

Practical information

EMOTIONS



Metaphor: Tame me: suffering and the fox in The Little Prince

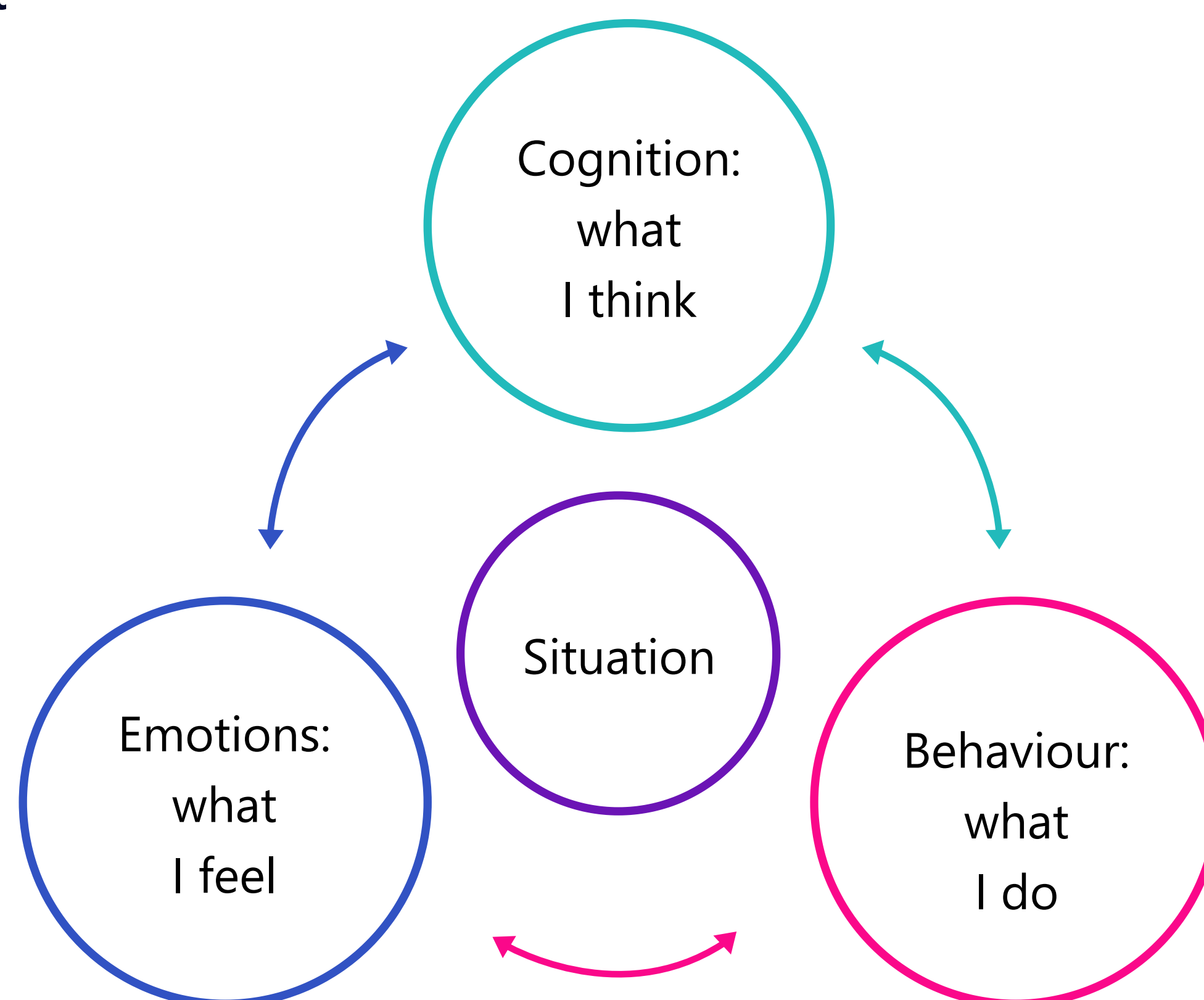
“Suffering is a bit like the fox in Saint Exupéry’s The Little Prince, but a fox that is wild and frightening. If we tame it, as the Little Prince did, this fox can become our friend. What do you do to tame an animal? Do you flee? Do you turn away? Do you curse it? Do you rush towards it?”

In the face of emotions, there can be two circuits which lead to the emotion and to behavioural responses:

A short circuit

Triggering situation → Immediate reaction → Rapid behavioural response

A long circuit



Three basic points to remember:

- 1 This pattern applies to all our emotions.
- 2 Our emotions are not only determined by events. The thoughts (interpretations, judgements) that we have about these situations will play a fundamental role increasing or reducing the emotion.

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- 3 These thoughts are not facts, absolute truths. They are subjective personal interpretations. We all deal with emotions in different ways, depending on our life experiences, our upbringing and other factors such as our lifestyle.

The aim is not to get rid of emotions but to reduce their intensity when they overwhelm us. The idea is to welcome our emotions, to consciously allow ourselves to feel them and to pay attention to what they are telling us and to our associated needs so that we can free ourselves of them. The aim of emotional regulation is to welcome emotions, whereas we tend to avoid them in order to reduce suffering.

