

Ordinary People Cognitive Behavior Theory

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The Cognitive Behavioral Therapy first originated with Albert Ellis who introduced Rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT). REBT believes that person problems originate from the beliefs that have ingrained from childhood learning from others. Author Gerard Corey explains REBT as, “as psychological problems, as well as to specific symptoms, by the rigid and extreme beliefs they hold about events and situations.” (271) REBT focuses on the now and how a person thoughts about themselves must be changed. Out of this school of therapy other therapeutic practices have emerged. The most popular is by Aaron Beck who introduced cognitive therapy (CT). CT is the empirical research study that focuses on evidence based therapy for depression. CT believes that a person negative interpretation of their life events has caused them to have a dysfunctional view of how they may see themselves. The focus to change the beliefs and negative thoughts a person may exhibit for a more realistic viewpoint. There is also the study of Strength Based Cognitive Therapy and Donald Meichenbaum’s Cognitive behavior modification therapy that has also been developed and used to treat patients.

The reason I would use treatment from CBT is because of character Conrad depression, attempted suicide, the unrealistic thoughts he has about himself due to what he has learned from his dysfunctional relationship with his mother, and the death of his brother. In treating Conrad, I would use family therapy and four step model of building resilience. The dynamics of how Conrad’s family effected his outlook should be considered when developing a plan to help Conrad overcome the thought patterns that he had instilled within himself. The resistance of his mother, her favoritism of the older brother, the denial that there is a problem with Conrad, the father overcompensating for the lack of empathy on the part of his wife, are all issues that should be considered for family therapy. There may not be complete healing, but it would open the door for a dialogue to be had between the family members to consider a path towards a better way of

dealing with each other. Author Corey (2021) describes the focus is on the, “cognitions, emotions, and behavior as they exert a mutual influence on one another within family relationships to cause dysfunction.” (288) The mother especially had a influence over Conrad and the father that caused them to deny their feelings and worth for the sake of how she felt.

The four step model or resilience consists of search, construct, apply, and practice. This would be a process that could benefit Conrad who has low self-esteem. Conrad to shown that he has strength in certain areas of his life and to not focus on the negative. Conrad liked singing and he got good grades. Working with Conrad would include talking about how he manages to overcome shyness to sing and how he is resilient in getting good grades and even at one point in swimming. Showing Conrad the same strengths that he used in areas that are his strongest can also apply in areas that has become his weakness, such as his friendships and quitting the swim team. I would encourage him to see that he can apply the same resilience to overcoming obstacles that he has allowed to become a disadvantage. The techniques may be different but it is possible to change what he has been doing into doing it a different way. It would be the same as if he was singing in one key, he may have to change the tone to sing in another. It would be encouragement of showing how if he believe in himself and apply a different strategy he can change the outcome of any situation that he may face to his advantage.

The disadvantage of treating Conrad with CBT is if the therapist does not take into consideration his upbringing. Conrad bases much of his thoughts on what he has been taught by his parents, which is dysfunctional. Author Corey (2021) states, “the therapist’s job is to help clients critically examine long standing cultural values that result in dysfunctional emotions and behaviors, but a potential limitations of REBT is its negative view of dependency.” (299) Conrad falls back on what he has been taught or

behaviors that he has witness which limits how he lives his life because they have been ingrained into his moral values of who he is. As a therapist, Conrad may be given homework assignments which focuses on integrating his strong suits and/or behaviors on overcoming prior obstacles with the current obstacles he may still be having challenges with. Another problem may be because CBT deals with here and now. Some of Conrad problems stems from past experiences that has had a tremendous impact on how Conrad feels about himself.

References

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