

# “Working Smart”

Soft Skills for Workplace Success

Work and life skills that enhance employee productivity

7

Module 1:

## Self-Awareness



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A Product of  
Charlotte Mecklenburg Workforce Development Partners

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WORKBOOK

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The curriculum is approved for use only by certified “Working Smart” instructors who have completed an approved instructor training session conducted by the author or one of the Master Trainers.

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# “Working Smart”

Soft Skills for Workplace Success

work and life skills that enhance employee productivity

Module 1

Lesson 1

## PERSONAL BRANDING

**Today's Vocabulary:**

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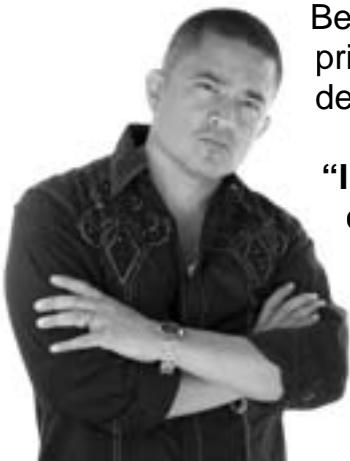
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**Quote of the Day:**

# Meeting Benny, Dave & Crystal



Benny is 30 years old, and back home after three long years in prison. He's been clean and sober for almost two years now, and determined to stay that way.

**“I’ve been trying to stay away from all my old buddies and change my image. I really want to be a good father to my two kids. I want to be the kind of man my family can be proud of. I’m going to do this right this time...”**

*What are your first impressions of Benny? Can you relate to him in any way?*

Dave is in his late 50's, an overweight construction worker with a lot of health issues.

**“I’ve got a bad back, arthritis in my hands, and high blood pressure too. There’s a part of me that knows I can’t keep doing this kind of work forever, but I’m too young to retire and I have no idea what else to do. Construction is who I am. Besides, my old man taught me to work hard and not complain, no matter how bad it hurts. No one wants to listen to a whiner, right?**

*What are your first impressions of Dave? Can you relate to him in any way?*



Crystal is a 22-year-old woman working at the cosmetics counter of an upscale department store.



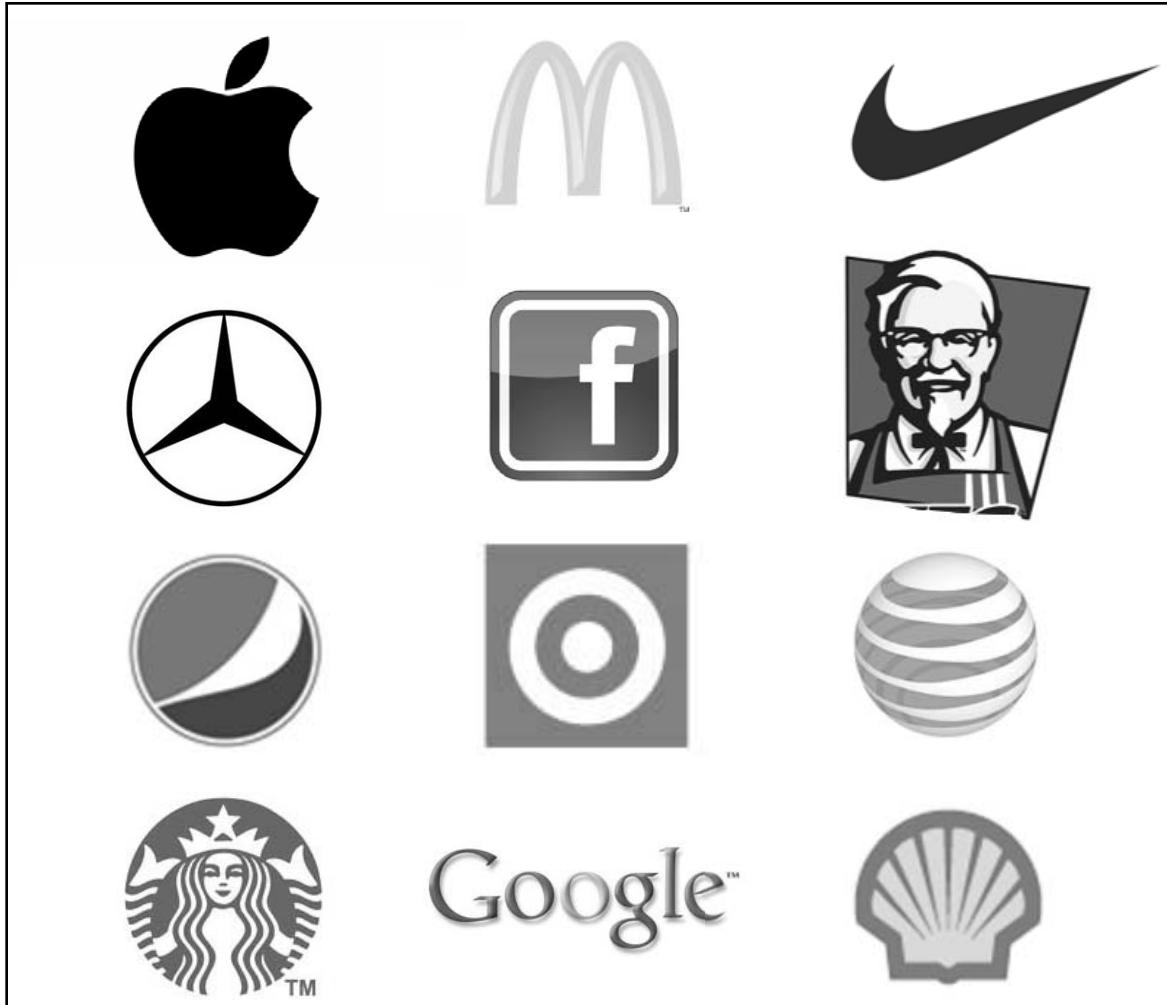
**“I stayed out of trouble in high school, but I turned into a serious partier in college. I ended up dropping out in my second year, and moving back home for a little while. Now I’m trying to leave that whole party-girl image behind, to grow up a little, I guess. Be more responsible, pay my bills on time, make my parents proud, you know? It isn’t easy being a grown up!”**

