

ABC Worksheet: Straightforward Version

<i>In the context of awareness and self-kindness</i>			
<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>What happened?</i></p> <p><i>What was the activating event (A) about which I became aware I was experiencing an intense inner state?</i></p>	<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>What were my primary feelings*</i>? <i>Mad, sad, glad, afraid, other feelings? List primary, natural human feelings/consequences (C) that occurred in relation to (A).</i></p>	<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>What was I thinking? Which thoughts were beliefs (B) and which were facts?</i></p>	<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>What were my secondary feelings?***</i> <i>What feelings resulted from my thoughts? List secondary feelings /consequences (C) that occurred as a result of (B).</i></p>
<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>D. What are the facts?</i></p> <p>What are the facts vs. what are thoughts that are beliefs, rules, opinions, judgments, expectations, assumptions, and/or interpretations? In what ways am I thinking I, they, or the world should or shouldn't be or do as they are? What problematic, habitual patterns of thinking do I need to identify and challenge? Have I overestimated possibilities as probabilities? What undue meaning about myself, my life, others, or the world might I have attributed to this activating event or to related events in the past? What is the "writing on the billboard" that I need to read, however reluctantly?</p>			
<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>E. How can I help myself with this?</i></p> <p>What can I do to provide myself kindness and support? What are humane, realistic, supportive, soothing, helpful thoughts to which I can shift my attention? Have I adjusted the volume on my inner state? How can I be curious rather than judgmental? What can I say to myself that might be helpful the next time this—or something like it—happens?</p>			
<p style="background-color: #ffff00; margin: 0;"><i>F. Based on my values and priorities, how do I want to play this?</i></p> <p>Now that I have data from my feelings, have separated beliefs from reality and have seen the facts as they are—however I might wish they were different—what is my end in mind? What strategies do I wish to derive? What shall I say or do next—or not say or not do?</p>			

**Primary feelings are natural feelings, evolved to be experienced by the human brain to provide data about surviving and thriving, that happen automatically without thought: mad, sad, glad, afraid, surprised, disgusted, alarmed (includes fight-flight-freeze response).*

***Secondary feelings happen as a result of thoughts – often thoughts that are opinions, beliefs, or rules – that cause feelings of shame, guilt, humiliation, self-blame, mistaken other-blame, regret, rage, dread, panic, despair, nostalgia, jealousy, righteousness, vengeance, and “ideations,” i.e. intrusive thoughts or fantasies of harm to self or others. Secondary feelings that result from thoughts cause suffering through 1) escalating natural feelings, 2) causing painful feelings, 3) creating a sense of “no escape,” which can result in feelings of rage, helplessness, and hopelessness, 4) increased reactivity vs. conscious choice, and 5) creating troubled interactions with others.*