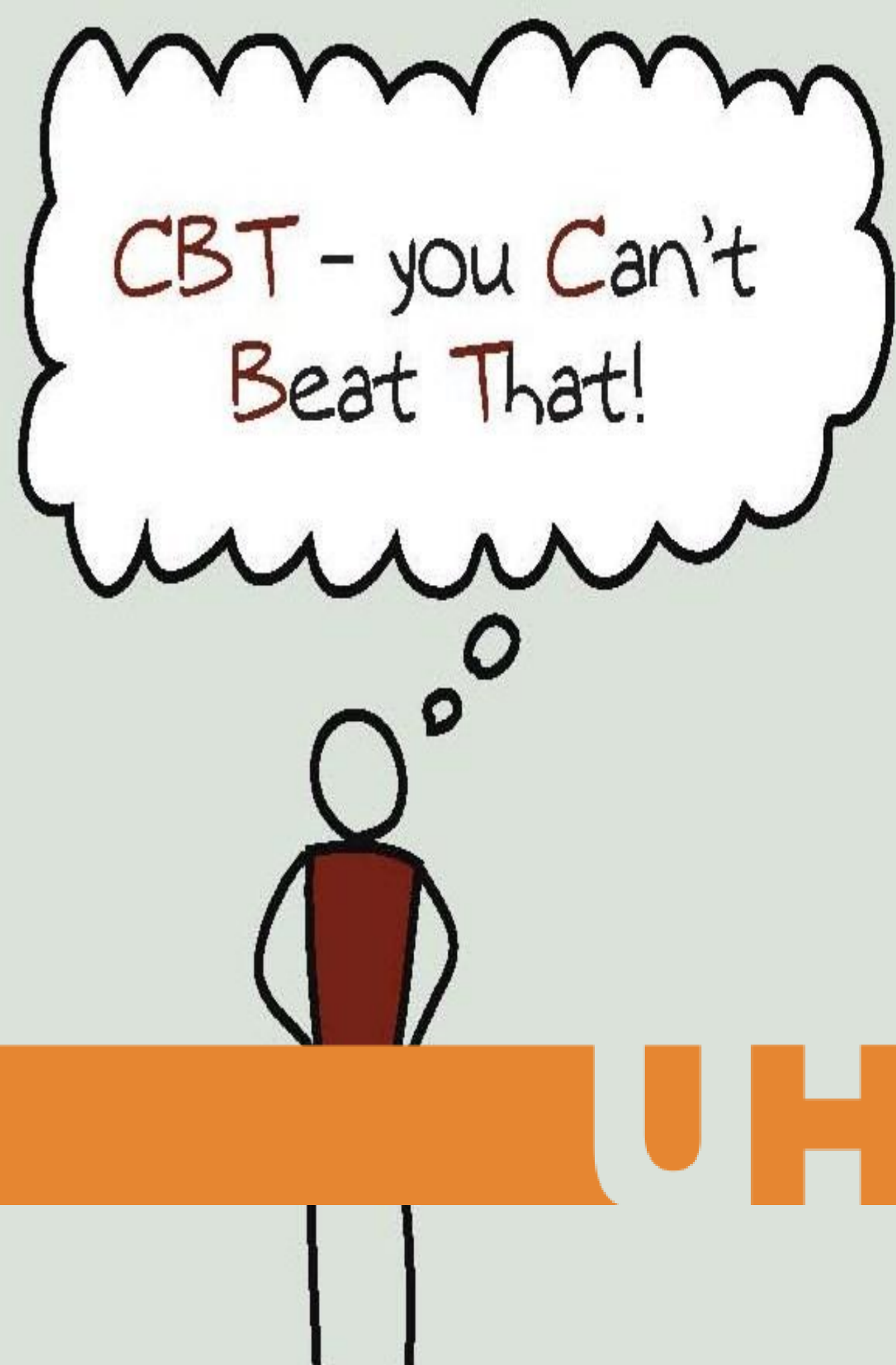


Become your own best  
therapist:  
*cognitive behaviour therapy and the  
power of the mind*

## Topics:

- Do you NEED to become your own therapist?
- How do we CREATE our own misery?
- What is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy?
- Does it work?
- Problems?