*What are your first impressions of Crystal? Can you relate to her in any way?*

# Understanding Branding

A company's unique "brand" is its way of standing out from the crowd. It shows the world who they are, what they do, and what they want to be known for.

A brand often includes a logo, which makes it recognizable. How many of the logos below do you recognize? What is each company known for making or doing?



A company's brand often includes a **slogan**. A slogan is a catchy phrase they hope you'll remember, one that represents what they stand for.

Which of the above brands go with each of the slogans below?

<b><u>SLOGAN</u></b>	<b><u>COMPANY</u></b>	<b><u>SLOGAN</u></b>	<b><u>COMPANY</u></b>
"Think Different."	_____	"Expect more. Pay less."	_____
"Just Do It!"	_____	"Finger lickin' good."	_____
"Unlike Any Other."	_____	"The Choice of a New Generation."	_____
"I'm Lovin' It."	_____		

# Defining Your Personal Brand

Your personal brand is defined by your look (clothes, language, hair), by your peers (people around you) and by your actions (choices you make).

Together, these things create your personal brand. They show others what kind of person you are, tell others what you stand for. To create a brand of your own, you must first identify your core values, then find a way to let these shine through in your actions.

## a. Your VALUES

Values represent what is most important to us in life, the ideals by which we live our lives. Our values act as an internal compass, keeping us on track.

**What do you value most deeply? Underline 5 values from the list on page 7, or make up some of your own.**



## b. Your LOGO

What logo or symbol will you choose to represent how you want to be seen?  
**Draw it below. If you need more room, use a separate sheet of paper.**

## c. Your SLOGAN

What is your motto or tagline?

**Write a short slogan (3-8 words) here.**

## d. Your SPOKESPERSON

Now hire any celebrity spokesperson (real or imaginary) to endorse your brand. **Who would it be? Why?**

## e. Your EMPLOYEES

What traits would you look for in the employees who represent you to your customers?

# Values = Most Important Ideals

*Inspirational* **VALUES**

Source: [www.values.com/teaching-values](http://www.values.com/teaching-values)

