

A Handy List of Challenge Questions

The “I Can’t” Habit

What is the evidence that I can’t do it?

What steps can I take to tackle the problem?

What steps have I taken in the past to learn new skills or tackle other problems?

Is it possible to ask someone for help?

The Catastrophizing Habit

How likely is the worst-case scenario?

Is there any evidence that it’s apt to happen?

What are five other things more likely to happen?

If something bad does happen, how would I cope?

What would I tell a friend who had the same thought?

The All-or-Nothing Habit

Is my thought at one extreme?

Is there evidence to support my thought?

Is there evidence against it?

What are some possibilities that fall in between the extremes?

The Zooming-In-on-the-Negative Habit

Is there evidence to support my thought?

Is there evidence against it?

Am I focusing too much on one detail?

What good things happened that I'm forgetting?

Next week, when I think back on today, what will be the most accurate way to remember the big picture?

The "I Should, You Should" Habit

Were my expectations reasonable in this case?

What if I substitute "It would be nice if ... " for the should statement?

How did having a rigid rule help me?

How did it hurt me?

The Fortune-Telling Habit

Is my prediction reasonable in this case?

What evidence do I have to base my fortune-telling on?

How often am I right when I jump to the conclusion that something bad will happen?

The Mind-Reading Habit

How do I know for sure what he or she is thinking?

How do I know it's about me?

What supports my assumption? What argues against it?

What are some more likely interpretations of the situation?

What would I tell a friend who is mind-reading like I just did?

The Blaming Habit

Am I being fair to myself by taking all the blame?

Am I being fair to others by blaming them?

How does blaming myself or someone else help me?

What are all the factors that may have contributed to this situation?

Were some or all of these factors beyond anyone's control?

The "It's Not Fair!" Habit

Is life always fair or equal?

What did the situation look like from the other person's point of view?

Were my expectations reasonable in this case?

Nine Thinking Habits

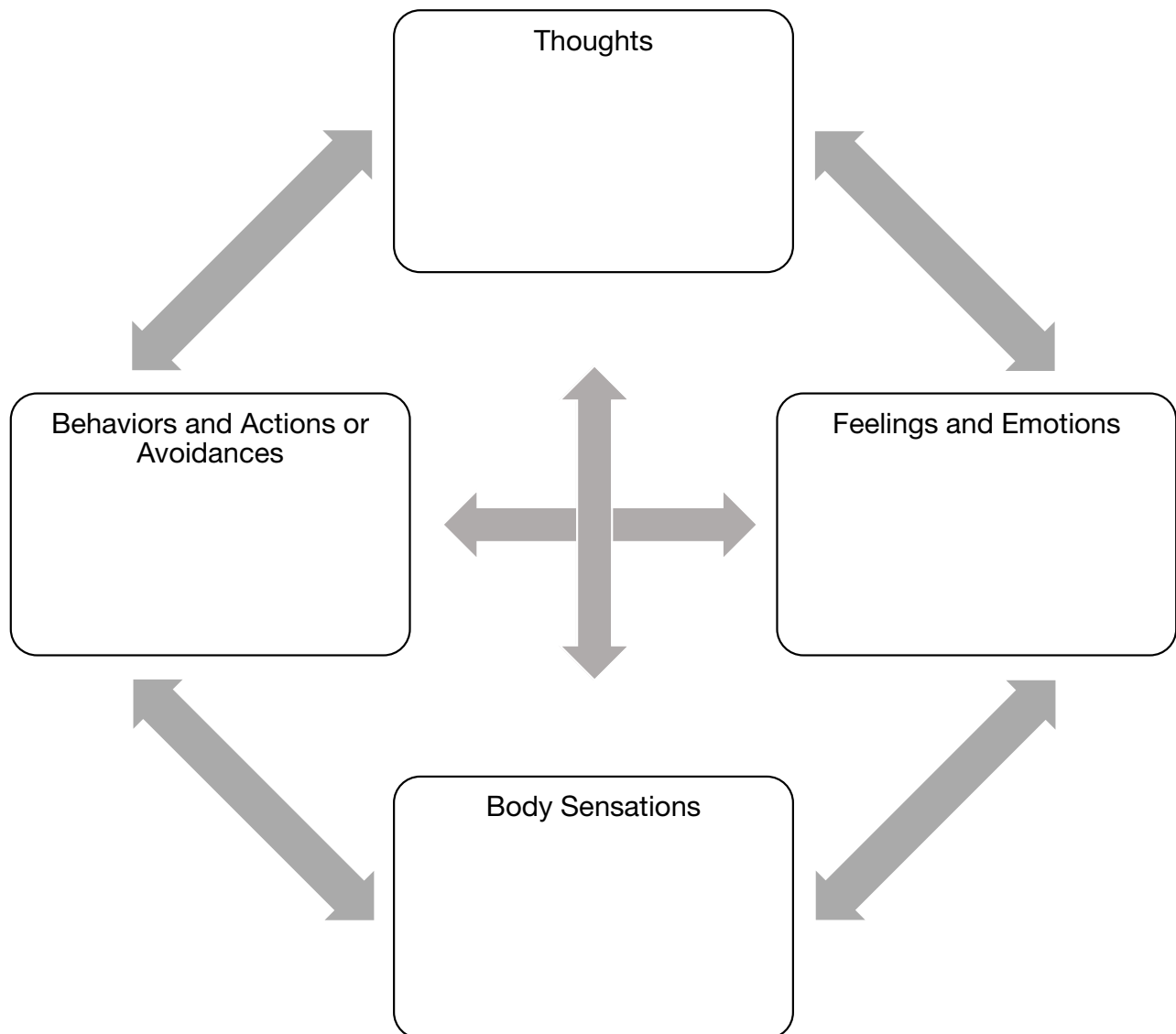
Does it apply?