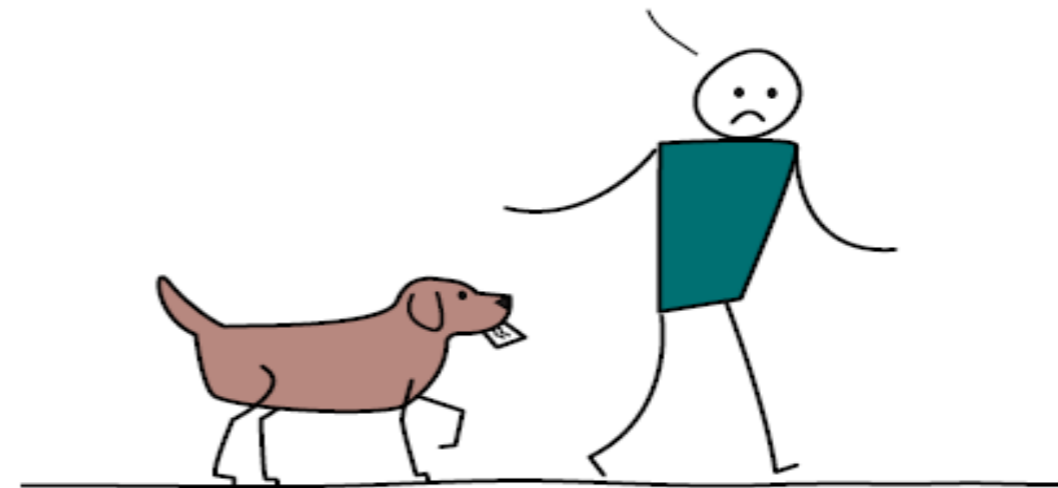
# Do YOU need to become your own therapist?

## The Party Invite

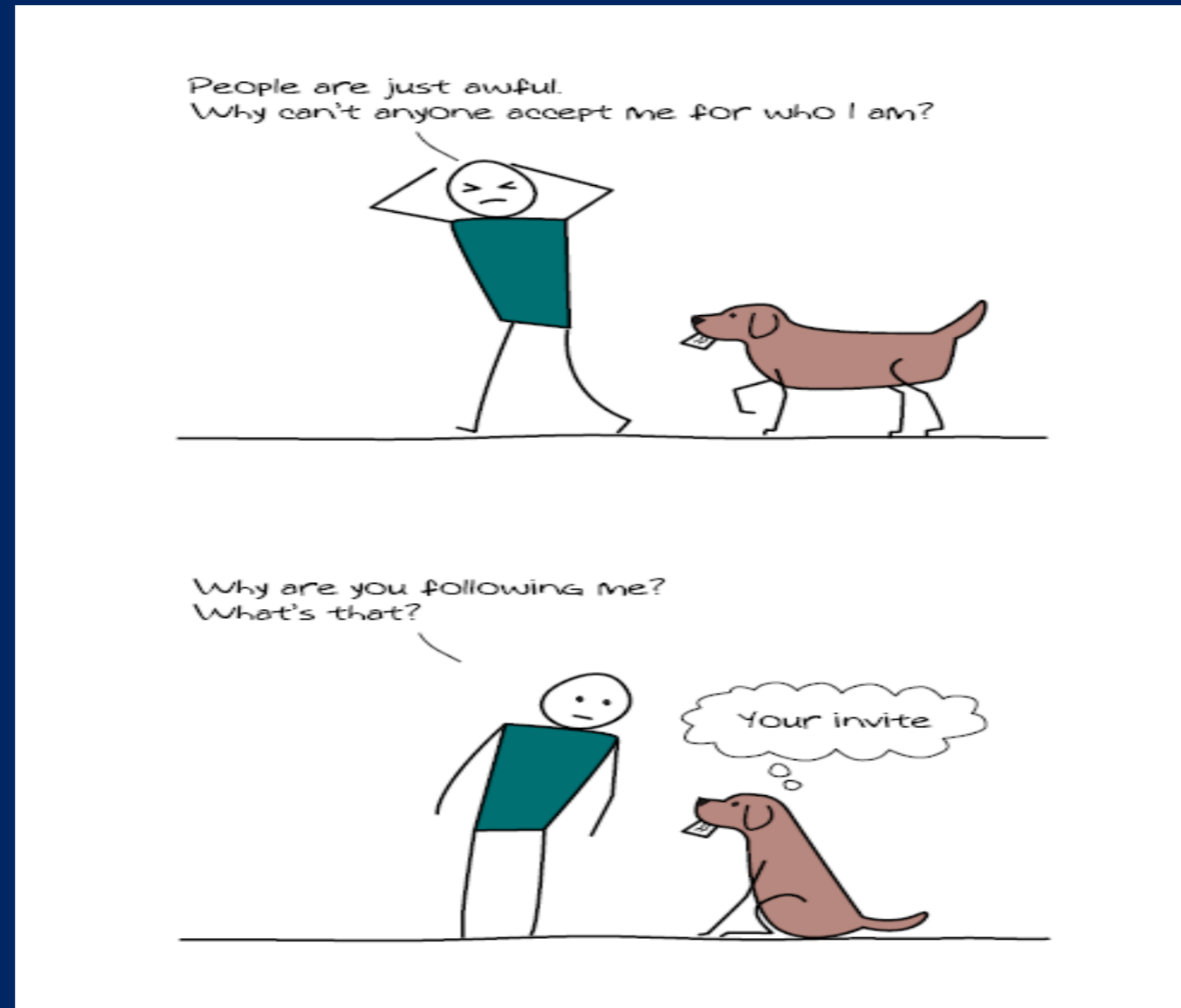
Everyone is invited to  
Theresa's party - except me!