**ACHIEVEMENT** AMBITION APPRECIATION **BEING THERE**  
**BELIEVE** BELIEVE IN YOURSELF **CARING** CHARACTER CHARITY  
**CIVILITY** CLASS AND GRACE **COMMITMENT**  
COMMON GROUND **COMPASSION** COMPLIMENTS  
COMPROMISE **CONFIDENCE** COURAGE COURTESY  
**DEDICATION** **DETERMINATION** DEVOTION  
DO YOUR PART DRIVE EDUCATION ENCOURAGEMENT EQUALITY  
**EXCELLENCE** FITNESS FORESIGHT FORGIVENESS  
**FRIENDSHIP**  
**GENEROSITY** **GIVING BACK** GOOD MANNERS  
GRATITUDE GREAT MUSIC HARD WORK **HELPING OTHERS**  
**HONESTY** **HONOR** HOPE HUMILITY IMAGINE  
INCLUDING OTHERS INGENUITY **INNOVATION**  
**INSPIRATION** INTEGRITY **JUSTICE** KINDNESS LAUGHTER  
LEADERSHIP **LEARNING** LISTENING LITERACY **LIVE LIFE**  
**LIVE YOUR DREAMS** LOVE LOYALTY  
**MAKING A DIFFERENCE** MENTORING **MOTIVATION**  
OPPORTUNITY **OPTIMISM** OVERCOMING **PASSION** PATIENCE  
**PEACE** PERSEVERANCE **PERSISTENCE** PRACTICE PREPARATION  
**PURPOSE** REACHING OUT **RESPECT** RESPONSIBILITY  
RIGHT CHOICES RISING ABOVE **SACRIFICE** SHARING SMILE  
**SOUL** SPORTSMANSHIP SPREAD YOUR WINGS  
**STEWARDSHIP** STRENGTH  
TEACHING BY EXAMPLE TEAM WORK  
**TRUE BEAUTY** TRUST UNITY **VISION** VOLUNTEERING

# ReBranding Yourself

When a company makes a mistake, it has to work very hard to clean up its image. It “rebrands” itself, hoping the public will see it in a new light and give it another chance.

The same is true for our personal brands. Past mistakes can change the way others see us, and the way we see ourselves. But just like multi-million dollar companies, we can rebrand ourselves if we are willing to do the work.



## Courage to Change

It takes courage to examine our lives honestly and admit to our mistakes. How are each of our characters **trying to “rebrand”** themselves?

Benny wants to be: \_\_\_\_\_

Dave needs to: \_\_\_\_\_

Crystal is trying to: \_\_\_\_\_

If you could **undo one choice** you made at some point in your past, what would it be? Or if you could instantly improve something about your present self, what would you improve?

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***REMEMBER: It is important to learn from our mistakes, but not to live in them. Look forward with determination, not backward with regret. Courage gives us strength, and our values give us direction.***

# Who's in Your Front Row?

## Life is a Theater: Invite Your Audience Carefully

Not everyone is healthy enough to have a front row seat in our lives.

There are some people in your life that need to be loved from a DISTANCE. It's amazing what you can accomplish when you let go of (or at least minimize time with) draining, negative, incompatible, not-going-anywhere relationships or friendships.

Observe the relationships around you. Pay attention:

Which ones lift and which ones lean?

Which ones encourage and which ones discourage?

Which ones are on a path of growth uphill and which ones are going downhill?

When you leave certain people do you feel better or feel worse?

Which ones always have drama or don't really understand, know or appreciate you?

The more you seek quality, respect, growth, peace of mind, love and truth around you...the easier it will become for you to decide who gets to sit in the front row and who should be moved to the balcony of your life.

**Remember, you cannot change the people around you,  
but you can change the people you are around.**

*Anonymous*

## Good People = Good Choices

**One good choice we can make right away involves the people we let into our lives.**

Imagine yourself on stage, playing out your vision of your new life. Imagine all the people who have had a role in your old story, the one you may not have been very proud of. They are waiting in line on the sidewalk, ready to buy tickets to your show.

1. Which of these people do you want to have front and center?

2. Which do you want to put farther back, away from the stage?

3. Are there some you wouldn't even let into the theater? Why?



# Lesson 1 Summary

**Key Point 1:** Our “personal brand” is based on our core values. It tells the world who we are and what we stand for. Many factors can portray our image or reputation, including our clothes, our language, our friends, and most importantly, the way we treat ourselves and others.

**Key Point 2:** When past mistakes cause image problems, it is possible to “re-brand” ourselves. Change takes courage, however -- the courage to look honestly at mistakes, to separate ourselves from unhealthy people and habits, and to try new things.

## Lesson 1 Quiz

### Part A: Match each definition below with its term.

1. _____	A company/person’s way of <u>standing out</u> from others
2. _____	A company/person’s most <u>important ideals</u>
3. _____	A <u>picture or symbol</u> that represents a company/person
4. _____	A catchy phrase to remember a company/person
5. _____	Process of changing your image or reputation

### Part B: List three things that define your personal brand:

6. Your \_\_\_\_\_
7. Your \_\_\_\_\_
8. Your \_\_\_\_\_

Actions  
Peers

Brand  
Rebranding

Logo  
Slogan

Look  
Values

### Part C: Answer T (true) or F (false). If false, explain the correct answer.

[T] [F]	9. It is hard work, but a person’s brand <u>can</u> be changed.
[T] [F]	10. We should try hard to <u>forget</u> the mistakes of our past.
[T] [F]	11. To “rebrand” ourselves, we have to change <u>everything</u> that makes us “us.”
[T] [F]	12. We may have to <u>leave some relationships</u> behind if we are going to successfully change our lives.

