

ABCDE TECHNIQUE



Technique to combat irrational thoughts

Activity Focus and Goals:

- Understanding our belief system and thoughts about the things that happen to us.
- Practice reflection or critical thinking.
- Develop new ways of interpreting the events that affect us.
- Improve our resilience and problem-solving skill
- Value and confirm our belief system.

Materials Needed:

- 1 paper template with the exercise
- 1 pen
- A quiet and comfortable place to connect with ourselves.
- ...
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Learning Objectives:

- Understanding our way of thinking and reacting.
- Analyze our behavior in the face of everyday events.
- Understanding our emotions and how they affect us.
- Creating new perspectives on problems.
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Structure and timing of the activity: in groups (**5 - 10 people**) or individually, around **1 hour**:

_ First, we read the exercise description and the "Strategies to Overcome Irrational Beliefs" sheet, so we can uncover the mechanism that causes them and understand the exercise, **20 minutes**.

_ Then, think and fill every field of template (page 3), no hurry, around **20 minutes**.

We will recall a past or recent event that causes me discomfort or worry. Then we will record it in the table to describe how I usually react, what emotions it provokes in me, and finally we will question the validity of our response to it in order to create a new, more realistic and less emotionally damaging response.

_ Reflect and share with the group (**25-30 minutes**) or individual reflection (**15 minutes**) to analyze our response and thoughts.

The full description of the exercise and the table template can be found on page 2 and 3.

(Self) assessment:

- *Is there another way to see or think about my worries?*
- *Am I reacting appropriately to the things that happen to me?*
- *Should I rethink what I tell myself about my problems?*

Resources and useful materials:

Annex "Strategies to Overcome Irrational Beliefs" and example template.

Notes, comments, recommendations for users (trainers/ learners):

In the section on reading the sheets about erroneous thoughts, we must consider; what they are, how they affect us, and the difficulties they cause. Next, we'll look at the sheet with strategies for overcoming them and uncovering the mechanism that causes them. We'll examine each of these mechanisms and clarify (when working in a group) those that are unclear, providing everyday examples for better understanding....





ReRootED

ABC technique to combat irrational thoughts.

This technique is based on demonstrating that our beliefs are irrational. To do this, we need to create a table detailing the following in columns:

- A: The Event
- B: Beliefs, Evaluation we make of what has happened
- C: Consequences, the emotion it generates in us, and what we do



Let's take an example:

	A: Event	B: Beliefs/Evaluation	C: Emotion
Irrational	They don't give any credence to my experience or previous training.	I've lost all professional identity and I have to start from scratch, I'm useless.	Discomfort, helplessness, and anxiety
Rational	They don't give any credence to my experience or previous training.	They are suspicious of my CV because it is not officially recognized, but I can demonstrate my knowledge if they allow me to.	Annoying

We can see that the same event (my experience or prior training is not taken seriously) can generate very negative emotions (discomfort, helplessness, anxiety) or simply negative ones (annoyance). The only difference between the two is the person's evaluation of the event.

Therefore, when something like this happens, we need to put the following technique into practice: the ABCDE technique. In this case, the columns of the table would be the following:

- A: The Event
- B: Beliefs, the evaluation we make of what has happened
- C: Consequences, the emotion it generates in us, and what we do
- D: Internal discussion, questioning irrational thoughts
- E: New rational thinking

Let's take an example:

A: Event	B: Beliefs	C: Emotion/Consequences	D: Internal discussion	E: New thinking
We went out into the street with a dirty shirt	Everyone's staring at me, they're going to think I'm an unhygienic person.	Discomfort, anguish, anxiety	Who's looking at you? Nobody's noticing your shirt; there are other people on the street. Besides, they might be admiring how good you look.	Indifference

As you can see, the most important thing for creating new thought is D: questioning, debating, or challenging our own thinking. We have to question ourselves to create more rational thought. In that case, it could be that people aren't looking at us, or if they are, it's for something else entirely, something unrelated to a small stain on our shirt. Getting a stain on your shirt is something that could happen to anyone.



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A: Event	B: Evaluation	C: Emotion and behavior	D: Internal discussion	E: New thought

- **A: The evento:** What happened?
- **B: Our evaluation of what has happened:** What do I think happened?
- **C: The emotion it generates in us and what we do:** How do I feel after what has happened?
- **D: Question irrational thoughts:** What real evidence is there to support what I'm thinking?
- **E: New rational thinking:** What else could I think now that I've debated my thinking?