Why would she do that? She might not like me.  
Or maybe she did it because I'm such a loser.



# Do YOU need to become your own therapist?



# Do YOU need to become your own therapist?

## The Traffic Jam

This is terrible, I'm going to be so late...  
I'm going to miss my meeting.

It's just a meeting.



Get out of my way!  
You're making me late!



# Do YOU need to become your own therapist?



# Do YOU need to become your own therapist?

Stressful and Challenging Events = normal and NOT problematic in themselves

Problems arise when the stress and challenges:

- Happen too often
- Are too intense when they happen

These problems could be:

- Not living life the way you want to lead it
- Burn-out
- Anxiety
- Depression
- And other mental health problems

Do YOU need to become your own therapist?

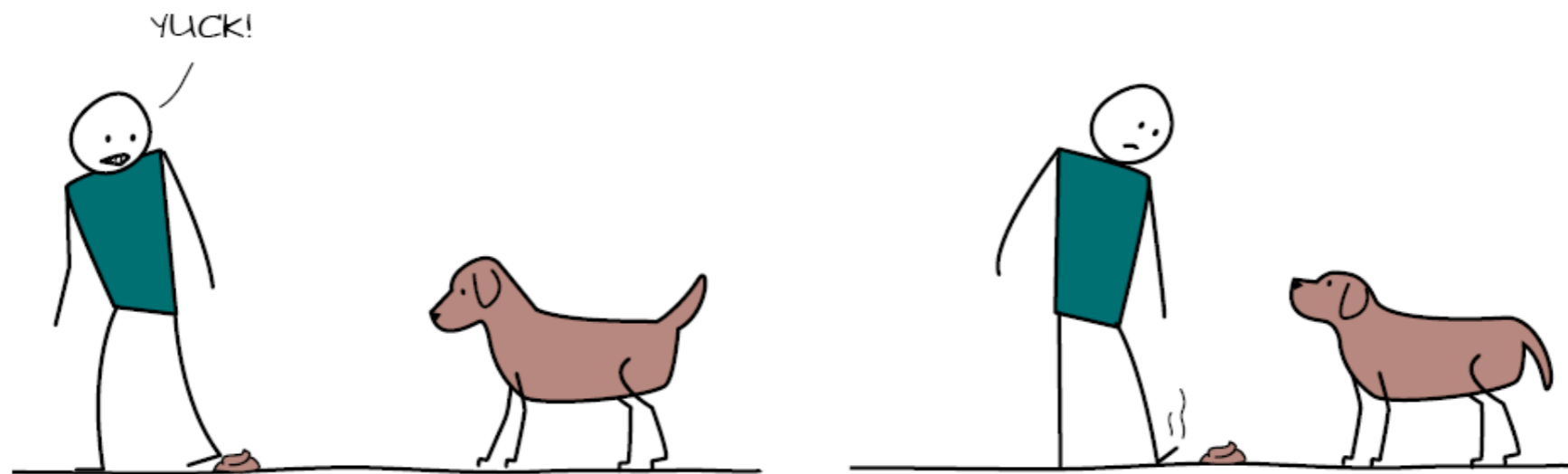
And then you may want to consider becoming your own best therapist by using

