

**Ordinary People – Cognitive Behavior Therapy**

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GCN 502: Theories and Foundations of Counseling

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April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

According to Corey (2017), cognitive behavioral therapies are collaborative between the client and the therapist, as well as having the point of view that psychological distress is often maintained through cognitive processes. Albert Ellis is well-known specifically for rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT), which is a didactic and directive form of therapy that has a primary focus of teaching clients that their emotions stem from beliefs, evaluations, interpretations, etc. from previous life situations. The overall goal of cognitive behavioral therapy is to help clients change their unhealthy thinking patterns into healthier ones. Many clients entering into therapy have negative views on themselves, as well as the world around them and this would include self-defeating behaviors and negative self-talk. Cognitive behavioral therapy will train the mind to be more mindful of these thought processes and try to challenge those who think these ways to have a more positive outlook.

In the movie, *Ordinary People*, based off of Conrad's symptoms and behaviors, cognitive behavioral therapy could and would benefit him immensely. Many of Conrad's behaviors and thought patterns relate to past experiences and these memories bring up negative feelings for him in the here and now. Cognitive behavioral therapy would aid Conrad in learning new and better coping strategies that will specifically target his current problems that he may feel and that are related to the past. Cognitive behavioral therapy can also aid Conrad in changing and challenging his current cognitive distortions that he holds against himself due to his family dynamic.

If I were Dr. Berger and were given the task to help Conrad using cognitive behavioral therapy, the two primary techniques I would use would include psychoeducation and cognitive homework. Psychoeducation can be used in order to help Conrad better understand why he feels the way he feels and why the current behaviors he is using is detrimental to his well-being.

Cognitive homework can be used in order to help Conrad think critically and analyze his own feelings after having recording them, whether it be through drawings, writing/journaling, etc.

## 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.