

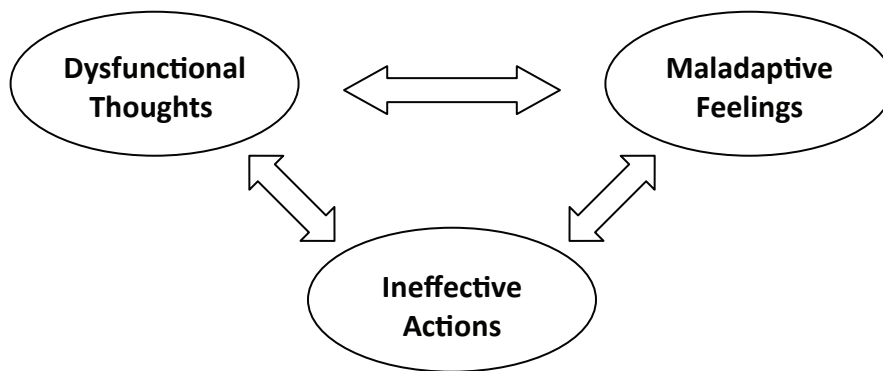


# INTRODUCTION TO 3D RECOVERY

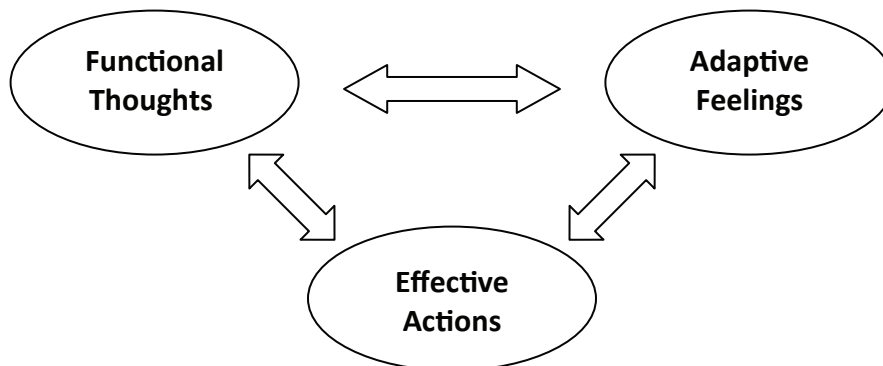
Transforming your thoughts, feelings, and actions

3D Recovery ® Resource 1.1  
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**Psychological problems—like addiction, depression, or anxiety—involve an interaction between three dimensions of functioning:**



**Recovery involves change within all three dimensions:**



**Feelings, thoughts, and actions can help people adapt or can interfere with adaptation**

Humans are always thinking, feeling, and acting. These three functions are designed to help people adapt to the environments they encounter throughout life. Ideally, thoughts, feelings, and actions are adaptive responses that help people survive, learn, and develop. Unfortunately, sometimes people get off-track and do not respond to situations in helpful ways. Jerome Frank suggested that psychological problems often represent unsuccessful attempts to adapt to stressful situations (Frank & Frank, 1991). When facing stressors, sometimes people respond with maladaptive thoughts, feelings, or actions. The idea that thinking, feeling, and acting is highly interactive and that each function can be adaptive or maladaptive is drawn from Multitheoretical Psychotherapy (Brooks-Harris, 2008).



### **Dysfunctional Thoughts**

Thoughts and beliefs originate in the brain and are part of a cognitive system including perceptions, interpretations, and the construction of meaning. Thinking can be adaptive or maladaptive. Cognitive therapists like Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis focused on thinking patterns that make it more difficult for people to adapt and function. Ellis (2011) suggested that irrational beliefs are self-defeating, unrealistic, and illogical. Beck preferred the term dysfunctional thoughts and suggested that thinking becomes maladaptive and contributes to psychological problems when it interferes with normal cognitive processing (Beck and Weishaar, 2011). Dysfunctional thoughts are inaccurate or irrational, are not based on evidence, and do not help people adapt to current environments.

### **Maladaptive Feelings**

Feelings are emotional responses that originate in the brain but are often associated with physical sensations in other parts of the body, such as tightness in one's throat or "butterflies" in one's stomach. Feelings can help us synthesize complex reactions into more primal responses. Emotions direct attention and help motivate people for action. Emotion-focused therapist Leslie Greenberg (2011) pointed out that feelings can be adaptive or maladaptive responses to the environment. Greenberg suggested that maladaptive feelings do not help someone cope with a situation and may interfere with functioning. Dysfunctional feelings may not match a current situation and may seem like a disproportional response. Maladaptive emotional reactions are often learned through traumatic experiences earlier in life.

### **Ineffective Actions**

Actions are observable behaviors that are the result of the brain's control of the body's motor activity. Actions become maladaptive when they are not effective in helping people achieve important goals. Behavior therapist Joseph Wolpe (1958) believed that psychological problems involve a persistent pattern of maladaptive behavior. Ineffective actions expend energy without fulfilling needs or result in damage or deprivation. Ineffective behaviors are maladaptive because they do not result in desired results or expend energy without meeting needs or attaining goals.

## **THREE-DIMENSIONAL RECOVERY**

Recovering from any psychological problem involves transforming patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting. The results of recovery include functional thoughts, adaptive feelings, and effective actions.

### **Functional Thoughts**

Because thinking is such a fundamental part of human functioning and impacts feelings and actions, recovery involves changing patterns of thought. By recognizing dysfunctional thoughts and testing these assumptions, cognitive changes can be made. Recovery is supported by functional thoughts (Beck & Weishaar, 2011) and rational beliefs (Ellis, 2011). Functional thoughts are accurate and rational, based on objective evidence, and help people adapt to the situations they face.



## Adaptive Feelings

Because feelings represent primal responses to the world, recovery involves emotional awareness and healthy expression of feelings. Greenberg (2011) believed that psychological well-being involves getting in touch with primary adaptive emotions that may exist on a deeper level than feelings on the surface. Emotional exploration can help people get in touch with the essential feelings that will help them adapt to the current environment. Adaptive feelings match the situation in a proportional manner, evaluate situations without distortion, and organize people for effective action.

## Effective Actions

For recovery to be successful, thoughts and feelings must be translated into action. Wolpe (1958) suggested that adaptive behaviors help people satisfy their needs and avoid damage or deprivation. Effective actions help people adapt to their environments by meeting needs, attaining goals, or avoiding undesirable consequences. Effective actions need to be learned and practiced over time in order to become “good habits.” Individuals may need to reinforce themselves when they enact new behaviors in order to strengthen healthy action patterns.

## Learn More about 3D Recovery ®

To learn more about 3D Recovery ®, please visit our website: [www.3DRecovery.com](http://www.3DRecovery.com).

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