COGNITIVE  
BEHAVIOUR

THERAPY

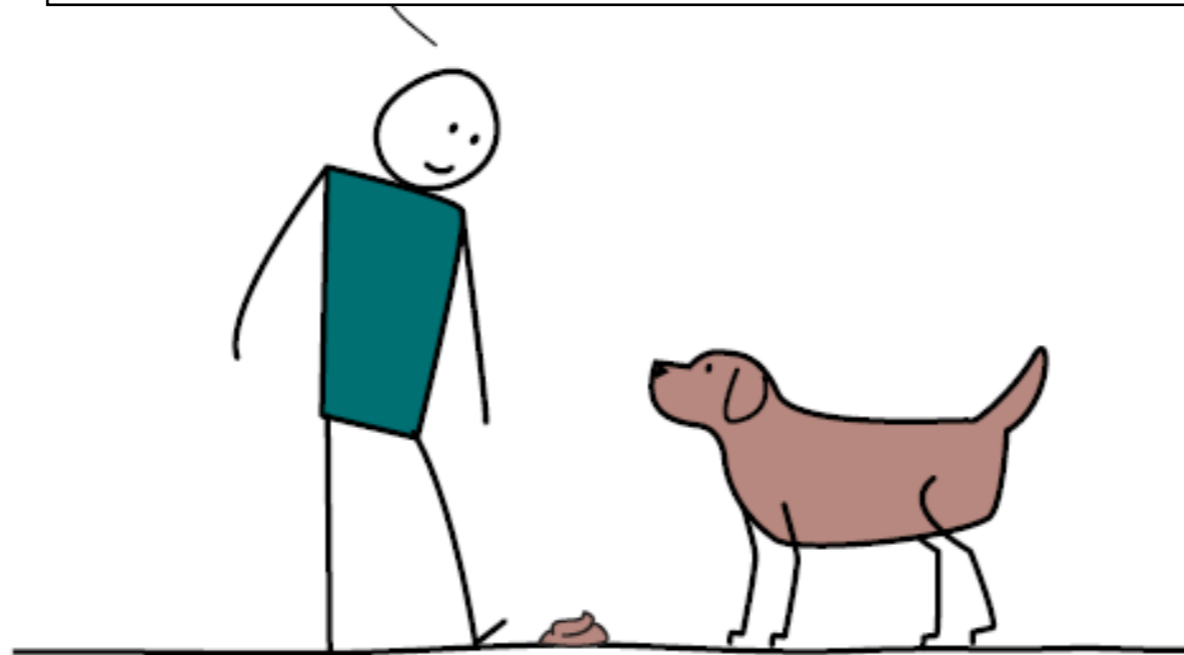
# How do we create our own misery?

