

CBSST: Automatic Thoughts

- Certain kinds of thoughts (called "**automatic thoughts**") can lead to many of our emotions and actions. We call them automatic thoughts because they seem to come very quickly in response to a situation:

Example:

SITUATION: Medication causes side effects.

OUTCOME: The outcome can be either GOOD or BAD, depending on how you think about it

1. BAD OUTCOME:

Automatic Thought

"I can't stand this"
"This will never go away"

Feeling

Frustrated/Scared

Action/Outcome

Stop medications
Problems worsen

2. GOOD OUTCOME:

Automatic Thought

"Nurse told me this
could happen"

Feeling

Calm

Action/Outcome

Talk with nurse or
doctor and get help
with side effects

- As long as you focus on the **same automatic thoughts**, you will have the **same emotions** (feelings) and **do the same things** (actions).
- This class will help teach you a way to **change how you think** (by changing where you focus your attention) so you can **change what you do and how you feel**.
- You will learn how to control thinking problems (unhelpful thoughts) in practical ways that you can use now and in the future. By **changing how you think**, you can **increase the positive things you do** for yourself, such as taking care of your health, having friendships with supportive people, and doing pleasant enjoyable activities.

