Sharing a love of learning

ROYAL FREE
HOSPITAL CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

Thinking cards

What are Thinking Cards?

- A set of 25 cards that show examples of helpful and unhelpful patterns of thinking

- Using ideas from Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and Mindfulness

- The cards consist of easily remembered phrases with a relating image the students can easily work and learn from

Why did we create Thinking Cards?

- Young people were finding it hard make changes and develop resilience

- Using advice and showing scenarios on their own did not seem to produce sustained or effective change in thinking patterns

- The cards help students clearly identify their unhelpful thoughts and start to challenge them

The Power of Thoughts

Thought
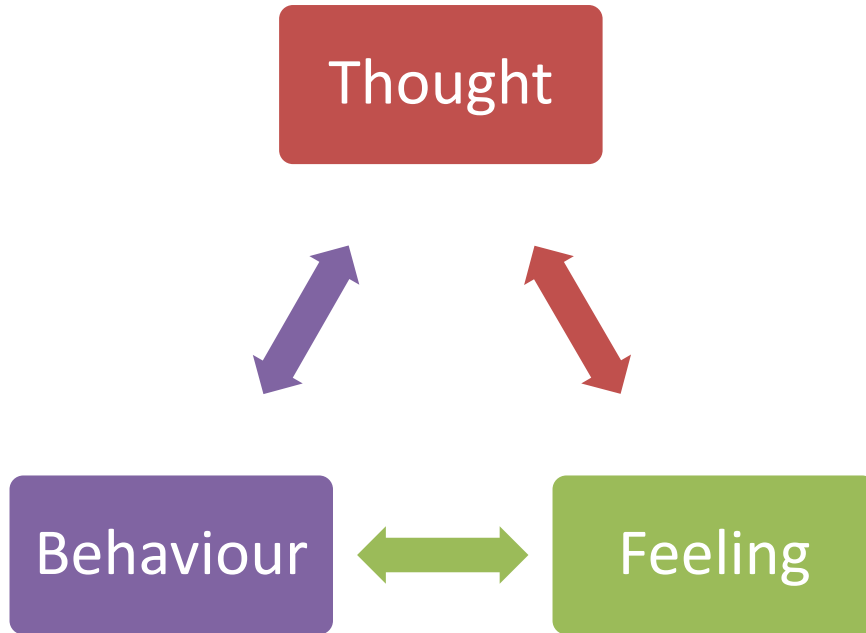
Behaviour

Feeling

This simplified CBT model shows the **relationship and influence** between thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Unhelpful or outdated thoughts can lead to distressing feelings and ultimately unhelpful behaviour

By challenging the thought and **teaching the tools of helpful thinking**, the young person can improve their inner life and ultimately their behaviour

How to introduce and use thinking cards in the classroom

- First go through the cards and make sure the student(s) clearly understanding what they mean

- Ask the students to identify which thought patterns they experience regularly

- Encourage an open discussion about examples of when they have these thinking patterns

- Use the Thinking Grid to record the cards which apply to them

- Make sure there is a positive ending by identifying a helpful thinking card

Name:

Unhelpful Thinking Card you are Currently Experiencing:

Date										
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										

Helpful Thinking Cards you are currently using:

Date										
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										

Comments:

Over a period of time…

- Revisit the exercise on a <u>regular basis</u> or in a situation where the cards may be useful

- The students set themselves targets over a period of time and by focusing on certain helpful thinking cards they can slowly alter their way of thinking

- Tutors can monitor this progress in meetings or through observation

Examples of the use of Thinking Cards

- To de-escalate an incident or situation
- Breakout session with a pupil who is having difficulty managing in class
- Give pupils a scenario and ask them to match it with thinking cards
- Asking pupils to support or mentor each other by going through the cards with one another
- To discuss the mindset of someone who is susceptible to peer pressure
- As an icebreaker with a pupil who is in crisis but cannot find the words to say what's troubling them
- Asking pupils to invent their own cards

Negative glasses

- They say it's a good school but as far as I'm concerned the school I go to is the worst school in London. There is nothing I enjoy about it and all the teachers are rubbish. All I like to do is listen to my iPod at breaktime but even that's spoilt 'cos I haven't got the latest model. To be honest there isn't much I enjoy doing with the other kids and when they tell me what they like to do of an evening I can't see what they get out of it; the things they like to do all seem pretty boring to me. I can't wait till I'm old enough to leave home but then being an adult looks like it can be a bit of a drag too.

'Negative glasses'
If we think this way
we only see the negatives in any situation

'Grow your optimism'
If we usually expect things to improve
then we are more likely to maintain our mental strength
until things actually do improve

'Get some perspective'
It's not the biggest problem in the world.
Take a step back from it and look again

The outcomes of using Thinking Cards so far…

- Since September, there are signs that students use the thinking cards to initiate changes in school and outside

- There have been a number of examples that the cards have created a more positive state of mind for the young people

- Teachers are able to discuss and subsequently record students pastoral progress in daily meetings

- The school is recording the unhelpful thinking patterns across a 12 month period

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