

# IT'S NOT PERSONAL

Back in the 1950's, Albert Ellis the man credited with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, pushed back on the widely held theory that people's actions, or what's been done to us, causes our feelings. Ellis believed that what "makes us" mad, sad, or happy is based on what we think about what happened to us. Put another way: *what we think or tell ourselves about a person or event dictates what we feel, not the actual event.* Thoughts lead to feelings. Ellis developed a process called the ABCD format to help people view life events differently by changing the narrative which, in turn, helped change how they felt.

I've adapted his process and broken it down into smaller chunks. Keep in mind that working through these steps still requires you to address issues, set boundaries, make amends, or accept responsibility. The It's Not Personal Tool is for you to process your emotions and separate another person's behavior from your self-worth and deal with your emotions in a healthier way.

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**(1) State the event without judgement or emotion -- just the facts.**

**(2) What feelings am I experiencing?**

**(3) What do I believe about this event – about myself, the other person, and/or the situation?**

**(4) Why am I believing this?**

**(5) What else could be true about this situation?**

**(6) How can I reframe this event?**

**(7) Now, what feelings am I experiencing?**

**(8) What could I have done differently/ better in this situation?**

**(9) What do I need to do to move forward?**