

**Ordinary People: Rational Emotive Therapy & Cognitive Therapy**

Michelle Davis

License Mental Health Counselor, Alliance University

GCN 502.OA Theories and Foundation

Dr. George J. Ramos

April 4, 2023

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Rational Emotional Behavior Therapy (REBT) is a cognitive behavioral approach that aims to alter dysfunctional attitudes from irrational belief developed throughout someone's lifetime. These irrational beliefs cause the emotional disturbance by how someone interprets an event and situation. Using a therapeutic process clients are able to self-construct their attitudes instead of practicing self-repetition of irrational beliefs.

Clients seeking REBT tend to develop beliefs on how matters should, ought and must be causing disruptive feelings. Common beliefs that lead to self-defeat are "I must do well and be loved and approved by other", "other people must treat me fairly, kindly and well" and "The world and my living conditions must be comfortable, gratifying and just, providing me with all that I want in life". These irrational beliefs enable clients to maintain good and healthy psychological patterns.

During the therapeutic process, counselors counteract beliefs with realistic philosophy of life. Counselors try to give clients goals or homework that aim to teach clients unconditional self-acceptance, unconditional other acceptance and unconditional life acceptance.

Cognitive Therapy (CT) is similar to REBT as it was created to alter cognitive distortion that may cause depression in clients. In early research Aaron T Beck theorized that depression reflected what he considered negative cognitive triad. The negative cognitive triad is negative views clients have of themselves, the world around them and hopelessness of their future. Using the research for CT, Beck proposed the generic cognitive model that treated clients that suffered from depression as well as other diagnosis like substance abuse and psychosis.

In the case of Conrad, I believe either form of therapy could have been beneficial for him. As a counselor, I would have probably preferred to use the REBT therapeutic process to challenge his irrational beliefs around his family life and extracurricular activities in school. I think he often felt discomfort in his home and during family activities. He held irrational beliefs in regards to his mother. He believed as his parent, she should have been more engaging and “warm”. I would have assigned him homework to assist with developing skill for unconditional other acceptance.

## References

Corey, Gerald. (2015), *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy.*, 10th edition\_\_\_\_  
USA, Thompson Learning.

Redford, R. (Director). (1980). *Ordinary people* [Film]. Paramount Pictures.