

Cognitive Perspectives Rational Emotive Therapy Albert Ellis

How changing one's thinking can help to overcome emotional problems – As you think, so you feel.



Unit 8 P5 Explain the value of the cognitive perspective in supporting individuals

- WALT – Understand how thinking (cognition) can effect emotions and behaviour
 - WILF –
 - Think about how our beliefs can effect our feelings and behaviour
 - Challenge irrational beliefs with more realistic beliefs
 - Go through Ellis's ABC model
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Starter Activity

- Go through the handout and indicate agree / disagree next to each statement
 - Count up - How many of these beliefs do you agree with?
 - How many do you disagree with?
 - What do you think about these statements?
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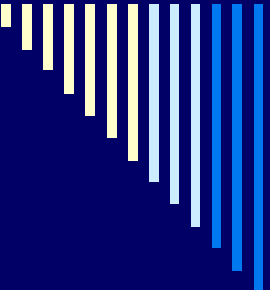
Sample beliefs underlying undesirable emotions and behaviour – How could you change these beliefs?

- ❑ I need love and approval from those significant to me – and I must avoid disapproval from any source.
 - ❑ To be worthwhile as a person I must achieve, succeed at whatever I do, and make no mistakes.
 - ❑ I shouldn't have to feel discomfort and pain – I can't stand them and must avoid them at all costs.
 - ❑ Every problem should have an ideal solution – and it's intolerable when one can't be found.
 - ❑ Things must be the way I want them to be, otherwise life will be intolerable.
 - ❑ My unhappiness is caused by things that are outside my control – so there is little I can do to feel any better.
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Key Assumptions of The Cognitive Perspective

- ❑ Individuals who suffer from mental disorders have distorted and irrational thinking – which may cause maladaptive behaviour.
 - ❑ It is the way you think about the problem rather than the problem itself which causes the mental disorder.
 - ❑ Individuals can overcome mental disorders by learning to use more appropriate cognitions.
 - ❑ Aim – to be positive and rational.
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What are irrational self defeating beliefs?

- ❑ It distorts reality : *awfulising, can't-stand-it-itis, demanding and people-rating;*
 - ❑ It blocks you from achieving your goals and purposes;
 - ❑ It creates extreme emotions which persist, and which distress and immobilise; and
 - ❑ It leads to behaviours that harm yourself, others, and your life in general.
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Dysfunctional thinking

- *Awfulising*: using words like 'awful', 'terrible', 'horrible', 'catastrophic' to describe something - e.g. 'It would be terrible if ...', 'It's the worst thing that could happen', 'That would be the end of the world'.
 - *Cant-stand-it-itis*: viewing an event or experience as unbearable - e.g. 'I can't stand it', 'It's absolutely unbearable', 'I'll die if I get rejected'.
 - *Demanding*: using 'shoulds' or 'musts' - e.g. 'I *should* not have done that, 'I *must* not fail', 'I *need* to be loved', 'I *have* to have a drink'.
 - *People-rating*: labelling or rating your total self (or someone else's) - e.g. 'I'm stupid /hopeless /useless /worthless.'
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Rational thinking = *Realistic thinking*

- It is based on reality - it emphasises seeing things as they really are, seeing things in perspective;
 - It helps you achieve your goals and purposes;
 - It creates emotions you can handle; and
 - It helps you behave in ways which promote your aims and survival.
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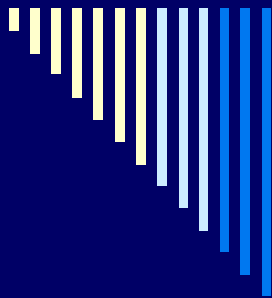
The ABC's of feelings & behaviours

- American psychologist Albert Ellis, the originator of *Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy* (REBT), was one of the first to systematically show how beliefs determine the way human beings feel and behave. Dr. Ellis developed the 'ABC' model to demonstrate this.
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The ABC's of feelings & behaviours

- 'A' refers to whatever started things off: a circumstance, event or experience - or just thinking about something which has happened.
 - This triggers off thoughts ('B'), which in turn create
 - a reaction - feelings and behaviours - ('C').
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Ellis (1955): The ABC model

A: Activating event

Alex receives a very poor mark for his psychology essay

B: beliefs about A

rational beliefs

Alex tells himself that he did not really spend enough time on researching, planning and writing the essay, as he has been too busy working on his part in the Sixth form play.

irrational beliefs

Alex believes that the essay grade shows that he is not really any good at psychology, and should think about giving up the course. There is no reason why he should do any better next time.

C: Consequences of B

desirable emotions

Alex is disappointed with his grade.

undesirable emotions

Alex feels he is no good at psychology.

desirable behaviour

He decides to spend more time on psychology assignments once the play is over, and in the meantime put time aside for psychology to make sure he keeps up with new work.

undesirable behaviour

He decides to give up psychology



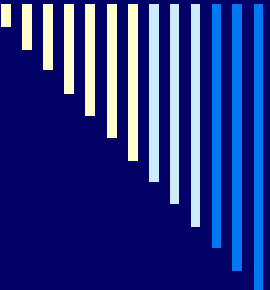
ABC Activity (in small groups)

- Read the handout scenarios identify the irrational beliefs and fill in an alternative way of thinking, feeling and behaving.
 - Make up an ABC scenario of your own.
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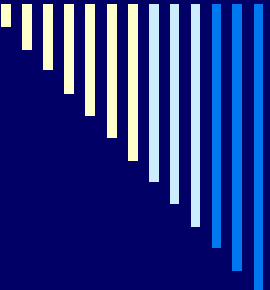
Thinking about Applications in Health and Social Care

- How could the Cognitive approach be applied to the following examples:
 - Weight loss groups
 - Treating Eating Disorders
 - Treating Depression
 - Treating Phobias (extreme irrational fears)
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Homework - Assignment Brief - Writing up P5

- For P5, you will need to explain the value of the cognitive perspective in supporting individuals. A brief description of Rational Emotive cognitive-behavioural therapy could be included here. Use a case study example.
 - Visit the website www.rational.org.nz/public to find out more about Cognitive Behavioural therapy.
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Recognising faulty thinking

Diary Activity (Optional)

- Keep a diary next time you feel anxious or depressed – write down your thoughts. (alternatively you could use characters from a Soap that you watch on TV)
 - Look for any distortions of reality – think of examples for each of the following:
 - black and white thinking,
 - over-generalising,
 - personalising
 - Identify your evaluative beliefs
 - Awfulising – what is terrible?,
 - Demandingness – what I should or should not be
 - Identify an new Effect you want and an alternative way of thinking or reacting to the Activating event.
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Plenary

- Can you think of any Ethical issues or difficulties that might arise based on the Cognitive approach to therapy?
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Possible limitations

- The Cognitive approach puts the burden of responsibility on the person – to change their thinking.
 - What if some of the person's 'irrational' beliefs are really true?
 - What comes first? The emotion or the cognition? When you feel depressed emotionally, is this because of your thinking or is your thinking due to your emotion?
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Take Home Message

- Remember the saying –
 - As you think, so you feel
 - See your cup as half full, rather than half empty.
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Extension Activity - Rational Self Analysis

- How much do self defeating beliefs affect your life? Try a questionnaire yourself at the following website:
 - www.rational.org.nz/public/
 - Click on BeliefsQuestionnaire
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