

**Film Ordinary People with Reality Therapy Applied**

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Reality therapy (or Choice therapy) suggests that individuals are in control of their behavior, and every individual has the power to make choices that lead to their desired outcomes. William Glasser argues that individuals are motivated by their basic needs, such as survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. Thus, according to this therapy, mental disorders result from an individual's inability to meet basic needs. By emphasizing the importance of relationships, reality therapists recognize that people choose certain behaviors as a coping mechanism for dealing with the disappointments arising from unfulfilling relationships. Overall, reality therapy is focused on helping individuals identify their basic needs and develop positive behaviors that lead to a fulfilling life and satisfying relationships.

From a reality therapy perspective, Conrad's behavior in the film *Ordinary People* could be understood as his struggles to meet his basic needs, especially love and belonging, and cope with the frustrations of unsatisfying relationships. The tragedy of his brother's death causes Conrad to feel isolated and disconnected from his family and friends, leading him to experience symptoms of depression and suicidal thoughts.

First, I would establish a positive and trusting therapeutic relationship with Conrad and work to create an environment where he feels comfortable sharing his thoughts and feelings. Once a solid therapeutic relationship has been established, I would use the WDEP (Want, Decide, Evaluate, Plan) framework to help Conrad make better choices. In the "want" phase, I would focus on identifying Conrad's basic needs and wants to help him articulate what he wants out of life and identify any unmet needs contributing to his symptoms. If his goal is to obtain a healthy relationship with his mother, then in the "decide" phase, he must take responsibility for his actions and make positive changes. In the "evaluate" phase, he would self-assess the

effectiveness of his current behaviors in meeting his needs and evaluate his progress in reaching his goals. In the "plan" phase, we would develop a specific plan of action for Conrad to take responsibility for his choices and work toward meeting his basic needs in healthier ways. He cannot control his mother's behavior, but he can change his behavior; as he does in the movie, he hugs his mother and shows genuine and sincere love to her.

Reality therapy could be a helpful approach to Conrad's treatment. Focusing on his basic needs can help Conrad understand what he wants out of life and identify any unmet needs contributing to his symptoms. Additionally, the WDEP system provides a structured and systematic approach to therapy that can help Conrad identify his basic needs, take responsibility for his choices, evaluate his progress, and develop a plan to meet his goals.

## References

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[https://www.amazon.com/Ordinary-People-Donald-Sutherland/dp/B00AALLU08/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=2DCW2YC69IFLB&keywords=ordinary+people&qid=1675562867&s=instant-video&srefix=ordin%2Cinstant-video%2C228&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Ordinary-People-Donald-Sutherland/dp/B00AALLU08/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2DCW2YC69IFLB&keywords=ordinary+people&qid=1675562867&s=instant-video&srefix=ordin%2Cinstant-video%2C228&sr=1-1)