

Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy

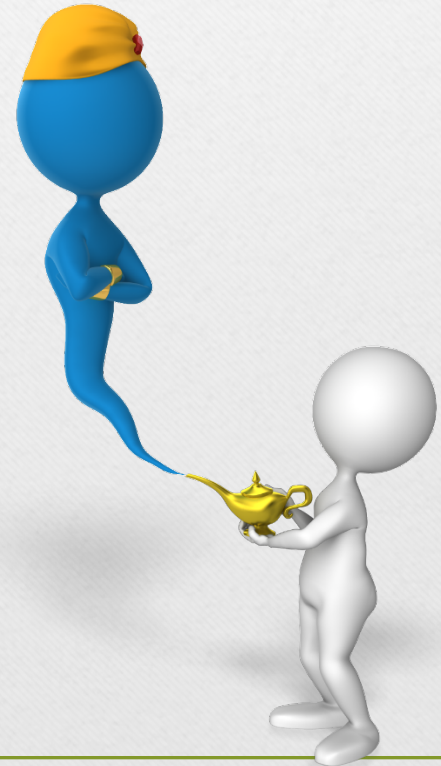
Presented by: Alisa Houseknecht

MHS 6401: Counseling Theories and Applications

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REBT

- REBT holds that virtually all serious emotional problems directly stem from magical, empirically unvalidatable thinking.
- If disturbance-creating ideas are vigorously disputed by logical/empirical thinking, they can be eliminated or minimized and will ultimately cease to reoccur.



RATIONAL EMOTIVE THEORY OF PERSONALITY

- Philosophical viewpoints as well as attention to biological and social factors have influenced the development of rational emotive behavior's theory of personality.



- Ellis's A-B-C model is the basis of his personality theory.
- Responsible hedonism, humanism, and rationality are philosophical ideas that can be seen in REBT's approach to psychotherapy.

Hedonism

- A philosophical term referring to the concept of seeking pleasure and avoiding pain.
- In REBT, *responsible* hedonism refers to maintaining pleasure over the long-term by avoiding short-term pleasures that may lead to pain, such as alcohol or cocaine.



REBT's PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWPOINTS



- *Humanism*: A philosophy or value system in which human interests and dignity are valued and that takes an individualist, critical and secular as opposed to a religious or spiritual perspective.
- *Unconditional Self Acceptance (USA)*: Individuals have worth. They should accept that they make mistakes and that some of their assets and qualities are stronger than others. Individuals' acts or performances should be criticized, not their personal worth.

REBT's PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWPOINTS

Rationality:

- Thinking, feeling, and acting in ways that will help individuals attain their goals.
- This is in contrast to irrationality in which thinking, feeling and acting are self-defeating and interfere with goal attainment.



FACTORS BASIC TO REBT THEORY OF PERSONALITY



- Ellis recognized that individuals' personality development and their emotional disturbances were not independent of biological and social aspects.
- Ellis believes that individuals have a biological tendency to severely disturb themselves and to prolong their emotional dysfunctioning.

FACTORS BASIC TO REBT THEORY OF PERSONALITY

- One reason that Ellis uses such powerful and direct therapeutic techniques is his view of the strength in which individuals hold irrational beliefs. Some of this is due to biological factors. Social factors refer to the effect of interpersonal relationships on beliefs about self.
- Criticism from others contributes to negative self-beliefs.
- Likewise, caring too much about what others think of you can negatively affect your own beliefs about yourself.



Irrational belief:

Unreasonable views or convictions that produce emotional and behavioral problems.



- Being vulnerable to emotional disturbance for both social and biological reasons is a core view of Ellis.
- Although individuals desire to be successful and happy, many irrational beliefs interfere with these goals.

A-B-C THEORY OF PERSONALITY

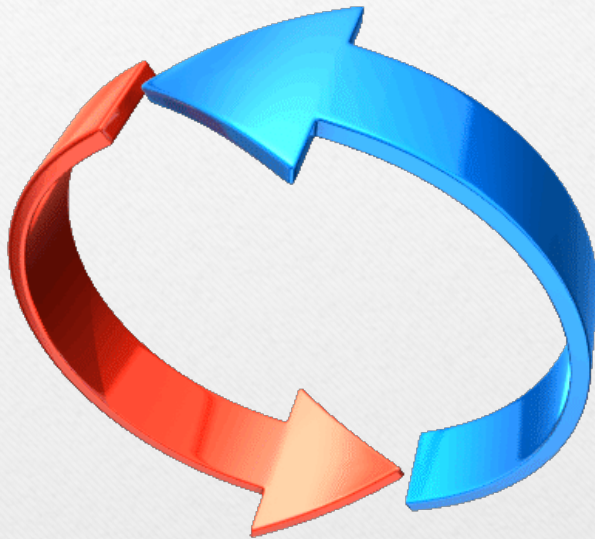
- The A-B-C model refers to what happens when an activating event (A) leads to emotional and behavioral consequences (C).
- The emotional and behavioral consequences are not caused by (A) the activating event but by the individual's belief system (B).
- Irrational beliefs occur when the activating event (A) is an unpleasant one.
- Irrational beliefs (B) can then partly cause difficult emotional and behavioral consequences (C).

A-B-C Premise

- Ellis believes that it is not the activating event (A) that causes positive or negative emotional and behavioral consequences (C), but rather it is that they interpret these events unrealistically and therefore have irrational belief system (B) that helps cause the consequences (C).
- The “real” cause of upset is themselves and not what *happens* to them.



Disturbances about Disturbances



- According to Ellis, it is bad enough that individuals have irrational beliefs, but they turn these beliefs into new activating events which cause new irrational beliefs.
- Ellis refers to this as disturbances about disturbances.
- Thus, if an individual does not get a job promotion that he wants, he may say to himself, “I feel terrible and hopeless,” and feels depressed.