- _____ 1. **The “I can’t!” habit.** You automatically conclude that you’re not capable of meeting a new challenge or solving a tough problem, which often makes you give up before you even try and leaves you feeling anxious and sad.
- _____ 2. **The catastrophizing habit.** You expect disaster and think *What if ... ?* whenever you’re faced with uncertainty, and you spend a lot of energy feeling needlessly panicky and anxious.
- _____ 3. **The all-or-nothing habit.** You see life in extremes. For example, if your performance isn’t perfect, it’s a total failure. Or any event that doesn’t happen one “right” way is all wrong. This makes you feel down on yourself or upset and irritated with others.
- _____ 4. **The zooming-in-on-the-negative habit.** You get stuck thinking over and over about your disappointing or embarrassing experiences and filter out everything positive or even just neutral that also happened. Blowing the negative moments way out of proportion results in pessimism about the present and future.
- _____ 5. **The “I should, you should” habit.** You hold yourself or other people to a set of rigid and unreasonable rules. When your expectations are not met, you feel disappointed in yourself or frustrated with others.
- _____ 6. **The fortune-telling habit.** You jump to the conclusion that you’re certainly going to mess up or that a future event will be a disappointment. You tend to either get really down on yourself and feel unmotivated and depressed, or feel cheated and resentful.
- _____ 7. **The mind-reading habit.** You jump to the conclusion that someone else is thinking about you and that the thought is critical. This makes you feel unsure of yourself and anxious.
- _____ 8. **The blaming habit.** You either think, *It’s all my fault!* and feel guilty or *It’s all his fault!* and feel angry and resentful.
- _____ 9. **The “It’s not fair!” habit.** You get upset when you feel that you’ve been unjustly treated, even though fairness is an unrealistic expectation.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Try It Out!

Part 1: Consider Your Own Negative Thinking Habit

CBT is based on the concept that your thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and body sensations are interrelated and affect one another. Changing your thinking changes the way you act and feel, and changing your behavior can change the way you think. Which negative thinking habit got in your way this week? Use this worksheet to write down your negative thought and how it made you act and feel.

