

Target competency	Manage one's emotions and stress effectively
Cross-curricular competencies (QEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solve problems Exercise critical judgment
General objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize what's a thought Understand the influence of thoughts on emotions, sensations and reactions Analyze a situation from different perspectives



REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS WORKSHOP

In the last workshop, we talked about ways to assert yourself against social influences. Do you remember the challenge I gave you? Tell me how it went.

*The challenge was to identify a situation where students felt pressure to act in a certain way when they didn't want to, and try to list the pros and cons of letting themselves be influenced.

THE ADVENTURES OF LEO AND CHARLIE

The sun is shining above the Camp OFF-TRAIL valley. The camp is slowly coming back to life after a few weeks of renovations, big and small. Charlie and Leo are sitting in the cafeteria, happy to be back at camp.

Charlie asks him: “Can you smell it, Leo?”

Intrigued, Leo asks her: “What? Flowers? Bread baking?”

“No! The sweet smell of Camp OFF-TRAIL! All the little things that make us feel good here! Well, I'm off to wash up. See you soon,” replies Charlie.

A minute later, Mr. Bruno, the fire chief assigned to Camp OFF-TRAIL, calls out: “Good morning, everyone! Like every year, I'm here to explain the safety rules. Because of this year's renovations, we'll be doing a real fire drill. The camp now has a state-of-the-art siren. You'll hear the alarm in a few minutes, but don't worry, it's just a test. 3-2-1...”

BEEEEEEEEEEEP BEEEEEEEEEEEP BEEEEEEEEEEEP BEEEEEEEEEEEP

The siren blares in the cafeteria. It's so loud that the children and counsellors all cover their ears. Despite the racket, everyone remains calm. Except for Charlie, who is totally P-A-N-I-C-K-I-N-G in the bathroom! She didn't hear Mr. Bruno's speech. She's terrified. She can't think straight, and she's running around thinking the camp is on fire.

Financial contribution from



Public Health Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé publique du Canada

Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de la Montérégie-Centre

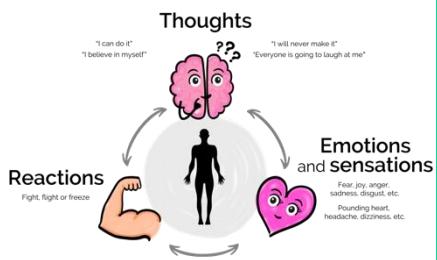


Université de Sherbrooke

Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale

DID YOU KNOW?

To better understand what's going on inside each person, we can use the cognitive-behavioural approach. This helps us to realize that thoughts have an influence on emotions, sensations and, ultimately, on the behaviours we adopt in response to a situation. Physical sensations also feed emotions, then thoughts and behaviours. All these elements interact.



To manage anxiety, we sometimes have to learn to see things differently, to change our perception of the situation.

(Beck, 2011)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask the students why did Leo and Charlie react differently in this situation. PPT 8
2. Complement their answers by explaining why Leo and Charlie didn't perceive the situation in the same way. Leo knew it was just a test, while Charlie thought it was a real fire. How a person interprets a situation will have a big influence on how they feel and react in that situation. PPT 9
3. In the classroom, project the *Thief in the Night* slide on the board or display the Supplementary sheet in poster format, whichever suits you best. PPT 10
4. Then invite students to carry out a small experiment to illustrate the principle, and hand out a few *Post-it® notes* in two different colours. Turn off the lights and tell the students: "Imagine you're sound asleep. You wake up to the sound of breaking glass. You think to yourself: It's a robber!" PPT 11
5. Ask the students to answer the following questions on their coloured *Post-it* notes and stick them in the right place on the chart shown on the Supplementary sheet or slide show:
 - What's going on in your body (e.g., pounding heart, sweaty hands, trembling)?
 - How do you feel (e.g. scared, panicky)?
 - What do you do (e.g., hide under the covers, grab your bedside lamp to be able to protect yourself)?PPT 12
6. You can read some of the answers. Then invite students to repeat the experiment and tell them: "Imagine you're sound asleep. You wake up to the sound of breaking glass. This time, you say to yourself: Oh no! my cat broke the glass that I forgot to put in the dishwasher." PPT 13
7. Ask students to answer the same questions as in point 5 above on their *Post-it* notes of the other colour and stick them in the right place on the chart shown on the supplementary sheet or slide show. PPT 14
8. You can read some of the new answers. Ask the students why their sensations, emotions and reactions are different, even though the same situation is happening. PPT 15
9. Explain that what's changed is the way they interpret the situation, their thoughts. Explain that when they are face with a situation, what they say to themselves influences what happens in their body, how they feel and how they will react to the situation. PPT 15
10. Explain to the students that to relieve their stress or anxiety about a situation, they sometimes need to learn to see things differently. Hand out the *The influence of your thoughts* worksheet and invite them to use it when faced with a stressful situation. PPT 15

CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Before the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, if you're faced with a stressful situation, use the *The influence of your thoughts* worksheet to identify your thoughts, sensations, emotions and reactions to the situation.

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

When a student experiences a stressful situation, you can ask questions to help them see things differently: Are you sure it's going to happen this way? Is it possible to imagine another scenario? If your friend were in the same situation, how would they perceive it? You can also help them identify their thoughts, sensations, emotions and reactions by using the *The influence of your thoughts* handout.

You can also print out the poster entitled *Possible physical sensations related to stress and anxiety*, which can be found on the [OFF-TRAIL website](#) in the [Workshops and tools for students](#) section, to help students identify their physical sensations when experiencing stress.



READING SUGGESTIONS

- Gaudrat, M.-A. (2018). *What Makes You Happy?* Shelter Harbor Pres



Text is under a [CC BY-NC 4.0](#) licence. Graphics designed with Canva are under [Canva's content licence](#). © [OFF-TRAIL program](#) by Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale (2025), Université de Sherbrooke.

SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

The thief in the night

It's a thief!



What's happening in your body
(physical sensations)?

How do you feel (emotions)?

What are you doing (reactions)?

Oh no, my cat broke another glass that I forgot to put in the dishwasher!



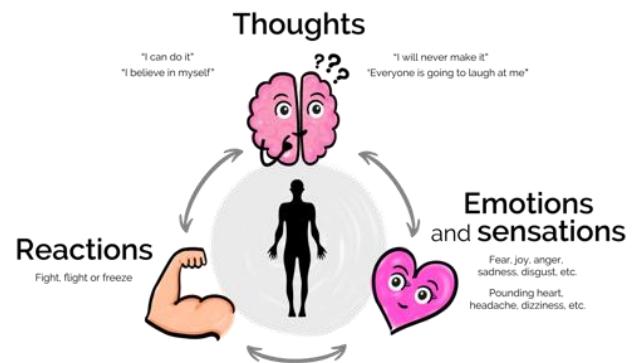
What's happening in your body
(physical sensations)?

How do you feel (emotions)?

What are you doing (reactions)?

HANDOUT TO PRINT

The influence of your thoughts



What is the situation?

In this situation, what are your thoughts (what you say to yourself)?

What's happening in your body (physical sensations)?	How do you feel (emotions)?	What are you doing (reactions)?
--	-----------------------------	---------------------------------

Is there another way of looking at this situation?