Something I will remember about today:

# “Working Smart”

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work and life skills that enhance employee productivity

## Module 1 Lesson 2

# SELF- CHANGE

### Today's Vocabulary:

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Quote of the Day:

# You Can Lead a Horse to Water...

Most people get attached to their way of doing things. Changing habits isn't easy, even when those habits are unhealthy.



**Describe a specific behavior or habit of yours that isn't or wasn't good for you.** It might be physical (like oversleeping) or emotional (like blaming others).

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## Here's your wake up call!

We seldom change until we have to. Sometimes it's because we've gotten so far out of balance that our quality of life is threatened. Other times, it's because we get a "Wake-Up Call" that we just can't ignore.

**Think about a "Wake-Up Call" you received at some point.** It might have been frightening (like a heart attack) or motivating (like the birth of a child).

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# Five Stages of Change

People who are able to make lasting changes in their lives usually go through five stages. Skipping or rushing stages usually leads to relapse.

Source: Prochaska, Norcross, & DeClemente (1994)

## Stage 1: \_\_\_\_\_

In Stage 1, we are in denial. It isn't that we can't find a solution, it's that we don't see a problem. We ignore all the warning signs, dismiss others' concerns, make excuses for our behavior. We might make temporary changes to make others happy, but go right back later. This can last for years.



## Stage 2: \_\_\_\_\_

In Stage 2, we are unmotivated. We admit that there's a problem, but aren't ready to do anything about it yet. We know this habit isn't good for us, and understand why others are concerned. But we insist that it is our problem, not theirs. We make vague promises to address it at some point time, but not in the next 6 months.



## Stage 3: \_\_\_\_\_

In Stage 3, we are ready. We have had a wake-up call and are now motivated to change our habit. But we know that cold turkey solo solutions often fail, so we use the next 30 days to plan our change. We research the options and arrange for help and support to deal with temptations.

## Stage 4: \_\_\_\_\_

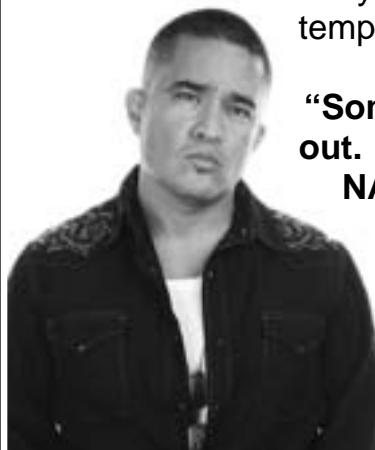
In Stage 4, we are actively changing. We put our carefully thought-out plans into action. We do more than simply stop unhealthy habits, we replace them with healthier ones instead. We not only change our behavior, but our routines, friends, and surroundings as well. This stage usually lasts for the first 6 months.

## Stage 5: \_\_\_\_\_

In Stage 5, we are different. The new behavior has become part of our life for more than 6 months. New routines are fairly well-established, and the temptations to go back to our old ways is not as strong. We think of ourselves differently, and may actually help others make similar changes too.



# What Stage of Change?



Benny's been out of prison for a couple of weeks. There have been a few temptations, but he's managed to stay sober.

**“Some of my boys threw a party for me when they found out I was out. It was kind of hard to ‘just say no,’ but I’d already found an NA meeting and a new sponsor on the outside, so I just worked my steps. I had to leave that party a little early, and I don’t think my boys understood, but so be it. I wasn’t giving up two years of sobriety over a little peer pressure!”**

What stage of change is he in? \_\_\_\_\_



Dave's been trying to keep his aching back and painful arthritis a secret from his boss, but they're starting to affect his work. His wife has been bugging him to get serious about his health, especially about losing some weight, but he won't listen.

**“She’s right about the weight, I suppose. I know I’m a little overweight, but Dad was a big man, and so was Granddad. I guess this is just who I am. I’m living with it, so why can’t she?”**

What stage of change is he in? \_\_\_\_\_



Crystal has made some serious changes in her life in the past few weeks.

**“I’m not sure if I had a problem or not, but I know that I did way too much partying in school. I decided a couple of months ago that it would be better for me if I just stopped drinking altogether. So for the past six weeks, I’ve been working out, eating healthy, and staying away from the clubs so I won’t be as tempted to go back to my old ways.”**

What stage of change is she in? \_\_\_\_\_

# Steps to Self-Change

To be successful at change, we first have to identify a behavior that has been holding us back, then choose strategies to help us progress through each of the stages.

