

**CBT and AF**  
**(in 20 mins!)**

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# Content

- Context
- What can CBT help with?
- How does it work?
- Relevance for people with AF?



# Context

- AF journey is challenging to all...
- Affects partners/family as well as patient
- Physical problems don't exist in a vacuum

# Living with arrhythmia

- ‘greater risk of psychological problems and a poor quality of life.’

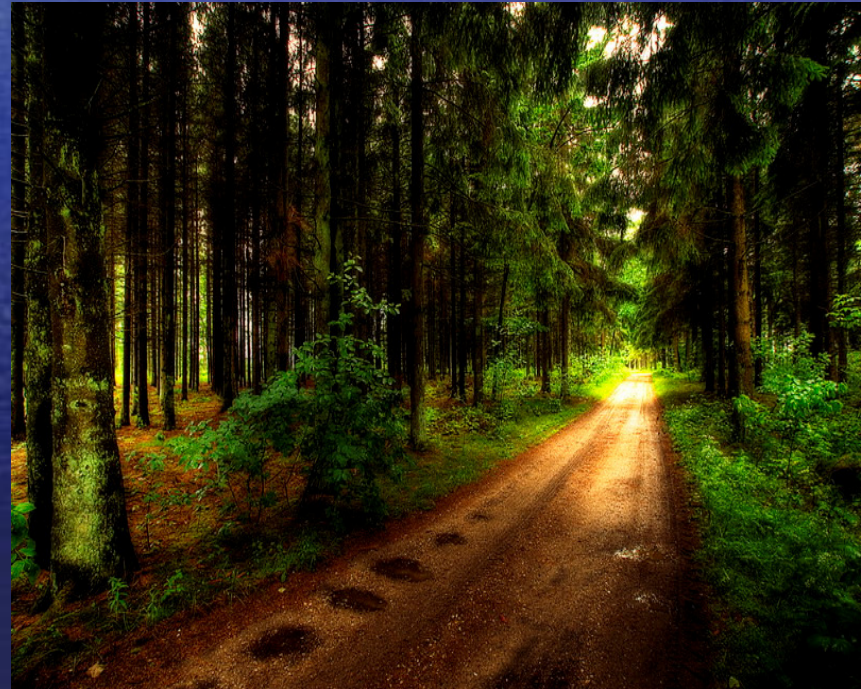
*NSF for CHD: Ch 8: Arrhythmias and SCD (Aug 2005)*

# What problems can CBT help with?

- NICE approved for treating depression, anxiety, OCD, agoraphobia, PTSD
- Not a panacea
- One of range of psychological therapies
- For cardiac problems, best offered within integrated biopsychosocial care pathway
- Rather than 'bolt-on'

# How does it work?

- If you're depressed/ anxious, sometimes..
- 'You can't see the trees for the wood'
- CBT can help break down big problem into smaller components





Before we proceed....

Here's a question for you...

How are you feeling right now?





Why are you asking?

I'm hungry

I'm thinking about lunch

I'm fine

Bit unnerved

I'm bursting

I'm tired

I'm bored

I can't sit still

What's he on about?

None of your business!

I'm checking my watch

I'm thinking about the morning

## **PHYSICAL SENSATIONS**

- Hungry?
- Tired?
- Bursting?

## **EMOTIONS**

- Fine
- Bit unnerved

How are you feeling?

