



MENTAL FITNESS

ABCs of Performance

By becoming more aware of your own tendencies, you can become more intentional about “trying on” different thoughts and noticing a different chain reaction of emotions, experiences in your body, and behaviors. To the right is an explanation of the ABCs and a chart to help you track your own ABCs.










The ABCs are:

Activating Event. Notice something that triggers your thoughts, emotions, body feelings, and behaviors.

Belief. Tune in to your thoughts in words and/or images. Imagine yourself as a cartoon with a thought bubble over your head. Your belief about the situation is what’s in the bubble.

Consequences. These are the results of how your thoughts affect you. Notice the specific emotion you’re feeling (fear, anger, happiness, etc.), what’s happening in your body (butterflies, tensing up, letting go, etc.), and what you feel like doing (hiding from the situation, arguing, giving your best effort, etc.).

Check out the examples below for different ways you could deal with a single Activating Event, and remember that there is no one right way to use this chart. You may find it easier sometimes to fill it out in ABC order: identifying the activating event, the specific thoughts it triggers, and the emotions, the experiences in your body, and your behavior. Other times, you may find that your behavior and/or the experience in your body are the easiest things to remember, and then you can work backwards to fill in the blanks (sometimes using your best guesses). Over time, using this ABC log will help you build awareness that is more and more instantaneous. You may even notice patterns in how you think, making it easier to try on other thoughts (for example, “Expecting the worst again! What’s a more likely outcome?”).

ABCs of Performance (Examples)		
Activating Event (What happened)	Belief (Words—images)	Consequences (Mood—body—behavior)
 Example: Scored lower this APRT than last time.	 “It’s not even worth trying. I stink.”— Imagine getting fat and doing worse.	 Defeated—low energy, muscle tension—stop putting in effort
 Example: Scored lower this APRT than last time.	 “It’s not my fault. People put too many demands on me.”— Picture many other demands.	 Powerless—muscle tension, short/shallow breathing— just focus on other tasks
 Example: Scored lower this APRT than last time.	 “I need to get my butt in gear.”— Imagine fitting in hard work and feeling satisfaction.	 Frustrated/hopeful—energized—begin 100% effort in daily training

See page 2 for a blank worksheet you can use.



MENTAL FITNESS ABCs of Performance

ABCs of Performance Worksheet		
Activating Event (What happened)	Belief (Words—images)	Consequences (Mood—body—behavior)