Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Ordinary People Movie

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There are several approaches that fall within the Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) umbrella of modality, from Ellis' Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), to Beck's Cognitive Therapy (CT), Padesky and Mooney's Strengths-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (SB-CBT), and Meichenbaum's Cognitive Behavior Modification (CBM). (Corey, 2015). All approaches that fall within the CBT modality stress that there is a link between cognitive processes, emotions, and behavior. The event causing psychological distress is less important than the interpretation of the event by the person. The assumption in all cognitive behavior therapies is that the belief system and internal dialogue that a person has within himself, are usually the true cause of distress and such cognitions are the major focus in therapy. Enduring change requires a change in the belief system of the client.

Similar to behavior therapy, CBT believes in a collaborative relationship between client and therapist, and there is a responsibility on the client to carry out homework tasks outside of the therapy session. CBT therapists are directive, and a large part of the therapy is educational for the client. Therapy is time-limited and the focus of the therapy is on the here and now.

If I were to employ Cognitive Behavior Therapy with Conrad, I would want to understand what irrational belief he might have internalized in regards to his brother's death. I would follow the A-B-C framework of REBT to find out the activating event (A), Conrad's belief about the event (B), and the emotional and behavioral consequences for Conrad (C). After that, I would dispute his irrational beliefs and teach him to substitute them for rational beliefs. For instance, after his brother's death, it's possible that Conrad might feel guilty for surviving the accident and hold an irrational belief that if his brother is dead, then he should be as well. I would dispute this thought with Conrad with a Socratoic dialogue, and examine his thoughts by looking for evidence. I believe that changing Conrad's beliefs about his role in his brother's death will change his negative emotions and behavior. As part of our goal of understanding his automatic thoughts and internal dialogue, I would ask Conrad to keep a "thought record" as his homework

task outside of therapy and log each time he has a self-defeating thought. Together I would teach him to question these thoughts and assist him with telling a new story about himself.

References

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