

Rational Emotive Therapy/Cognitive Therapy and Ordinary People

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Cognitive Behavioral therapy is a psychological approach used to treat various behavioral and psychological issues. This form of therapy helps clients learn how to identify and change

destructive thinking patterns and behavior. American Psychologist Albert Ellis was one of the key figures who developed Cognitive behavior therapy. He stressed the importance of thoughts/feelings. He created rational emotive behavior therapy in the 1950s. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy helps clients identify their thoughts, feelings and behaviors and dispute their beliefs through self indoctrination. In this approach, clients learn to replace destructive and ineffective thinking by replacing this thinking with effective and rational cognitive thinking. This approach emphasizes that there are 3 basic internalized beliefs that can lead to defeat.

Therapist who practice REBT practice techniques that include disputing irrational beliefs, cognitive homework, bibliotherapy, changing one's language(How we see and think about an issue) and psycho educational methods. Other techniques include rational emotive imagery, humor, role playing, shame-attacking exercises and standard behavior therapy procedures. Through REBT, clients can identify irrational beliefs, challenge these beliefs and learn to recognize and change their thought patterns.

In the 1950s and 1960s, psychiatrist Aaron Beck, noticed specific patterns with depressed clients. His observations included that those who suffered with depression, held negative thoughts about themselves and other people. He recognized that no matter how much they explored their past, their negative thinking did not change. These observations led Aaron to research how a person's thoughts affects how they feel and cognitive behavior therapy was formed. Cognitive behavior therapy is a combination of cognitive and behavior therapy. Through Socratic dialogue and reflective clients test the validity of their cognitions. The theoretical assumptions of this approach is that a clients' beliefs have highly personal meanings that are discovered by the client instead of being taught by the therapist. Some techniques used in CBT is identifying negative thoughts, practicing new skills, setting goals and learning problem

solving skills. Self-monitoring is also another technique used to help the therapist obtain information required to provide the best treatment.

In the Film, *Ordinary people*, Conrad struggles with negative thinking patterns and depression. As a rational emotive behavior therapist, I would help Conrad realize that his thoughts and thinking patterns have led him to cognitive, emotional and behavioral issues. This form of therapy is captured in the acronym ABC. A is the activating event or adversity, B is the belief about the event and C is the consequences of emotions/behaviors. Some techniques I would use are problem solving and cognitive restricting techniques. These techniques will help Conrad learn more about himself and the irrational beliefs that are holding him back. REBT can be effective in helping Conrad deal with the loss of his brother. Conrad believes that his brother's death is his fault. Through this form of therapy, Conrad will learn that his thoughts are a normal response to loss but will challenge his irrational beliefs. This approach will help Conrad accept that bad things happen to the people he loves but he can choose how to respond to it. As a cognitive behavioral therapist, I would be able to help Conrad deal with his mental health condition and destructive thinking patterns. Through CBT Conrad can learn that he is in control of his thoughts and has the ability to think in effective ways. Some techniques we can use are cognitive restructuring. Cognitive restructuring will help Conrad understand his thinking patterns, the emotion/trigger behind them and the actual reality of the situation. By presenting a more rational perspective, I can help reduce cognitive distortions. Cognitive restructuring can help Conrad form healthier thinking patterns and practice ways that can rationalize distortions. Thought journaling can also help Conrad develop self-awareness and learn coping skills.

References:

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