## The Sandals



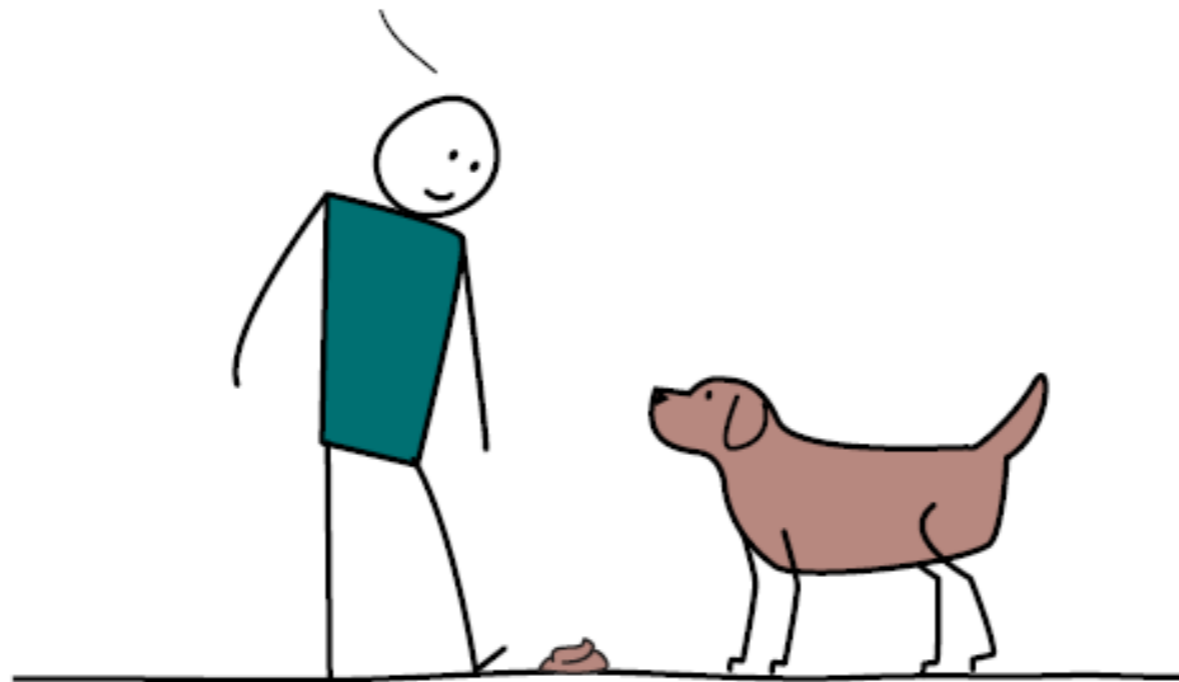
and

*"I stepped in dogpoop, this is terrible!"* "Everyone at work will smell me, they will think I didn't wash, they will reject me, I'd better call in sick and stay away from people for a couple of days."



Or

Lucky I wasn't wearing my sandals!



# Thinking Makes it so

1. How we feel and what we do is strongly influenced by what we think
2. Automatic Thinking: *"I stepped in dogpoop, this is terrible!"*
  - Occurs without effort
  - Can not be controlled
    - *Don't think of a red circle*
3. Deliberate Thinking: "Everyone at work will smell me, they will think I didn't wash, they will reject me, I'd better call in sick and stay away from people for a couple of days."
  - Is under our control
4. Beliefs: "
  - Opinions about ourselves, other people and/or the future

# How it works

1. We acquire what we believe to be true about ourselves, the world and the future through our LEARNING HISTORY
2. These beliefs guide our attention for what happens in the world
3. The BELIEFS are influential in dictating which automatic thoughts come to mind in specific situations
4. The beliefs also form the guiding principles for our deliberate thinking

# Ok, all true, but what is the problem

1. Our thinking is more than 90% pretty accurate and helpful
2. As a result of that we learn to trust our thinking
3. If this trust in what our mind tells us becomes TOO strong and
4. If our mind produces too many upsetting thoughts then
5. We will develop psychological problems

# Going back to 'dogpoop'



1. "I stepped in dogpoop, this is terrible!"
2. "Everyone at work will smell me, they will think I didn't wash, they will reject me, I'd better call in sick and stay away from people for a couple of days."

# Taking the products of your mind too seriously!

1. *"I stepped in dogpoop, this is terrible!" → It is true, you stepped in dogpoop, but is that terrible or just unpleasant*

- We often call things terrible, awful and intolerable if the issue at hand is just plain unpleasant, uncomfortable or inconvenient.*
- The 'international scale of terribleness' may be helpful.*

**Where would you rate stepping in dogpoop on this scale?**



# Taking the products of your mind too seriously!

1. Everyone at work will smell me → Is this true, and if it is true, what would it REALLY mean;
2. they will think I didn't wash → Is this true, and if it is true, what would it REALLY mean;
3. they will reject me → Is this true, and if it is true, what would it REALLY mean;
4. I'd better call in sick and stay away from people for a couple of days.