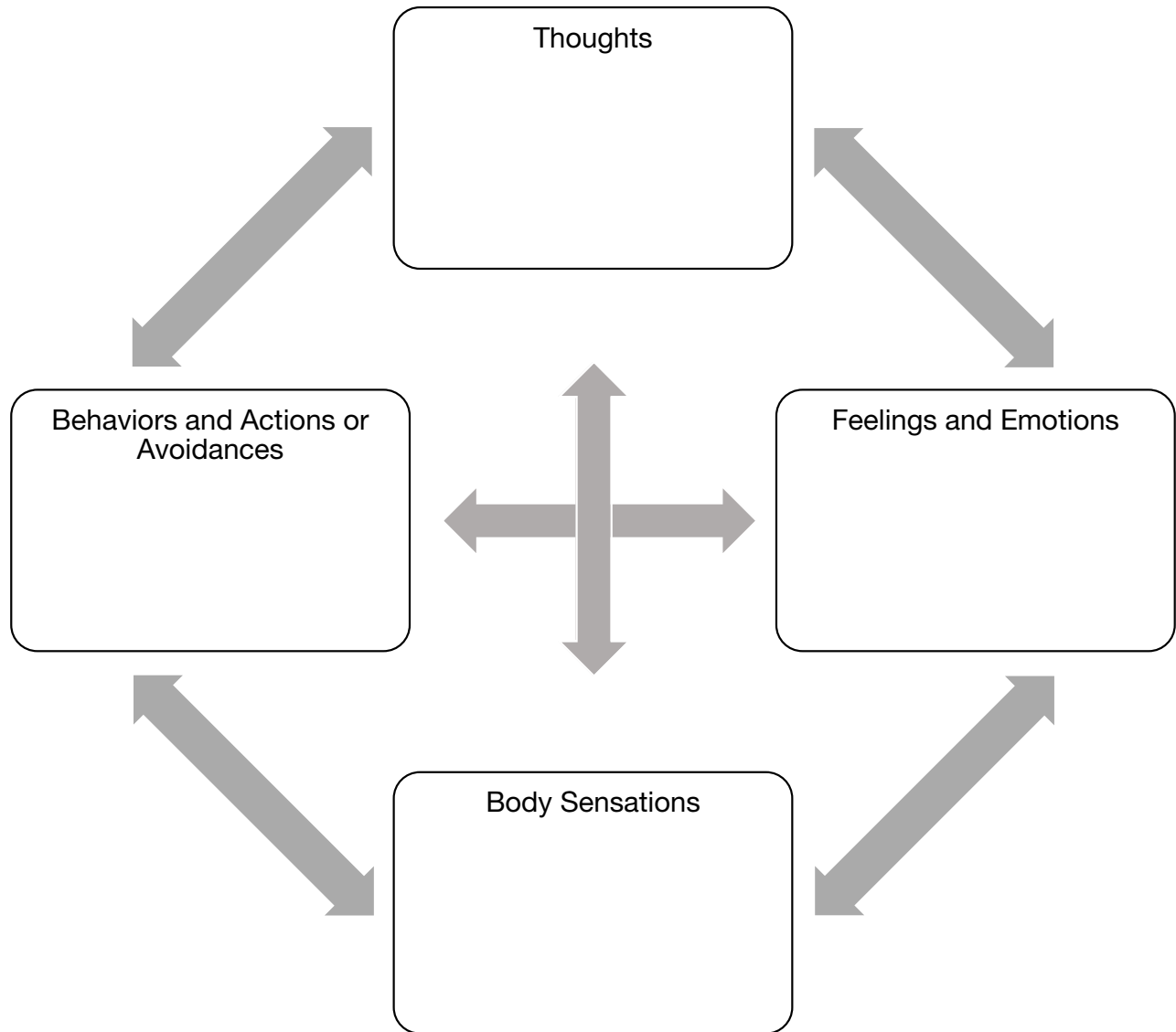


Use a new worksheet for each negative thinking habit. See the “Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Try It Out! Example: The Catastrophizing Habit” for an example of this worksheet already filled in.

Part 2: Change That Thought

Use the diagram below to challenge and change your negative thought. First, take a reality check, examining whether you can find any evidence to support or refute your thought. Refer to “A Handy List of Challenge Questions” to get the idea. Then fill in your more helpful thought and how it might make you act and feel.

