

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy

Theory of Change

Change occurs through changing irrational beliefs to rational beliefs, which improves clients' emotional and behavioral functioning.

Role of the Therapist

- Instructor
- Confrontational
- Direct

Treatment Goals

- Help clients alter illogical beliefs and thinking patterns in order to overcome psychological problems and mental distress.

Key Concepts

- **A – Activating Event:** Something happens in the environment around you.
- **B – Beliefs:** You hold a belief about the event or situation.
- **C – Consequence:** You have an emotional response to your belief.
- **Common Irrational Beliefs:** Feeling excessively upset over other people's mistakes or misconduct. Believing that you must be 100 percent competent and successful in everything to be valued and worthwhile. Believing that you will be happier if you avoid life's difficulties or challenges. Feeling that you have no control over your own happiness; that your contentment and joy are dependent upon external forces.
- **Self-Acceptance:** I have both good and bad points. I am allowed to have flaws. Despite my good and bad points, I am no more worthy or less worthy than any other person.
- **Other-Acceptance:** Sometimes other people will not treat me fairly. There is no law that other people have to treat me fairly all of the time. People who don't treat me fairly are no more worthy or less worthy than any other person.
- **Life-Acceptance:** Life does not always work out the way that you want. There is no rule that life has to go the way that you want. Although life will not always be pleasant, it is never awful or completely unbearable.

Phases of Treatment

Beginning: Provide psychoeducation about REBT. Identify underlying irrational thought patterns and beliefs and the resulting feelings and behaviors.

Middle: Once these underlying feelings have been identified, the next step is to challenge these mistaken beliefs. In order to do this, the therapist must dispute these beliefs using very direct and even confrontational methods. Ellis suggested

that rather than simply being warm and supportive, the therapist needs to be blunt, honest, and logical in order to push people toward changing their thoughts and behaviors. Clients are also encouraged to change unwanted behaviors using such things as meditation, journaling, and guided imagery.

End: Review progress made and apply learned skills to anticipated future struggles.