## STEP 1: Identify a Target Behavior.

One behavior or habit that I could change is: \_\_\_\_\_

Ways my life would be better if I made this change:

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## STEP 2: Identify Your Current Stage of Change.

I am probably in the \_\_\_\_\_ Stage with this behavior.

## STEP 3: Choose Specific Strategies to Move to the Next Stage.

To move from Stage 1 to 2 requires: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

*Look at your values and goals, then ask yourself, "Is this really working for me? Is my current behavior getting me and my family what I want out of life?" When you can be honest with yourself about the need for change, you'll be ready for stage 2.*

To move from Stage 2 to 3 requires: \_\_\_\_\_

*Learn as much as you can about your problem and your possible options. You must take personal responsibility for fixing the problem (even if you aren't to blame for it). This means learning as much as possible about the issues involved, and learning skills needed to eventually solve or manage the problem. When you have the knowledge you need and the motivation to use it, you will be equipped for stage 3.*

To move from Stage 3 to 4 requires: \_\_\_\_\_

*Prepare a strategy for dealing with the challenges of change and the temptations to go back to your old ways. Research support groups and treatment options. Tell friends and family of your plans, and ask them for encouragement and support. Build your willpower by focusing on the benefits of reaching your goals. When you have a solid plan in place, you are ready for stage 4.*

To move from Stage 4 to 5 requires: \_\_\_\_\_

*Put your plan into action. Use your knowledge, strategies, resources and supports to get through hard times. Changing behavior usually requires a change in everyday routines, friends, and surroundings as well. Build in chances to celebrate, and don't give up if you slip up.*

# An Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

## Chapter I

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost.  
I am hopeless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.

## Chapter III

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it there.  
I still fall in. It's a habit.  
But my eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately.

## Chapter II

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same place.  
But it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.

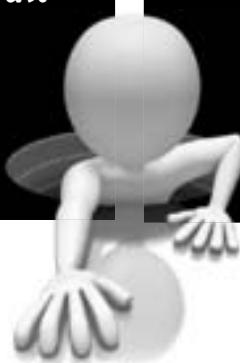
## Chapter IV

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.

## Chapter V

I walk down another street.

*Portia Nelson, Holes in the Sidewalk*



What does this poem inspire in you? Have you ever felt like this?

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# Lesson 2 Summary

**Key Point 1:** Change isn't easy, and bad habits are hard to break. People who are successful at self-change go through a series of five predictable stages, beginning with Resistance and ending with Maintenance. Rushing, skipping, or being forced through the stages usually leads back to old habits.

**Key Point 2:** Positive change begins by recognizing behaviors that are holding us back from our goals. We must then identify our current stage of change so that we can choose strategies that will help us make progress, one stage at a time.

## Lesson 2 Quiz

**Part A: Answer T (true) or F (false). If false, explain the correct answer.**

- [T] [F] 1. If you can't see the need for improvement, you are in the Resistance Stage.
- [T] [F] 2. If you've kept up changes for 8-9 months, you are in the Planning Stage.
- [T] [F] 3. If you're open to change but haven't prepared at all, you are in the Action Stage.
- [T] [F] 4. If you are getting ready for change within 30 days, you are in Planning Stage.
- [T] [F] 5. If you've successfully changed for 2 months, you are in the Thinking Stage.
- [T] [F] 6. If you make a *temporary* change to your behavior only because someone is bugging you (then go right back), you are in the Resistance Stage.

**Part B: Match each character's stage with the most helpful strategy.**

7. Alan is a smoker in Stage 1 (Resistance), denying his breathing problems. To work through this stage, he needs to \_\_\_\_.
8. Betty is a seriously overweight person in Stage 2 (Thinking). She knows she is unhealthy but hasn't done anything about it yet. To work through this stage, she needs to \_\_\_\_.
9. Charlie has been unemployed for a long time, but is now in Stage 3 (Planning), getting ready for work again. To work through this stage, he needs to \_\_\_\_.
10. Debbie spent years as a closet drinker, but is finally in Stage 4 (Action), staying sober and attending support groups. To work through this stage, she needs to \_\_\_\_.

- A. **Be honest about the real effects** of the past behavior.
- B. **Learn about / gain motivation to improve** the current condition.
- C. **Come up with specific steps** to improve the situation within 30 days.
- D. **Stick with the plan** for at least 6 months.

