

**Ordinary People – Reality Therapy**

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According to Corey (2017), reality therapy aims to focus solely on the client's present feelings and behaviors rather than their past and their symptoms as a whole. "Symptoms are the result of choices we have made...We can choose to think, feel and behave differently" (Corey, 2017). Reality therapy is based off of choice theory and is also considered a cognitive behavioral therapy. This form of therapy is used in order to help the individuals that we are counseling to accept the ways that they feel but come to the realization that in order to see positive changes/outcomes, certain behaviors and actions must have to be different as well. According to William Glasser, the founder of reality therapy, every individual seeks to have their five basic needs met. These five basic needs include power/self-worth, love/belonging, freedom/independence, fun/pleasure and survival.

In the movie, *Ordinary People*, Conrad shows an array of symptoms that point to his need for therapeutic intervention. I believe that reality therapy could potentially be a big help for Conrad in certain aspects. Conrad has difficulty staying present due to his traumatic experience that ultimately led to his older brother's death. Now, he is trapped in a vicious cycle of flashbacks and anxiety relating to those past experiences. Reality therapy would help Conrad because it could guide him on how to allow himself to feel any emotions that he feels but teach him healthy ways on how to act on those emotions that could be more productive and have a more positive outcome.

If I were Dr. Berger and was presented with the task of helping Conrad by using reality therapy, I would use the WDEP technique system. The WDEP system leads to change and stands for Wants, Doing/Direction, Evaluation and Planning. This would be a great start for Conrad on his journey to a healthier mindset.

## Reference

Corey, G. (2017). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy (10<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Cengage Learning.

Redford, R. (Director). (1980). *Ordinary People* (Film). Paramount Pictures.