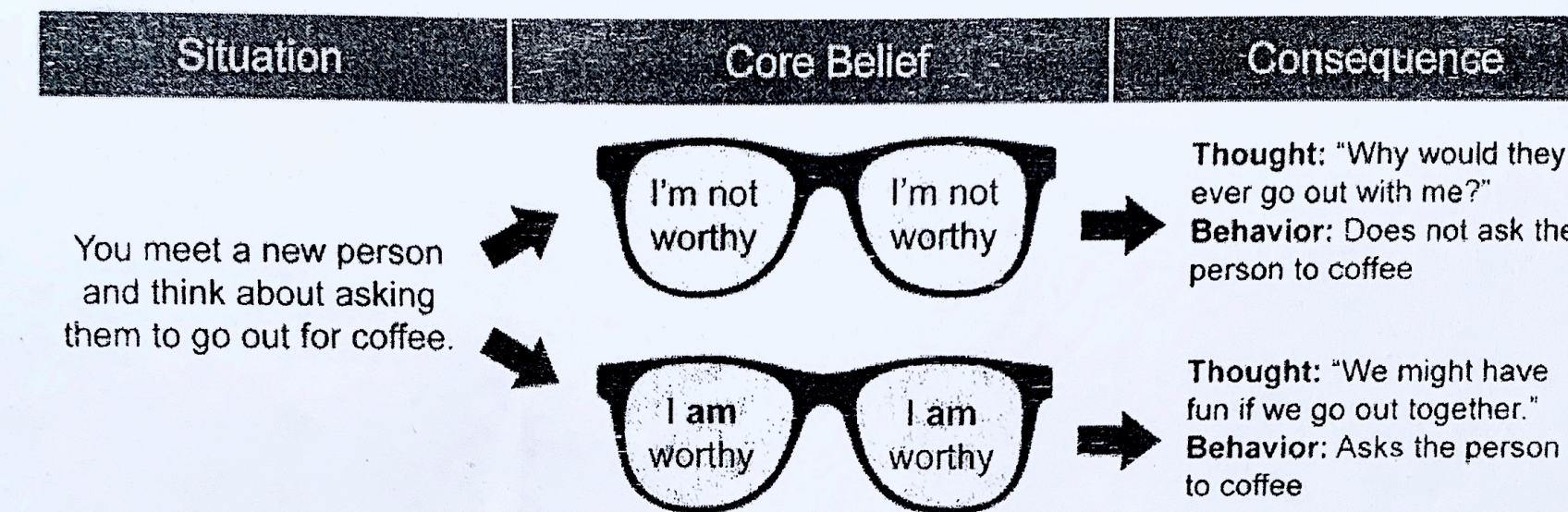
Once you become aware of your own irrational thoughts, you will learn to change them.

The thoughts that once led to depression, anxiety, and anger will be replaced with new, healthy alternatives. Finally, *you* will be in control of how you feel.

Core Beliefs

Everyone looks at the world differently. Two people can have the same experience, yet have very different interpretations of what happened. **Core beliefs** are the deeply held beliefs that influence how we interpret our experiences.

Think of core beliefs like a pair of sunglasses. Everyone has a different "shade" that causes them to see things differently.



Many people have negative core beliefs that cause harmful consequences. To begin challenging your negative core beliefs, you first need to identify what they are. Here are some common examples:

I'm unlovable	I'm stupid	I'm boring
I'm not good enough	I'm ugly	I'm worthless
I'm a bad person	I'm abnormal	I'm undeserving

What is one of your negative core beliefs? _____

List three pieces of evidence contrary to your negative core belief.

- _____
- _____
- _____

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