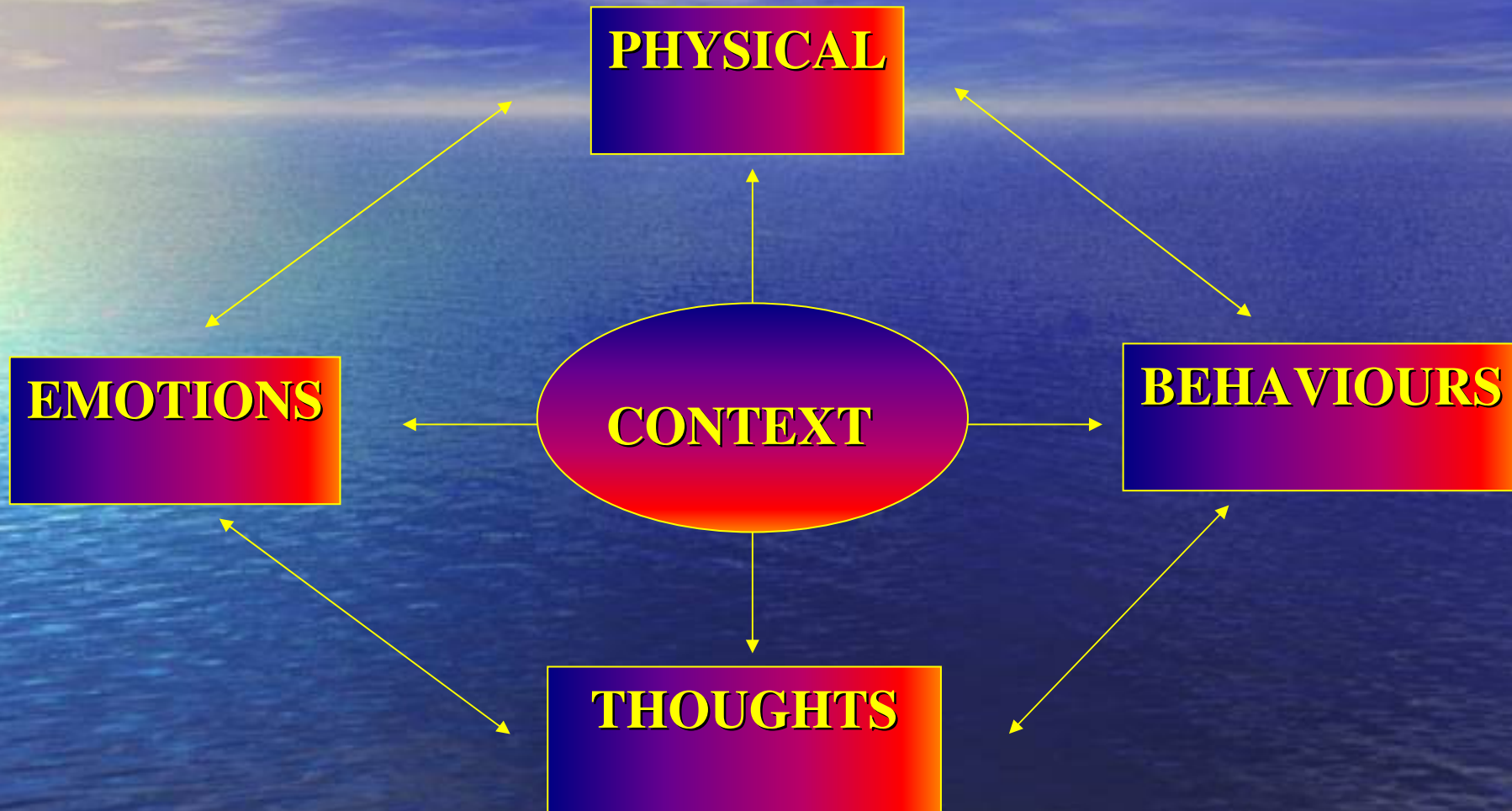
## **THOUGHTS**

- Lunch
- What's he on about?
- Where's this going?
- None of you business!
- Why are you asking?

