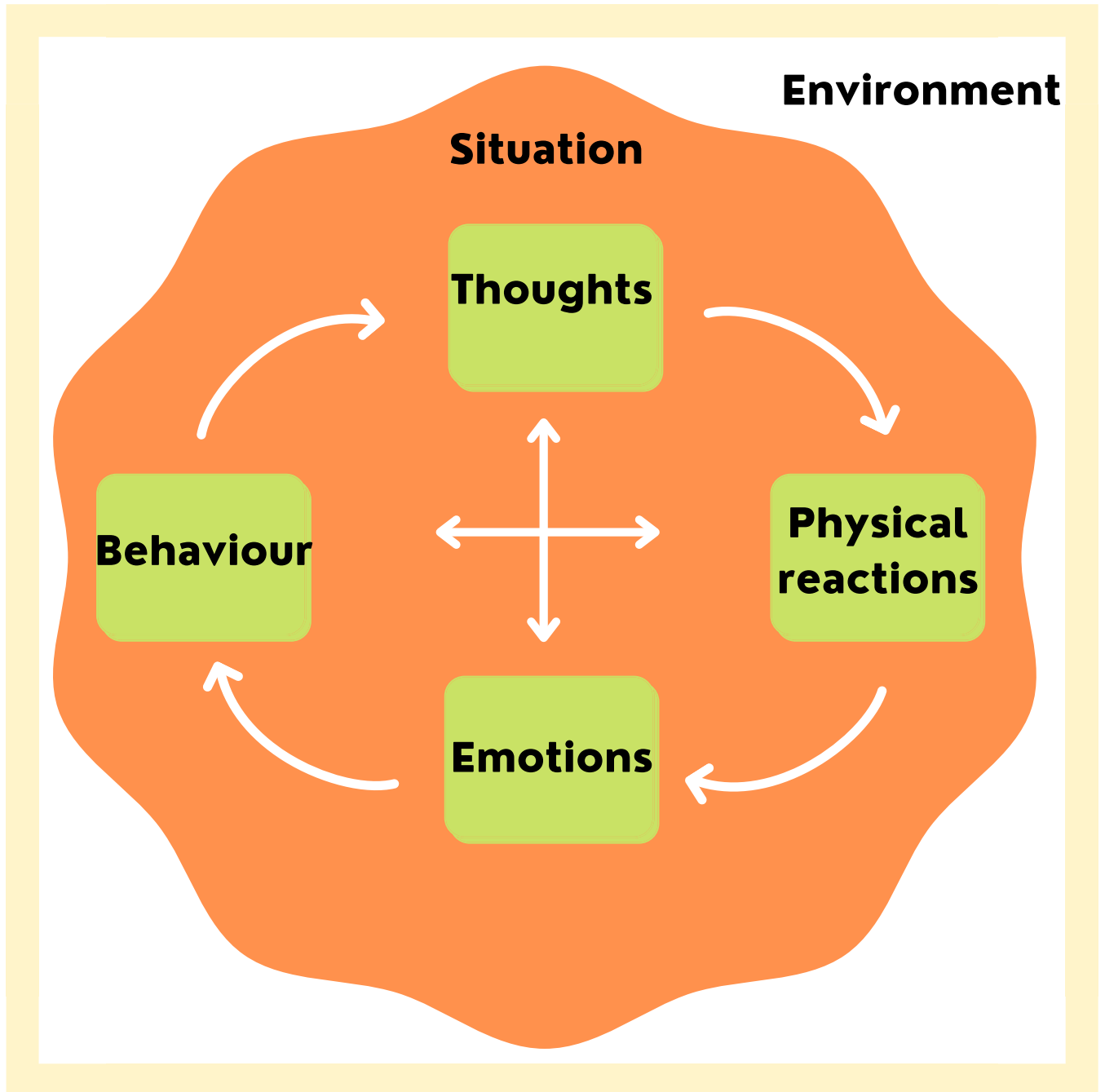




## UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS: HOT CROSS BUN





MANY OF US EXPERIENCE SITUATIONS WHERE WE MIGHT FEEL ANXIOUS OR LOW.

THE HOT CROSS BUN (HCB), MOST COMMONLY USED IN COGNITIVE-BEHAVIOUR THERAPY (CBT), IS A USEFUL TOOL THAT CAN HELP US TO UNDERSTAND HOW WE EXPERIENCE SITUATIONS THAT MAKE US FEEL THIS WAY. THERE IS USUALLY MORE TO IT THAN JUST THE FEELING.

THE HCB SHOWS THAT FOR ANY SITUATION, WHAT WE THINK, FEEL AND DO ARE ALL CONNECTED TO OUR EMOTIONS.

FOR EXAMPLE – WHEN WE FEEL ANXIOUS, WE MIGHT HAVE THOUGHTS LIKE “I WON’T BE ABLE TO COPE” OR “SOMETHING BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN”. HAVING SUCH THOUGHTS CHANGE THE WAY OUR BODY FEELS: WE MIGHT NOTICE OUR HEART RACING OR FEEL OUR PALMS SWEATING. THIS IS OUR BODY’S NATURAL RESPONSE TO FEELING STRESSED AND PREPARING TO TAKE ACTION (FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE).

WHEN WE ARE IN A WORRYING SITUATION WITH ANXIOUS THOUGHTS AND OUR BODY’S FEELING TENSE, WE MIGHT DO THINGS THAT HELP ALLEVIATE THESE THOUGHTS AND SENSATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE: LEAVING THE SITUATION THATS MAKING US FEEL THIS WAY OR AVOIDING IT ALTOGETHER. THESE ARE SOMETIMES CALLED “SAFETY BEHAVIOURS”. ALTHOUGH THEY MIGHT HELP ALLEVIATE SOME OF THE ANXIETY WE’RE FEELING, THEY CAN BE UNHELPFUL IN THE LONG RUN. IF WE AVOID CERTAIN SITUATIONS, WE MAY NEVER SEE THAT WE CAN ACTUALLY COPE WITH IT.

THE WAY WE RESPOND TO STRESSFUL SITUATIONS IN OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS AND BEHAVIOURS IS ALSO INFLUENCED BY ENVIRONMENT E.G. LIVING SITUATION, SOCIAL SITUATION, UPBRINGING, CULTURAL ETC.

BREAKING DOWN OUR DIFFICULT EMOTIONS IN THIS WAY CAN HELP US SEE WHAT MIGHT BE GOING ON FOR US IN OUR MINDS AND OUR BODIES.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT BY IDENTIFYING OUR THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIOURS, WE CAN BRINGING SOME CHANGES TO HOW WE FEEL (MORE ON THIS LATER).