# Human Misery

1. We think irrationally
2. We give this undue attention
3. We believe the products of our mind
4. And experience high levels of negative feelings as a result.

# Becoming your own best therapist

1. Mental hygiene, like dental hygiene takes time and effort and sometimes you really don't feel like it
2. Thoughts are just thoughts; emotions are OUR products and therefore no inherently dangerous
3. Spot the thinking errors
4. Behave by going against them: take a risk a day and it will keep the doctor away

# Examples of Thinking Errors

1. **Shoulding and Musting:** People should approve of me; I have to get what I want; They should accept my proposal; Life should be fair.
2. **Catastrophising:** Stepping in dogpoop is terrible, If my colleagues don't like me that will be awful.
3. **Downing:** I made a mistake: I am such a complete and utter idiot; They made a mistake they are completely useless.
4. **I can't stand it:** Stepping in dogpoop is simply intolerable; Failing this assignment is unbearable; If they don't like my lecture I might as well die...

# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: CBT

1. CBT is a form of psychological therapy that has received unparalleled support from research as being effective (in alleviating problems) as
  - A therapy
  - Self-Help with books and computerised CBT
2. For a whole range of problems from depression, anxiety (including PTSD and OCD), addictions to schizophrenia and personality problems

# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: How

1. Assessment: solving the puzzle how the problems came about and how they are maintained
2. Sharing the solution of the puzzle with the client
3. Based on the shared understanding the therapist outlines a therapy plan that is fine-tuned and adapted to client preferences and needs
4. The plan is regularly evaluated.

# Elements of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

1. **Cognitive Restructuring:** learning to appraise the products of client's mind and learn to take the irrational ones less seriously
2. **Behavioural Activation:** a planned approach to get clients into a more balanced lifestyle
3. **Exposure and response prevention:** a planned approach to (gradually) confront client with anxiety eliciting situations **WITHOUT THE USUAL AVOIDANCE**
4. **Problem Solving skills training**
5. **Communication Skills Training**

# Cognitive Restructuring in Action

1. Dogpoop thoughts: *"I stepped in dogpoop, this is terrible! Everyone at work will smell me, they will think I didn't wash, they will reject me, I'd better call in sick and stay away from people for a couple of days.*
2. *Disputing: Are these thoughts based on facts or are they based on beliefs; do these thoughts help me to lead my life.*
3. *What can I say to myself that is factual and will be helpful?*
4. *What can I do to demonstrate the accuracy of nr. 3*

# Rational Thought

1. It is true I stepped in dogpoop and that is unpleasant, but not the end of the world.
2. It is my colleagues good right to think whatever they like if they still smell dogpoop.
3. If they think badly of me, that is a pity, but it would not change me as a person.
4. It is unlikely that they would reject me, but if they would do so for this reason, that would be disappointing and would show them up to be not the good colleagues I thought they were.

# Supportive Behaviour

1. This would mean going against the avoidance
2. Mention at work that you stepped in dogpoop and that you hope you cleaned it all off and
3. If someone stills smells dogpoop to tell you.

# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy & IAPT

1. An initiative to 'carpet' England with psychological therapy centers offering evidence based psychological therapy (in first instance CBT)
2. UH has been part of this exiting project and has 100 trainee CBT therapists so far enrolled in our PGDIP in CBT

# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

## THE EVIDENCE

1. You get what you pay for: uncomplicated problems of anxiety and depression need between 8 and 20 sessions of CBT
2. More complex problems take longer
3. Just as brain surgeon can't do a complex operation in the middle of the street with a breadknife....a CBT therapist can't produce results in six sessions with complex problems.

# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

## More Information

1. [www.babcp.com](http://www.babcp.com) → professional organisation of CBT-ers
2. [www.cbt-partnership.org](http://www.cbt-partnership.org) → information on CBT, demonstrations and video lectures
3. [www.socksofdoom.org](http://www.socksofdoom.org) → follow the adventures of Mr. Percy and Zee
4. Contact Henck at [h.van-bilsen@herts.ac.uk](mailto:h.van-bilsen@herts.ac.uk)

# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

## THE END