## **BEHAVIOUR/ ACTIONS**

- Shuffling in seat
- Checking the time

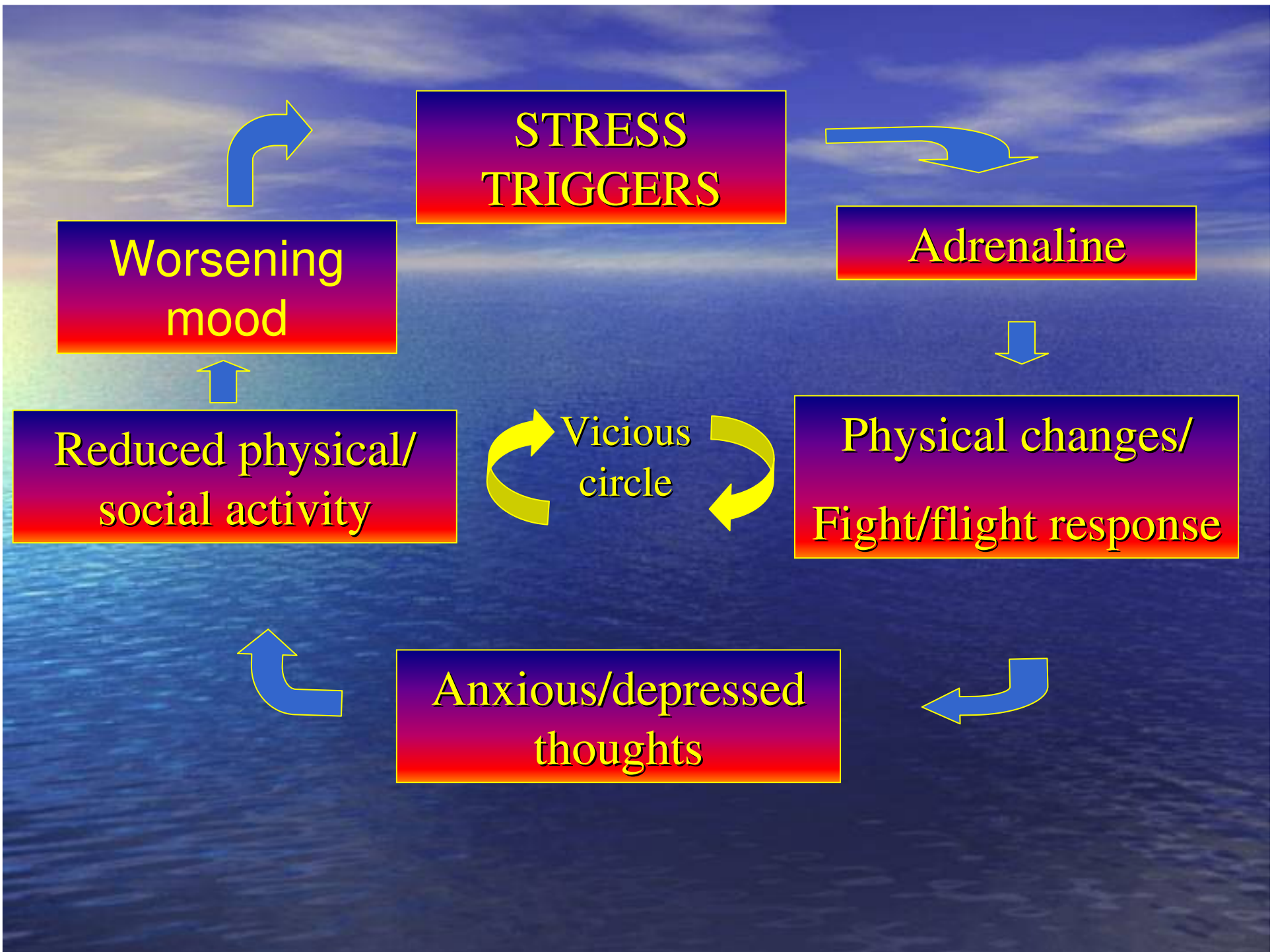
# COGNITIVE 'HOT CROSS BUN'



*From 'Mind over Mood' Greenberger and Padesky 1995*

# From 'what's the problem?' to.....

- When does this problem occur?
- What are the physical sensations?
- What thoughts go through your mind at the time?...just beforehand?...just after?
- What do you do when it occurs? Afterwards?
- How does it affect you emotionally?
- How do these experiences interact? How might they be maintaining the problem(s)?
- Stress example





# Relevance for Atrial Fibrillation?

- **NSF Chapter 8**

Living with an arrhythmia places patients at greater risk of psychological problems  
**Appropriate information and support** can relieve this

Some groups of patients are at significantly increased risk of anxiety, depression and a poor quality of life.

**Routinely checking for these problems, and establishing appropriate protocols for providing suitable care,** would increase quality of life for these people.

← Range of stepped psychologically informed care