- ✓ **Reality Check:** What can you say to yourself to challenge the thought?
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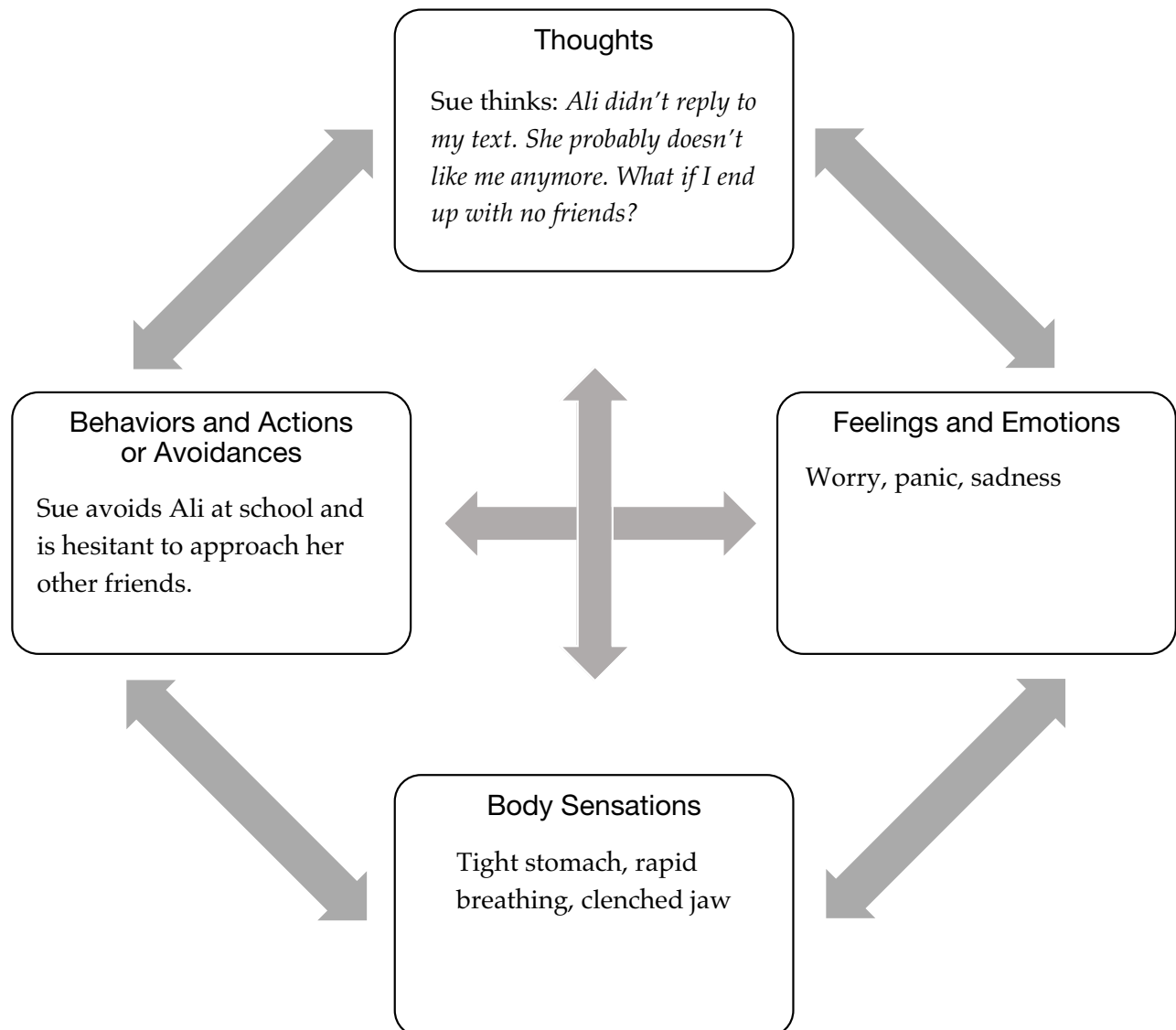
Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Try It Out!

Example: The Catastrophizing Habit

Part 1: Consider Your Own Negative Thinking Habit

CBT is based on the concept that your thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and body sensations are interrelated and affect one another. Changing your thinking changes the way you act and feel, and changing your behavior can change the way you think.

The diagram below shows how this might work for a teen named Sue who has the catastrophizing habit.



Part 2: Change That Thought

✓ **Reality Check:** What can Sue say to herself to challenge the thought?

What are other possible reasons Ali didn't reply? How likely is it that her not responding this one time means she doesn't like me?

