

# Psychology Month February 2017

## Week 1

**Change** how you *think*, **change** how you *feel*



[www.dpcdsb.org/psychology](http://www.dpcdsb.org/psychology)



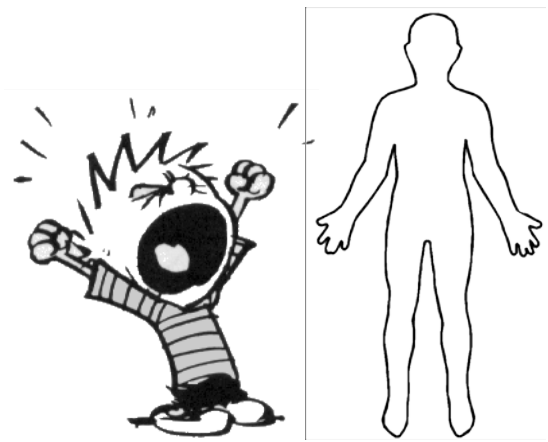
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DPCDSB Psychology Department, February 2017

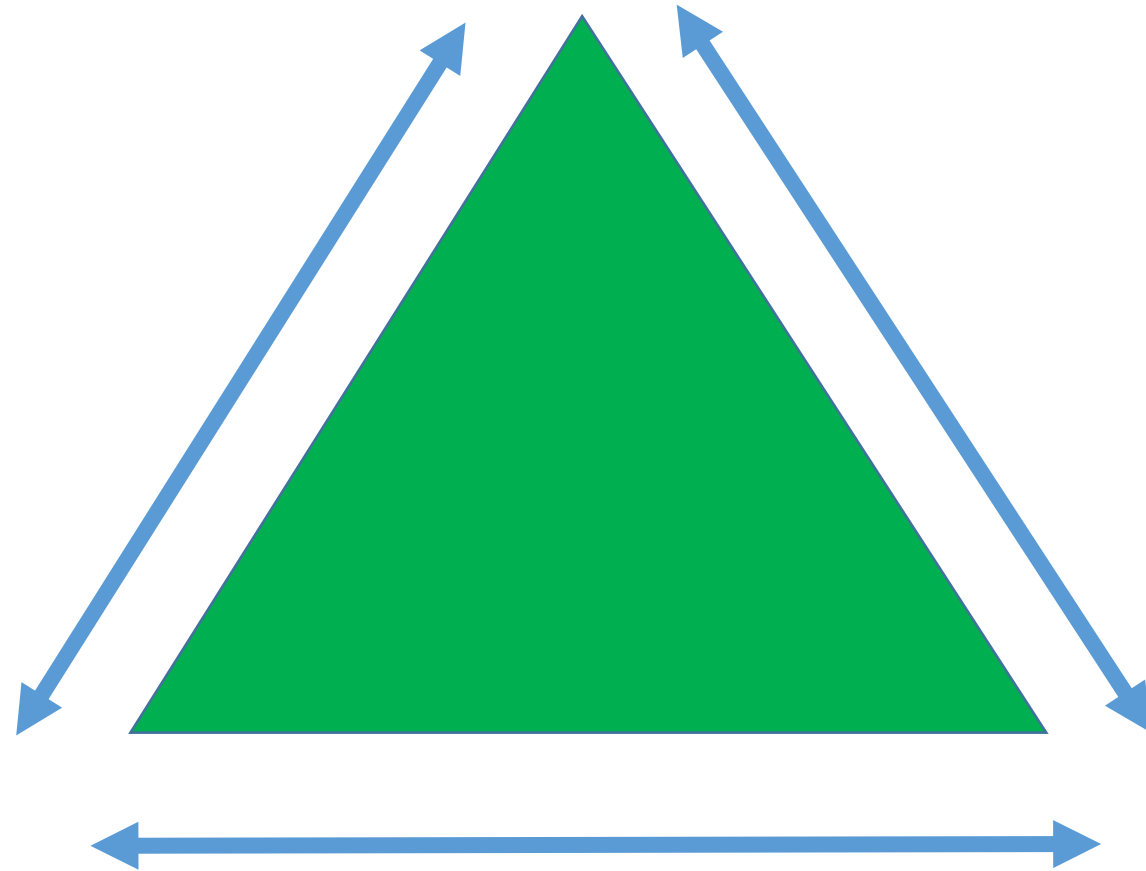
## Change how you *think* – Change how you *feel*

- It's hard to change how you feel directly
- It's easier to change how you think – doing this can change your feelings!
- E.g., in a crowded hallway someone bumps into you and you drop an armful of books.
  - If you think “they did that on purpose” you likely feel mad and might act on that by shouting at them
  - If you think “that was an accident” you likely feel neutral and don't act out

Thoughts






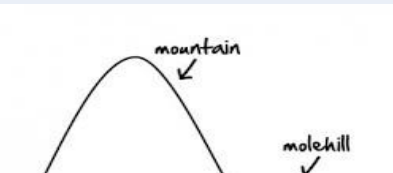
Actions / Body



Feelings

# Common Thinking Errors

*Change how you think – Change how you feel*

Thinking Trap	What's Going On	Example
Negative Glasses 	Focus on the negative and ignore the positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thinking about the 1 question you missed on a test and ignoring the ones you answered correctly</li> <li>- Can stop thinking about the 1 negative criticism ignoring all the positive feedback</li> </ul>
Fortune Telling 	Believing you can predict the future (and it will be negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't want to go to the party because I know no one will talk to me</li> <li>- I know I'll fail the test (even when you've studied so chances of failure are low)</li> </ul>
Mind Reading 	Believing you know what others are thinking (and it is negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Someone whispered as I walked by – they're clearly talking badly about me</li> <li>- Everyone is wondering what I'm doing at this party. They know I don't belong here</li> </ul>
Overgeneralization 	Often involves words like "always", "never", "everybody", and "nobody"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One friend is angry with you – "I <u>always</u> screw up friendships! <u>Everybody</u> hates me!"</li> <li>- Missing a goal in soccer – "I <u>never</u> get things right"</li> </ul>

# Core Beliefs

*Change how you think – Change how you feel*

- Rigid and strongly held beliefs
- Usually develop in childhood
- Maintained because we look for evidence that supports them and ignore evidence that contradicts them
- E.g., “I’m unlovable”, “I have to be perfect”, “I must please others”
- Often at the root of unhelpful thoughts that we just “can’t let go”
- What helps?
  - Try keeping a list of evidence that challenges negative core beliefs
  - Get help from others. They can point out things we overlook



# Balanced Thinking

*Change how you think – Change how you feel*



- Step 1: Identify your negative thoughts
- Step 2: Ask yourself – “am I making any thinking errors”?
- Step 3: Ask yourself – “what would I say to my best friend if they said this”? “What would my best friend say to me”?
- Step 4: Look for the evidence (that supports and contradicts) the belief.
- Step 5: If the evidence contradicts your negative belief – challenge it!

It's **not** about “just think positive”. It's about “thinking objectively” so you can see the whole story (not just the negative parts).