**Something I will remember about today:**

# NOTES

# “Working Smart”

Soft Skills for Workplace Success

work and life skills that enhance employee productivity

Module 1  
Lesson 3

## COGNITIVE CYCLE

**Today's Vocabulary:**

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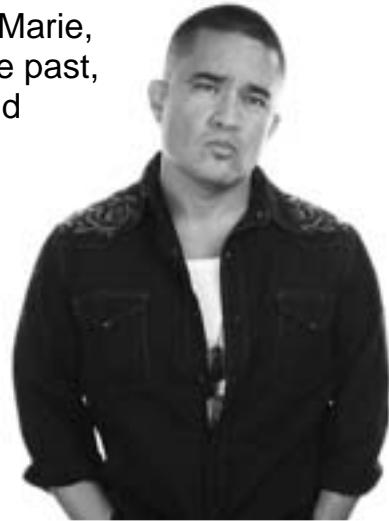


**Quote of the Day:**

# Benny Reunites with His Kids

During his last year locked up, Benny wrote a bunch of letters to Marie, his ex. He wanted to make amends for the things he'd done in the past, and he hoped to get a chance to be in his sons' lives, Sam (6) and Michael (4).

Benny was thrilled when Marie agreed to meet in a park and let him see his boys for a while one Saturday afternoon. As he sat on a park bench waiting for them, his body felt tense. He watched an SUV drive up across the street, and saw Marie get out with two boys... and some guy! He knew that Marie had gotten married a couple of years ago, but he wasn't prepared for the feelings that went through him when he saw HIS sons holding the hands of THAT man.



Benny (furious, to himself): 'Naw, that's not right! Those are MY boys, MY blood, not his! You don't mess with a man's family!'

He could feel his face getting hot and his fists clenching up as he got slowly to his feet. He tried to stay calm but it was hard to resist all the negative thinking from his old days. Marie gave him a little hug, but she could feel the tension as Benny stared her husband down.

Marie (nervous): "**Benny, it's nice to see you. This is Fernando, my -- my husband. Ferd, this is Benny, the boys' father.**"

Fernando reached out to shake hands, but Benny just turned away, his hands trembling.

Benny (enraged, to himself): 'Shake hands with the man who stole my sons? Yeah, I don't think so... He's lucky I don't kick his \_\_\_! That's what I FEEL like doing!'

Instead, he crouched down and opened his arms to the two young boys standing beside Fernando. He smiled a big fake smile and said:

Benny (loudly): "**Hello boys. You remember your Poppa, don't you? Give me a big hug!**"

Benny had pictured this moment in his head for years. But instead of smothering him with hugs and kisses, Sam and Michael hid behind their stepfather's legs. Benny tried to keep a smile on his face, but inside he felt crushed.

Benny (hurt, to himself): 'What's wrong with me? My own sons are afraid of me!?

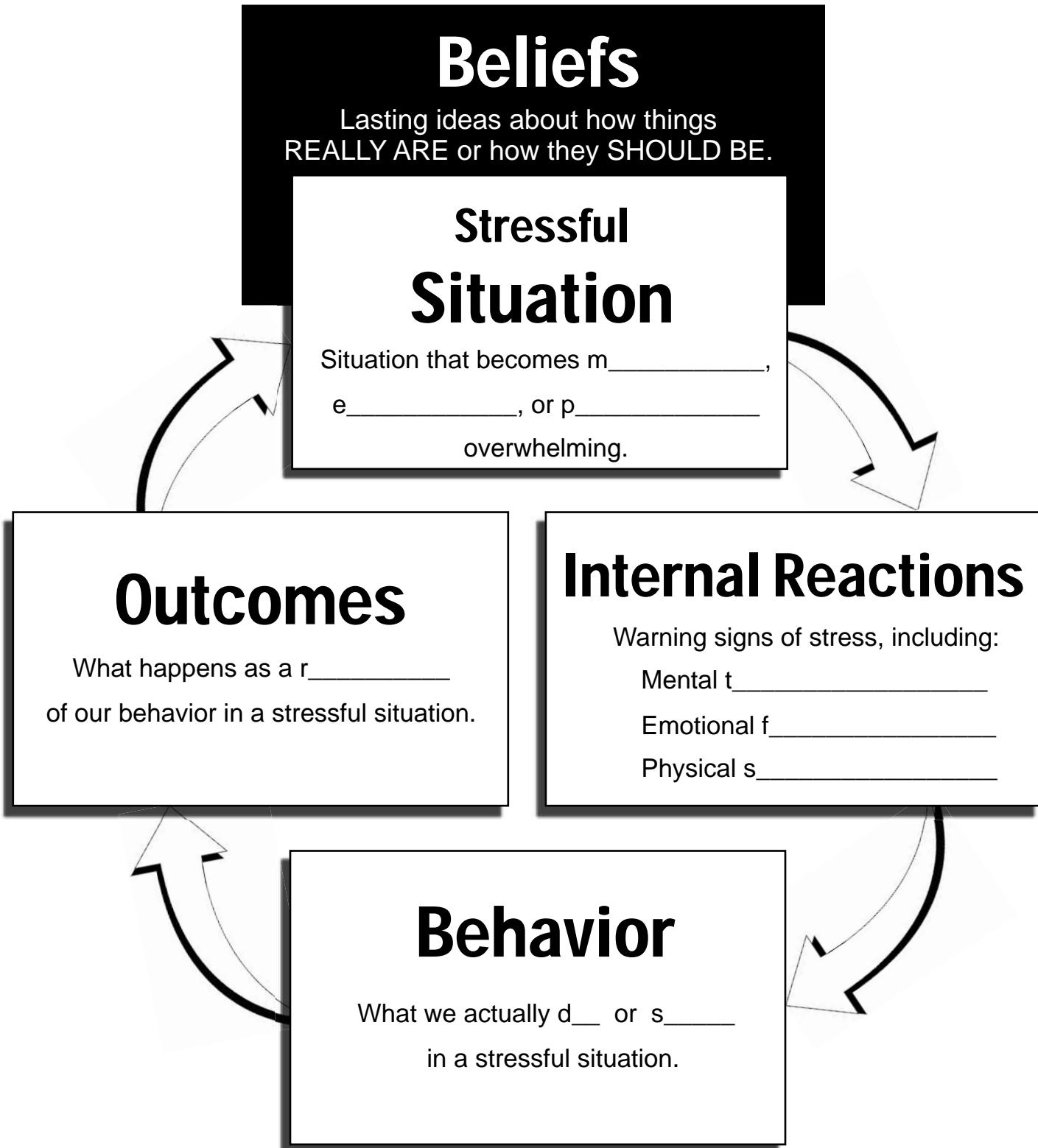
Benny stood back up and tried to cover his embarrassment. He made small talk with Marie for a minute, then gave her the toys, ignoring Fernando completely. Then, not knowing what else to do, he tousled the boys' hair and walked off. Marie called after him.

Marie: "**Benny, it's okay. It just takes time! Let them get a chance to know you!**"

Benny (depressed): "**Sure, we'll try it again another time. I gotta go to a job interview anyway. I'll call you...**"

# Overview of Cognitive Cycle

The Cognitive Cycle shows how what goes on inside of us drives our choices, and these influence our outcomes. Deeply held beliefs may be triggered by stressful situations, leading to strong feelings and impulsive behaviors.



# Benny's Conflict in the Park

It can be helpful to carefully look back at a critical moment in a problem, to better understand what went on inside us. Focus in on the moment when Benny first sees Marie approaching with his sons.

1. Benny believes that his sons will be \_\_\_\_\_ to see him.



2. The situation gets very stressful when Benny sees his sons holding \_\_\_\_\_

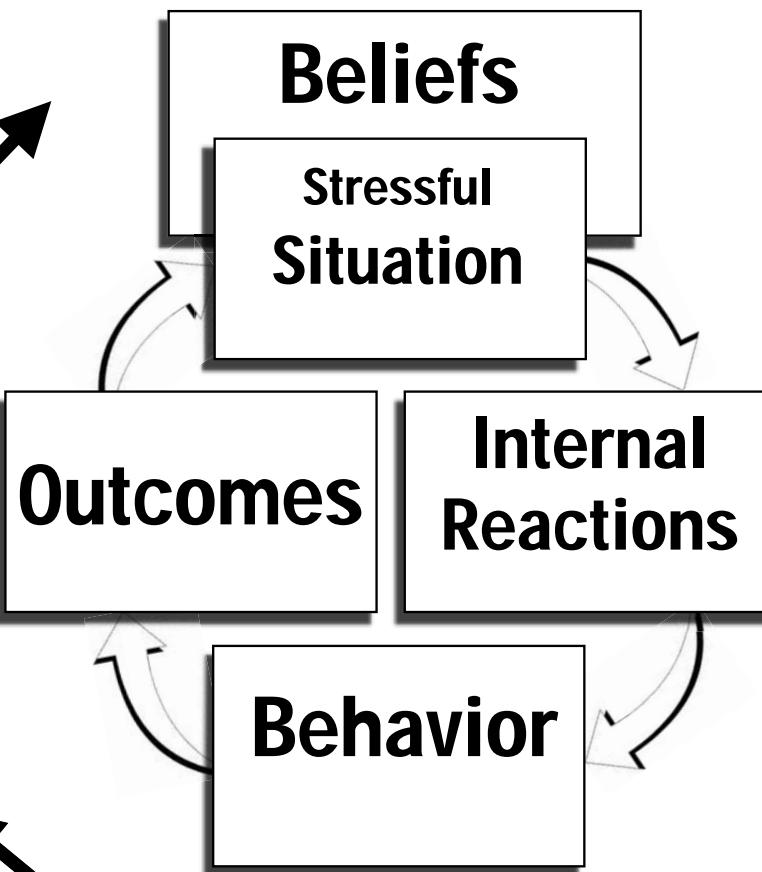
Benny believes it's wrong to \_\_\_\_\_ with a man's family.

5. But the two boys can feel the tension. As a result, instead of hugging Benny, they \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



3. Internally, Benny can feel his face \_\_\_\_\_

and his fists \_\_\_\_\_.

Emotionally, he feels:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Marie gives Benny a little hug and introduces him to her husband Fernando. Benny's behavior? He refuses to \_\_\_\_\_ and tries to give his sons \_\_\_\_\_.



# Helpful vs Harmful Beliefs

**Imagine that each of us is wearing a pair of “belief sunglasses,” created by our life experiences. These sunglasses color the way we perceive ourselves, others, and the world in general.**

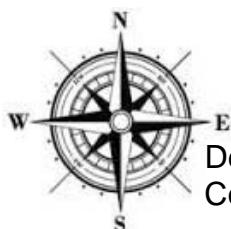


Many of our beliefs are helpful, but some are harmful instead.

**A helpful belief is like a compass**, guiding us *toward* our goals, helping us live according to our values.

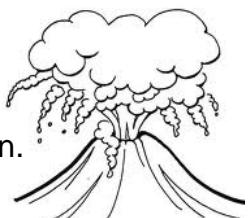
**A harmful or unhealthy belief is like an explosive volcano, justifying choices that hurt others, and keeping us from our goals.**

It is important to be aware of both types so that we can manage ourselves responsibly and make good choices in difficult situations.



## Helpful vs Harmful Activity

Decide if each of the following beliefs is **helpful** or **harmful**, in your opinion.  
Copy helpful beliefs in the left column, and harmful beliefs in the right.



## **Helpful (healthy) Beliefs**

## **Harmful (unhealthy) beliefs**

## “WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS”

**Watch your thoughts; they become your words...**

**Watch your words; they become your actions...**

**Watch your actions: they become your habits...**

**Watch your habits: they become your character...**

Watch your character: it becomes your destiny.

# Lesson 3 Summary

**Key Point 1:** The Cognitive Cycle shows how our perceptions (especially our attitudes and beliefs) influence the way we react to stressful situations. Helpful beliefs are like compasses, guiding us toward our goals. Harmful beliefs are like volcanoes, leading us to make poor choices that may harm us and others.

**Key Point 2:** Our internal reactions to a problem (thoughts, feelings and physical signs) will sometimes escalate us, making stressful situations worse. As we gain greater self-awareness, we may get better at clearing our minds, calming our emotions, and relaxing our bodies during tough problems.

## Lesson 3 Quiz

### Part A: Match each part of the Cognitive Cycle with its definition.

<input type="checkbox"/> 1. What we do or say.	a. Beliefs
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Our thoughts, feelings and physical signs.	b. Stressful Situation
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Lasting ideas about how things really are.	c. Internal Reactions
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. What happens as a result of our behavior.	d. Behavior
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Overwhelming problem.	e. Outcomes

**Situation:** Charlie has been unemployed for a long time. Today, he is waiting to interview for a good job. He is prepared, but deep down inside, he doesn't believe they'll give him a fair chance. His hands are sweaty and his heart is pounding. 'This sucks,' he says to himself, full of anxiety. He gets up to use the bathroom, then decides to keep on walking. Later, he and his wife get into a big fight when he tells her about walking out.

### Find each part of the Cognitive Cycle in the story above.

6. Charlie's stressful situation is waiting for \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Charlie believes that \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Charlie's internal reactions include:  
Thoughts \_\_\_\_\_.  
Feelings \_\_\_\_\_.  
Physical signs \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Charlie's behavior was to \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Charlie's outcome? He and his wife \_\_\_\_\_.

**Something I will remember about today:**