Disturbances about Disturbances

- This consequence can then turn into a new activating event, and the individual can say, “This is really awful that I’m so depressed and hopeless.”
- Now a new consequence is even greater than the original consequence.
- For Ellis, words such as “have to” and “must” are consequences that lead to more irrational beliefs.



Disturbances about Disturbances



- ***Musterbation:*** Albert Ellis's phrase to characterize the behavior of clients who are inflexible and absolutistic in their thinking, maintaining that they must not fail or that they must have their way.
- ***Low frustration tolerance:*** Inability or difficulty in dealing with events or situations that do not go as planned, for example, getting very angry because someone does not do as you ask.

RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIOR THEORY OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

- The A-B-C theory of personality affects the way REBT therapists determine goals for their clients, assess their clients, and select therapeutic techniques.
- Disputing irrational beliefs is a most important therapeutic intervention .



GOALS of Therapy



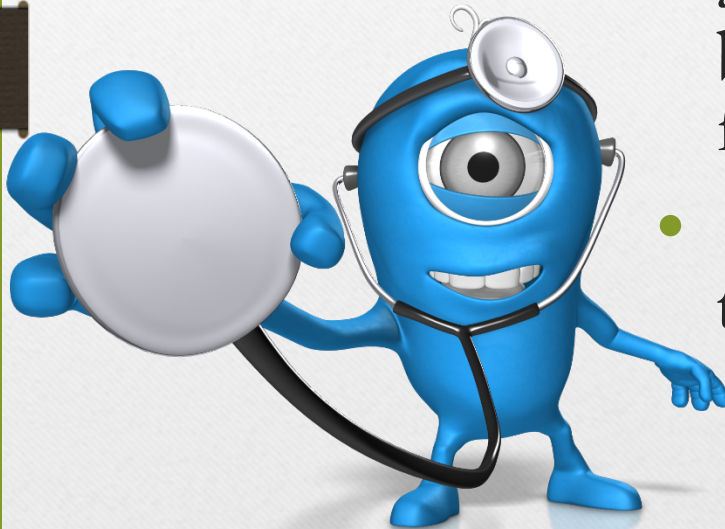
- A general goal of REBT is to help clients minimize emotional disturbances, decrease self-defeating behaviors, and become happier.
- If individuals can think rationally and have fewer irrational beliefs, Ellis believes they will live happier lives.

GOALS of Therapy

- REBT teaches clients how to deal with negative feelings such as sorrow, regret, frustration, depression, and anxiety.
- Virtually all client problems are viewed from the perspective of the contribution of their irrational beliefs.



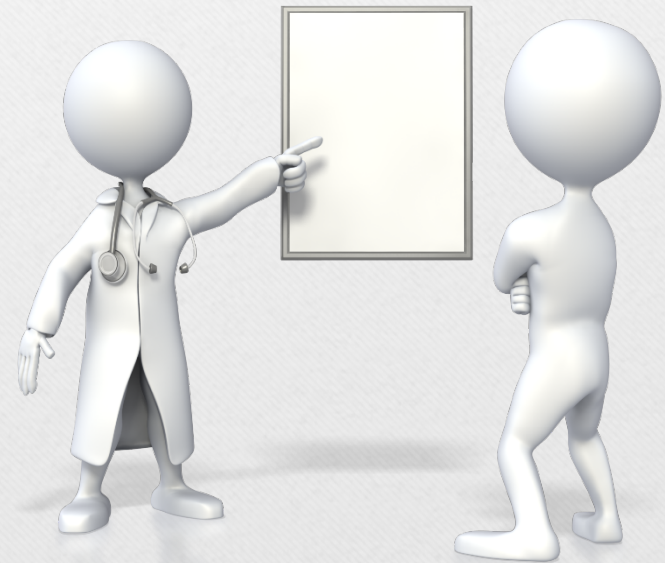
ASSESSMENT



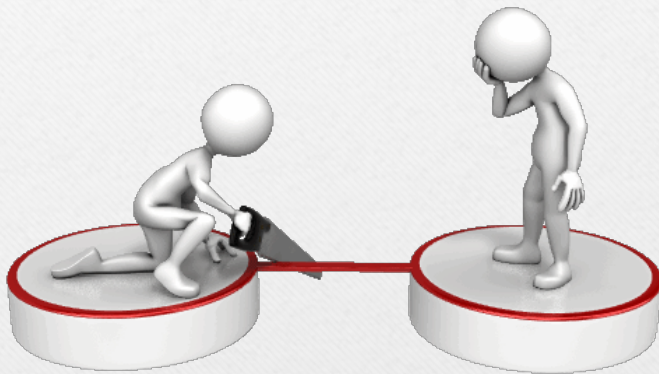
- REBT therapists try to assess which thoughts and behaviors create problems for their clients.
- They may listen for themes that repeat themselves.

ASSESSMENT

- Identifying activating events (A), rational and irrational beliefs (B), and emotional and behavioral consequences (C) is the most basic form of assessment in REBT.
- This assessment continues in each session and is not limited to the first few sessions.



Counselor/client Relationship



- Rational-emotive therapists do not believe a warm relationship between counselee and counselor is a necessary or a sufficient condition for effective personality change.
- REBT therapists fully accept clients as fallible humans without necessarily giving personal warmth.

Counselor/client Relationship

- To keep clients from becoming unduly dependent, REBT therapists deliberately use hardheaded methods of convincing clients that they had better resort to more self-discipline.



THE A-B-C-D-E THERAPEUTIC APPROACH



- The therapeutic interventions referred to by D are three parts of disputation.
- When irrational beliefs are disputed, the client will experience E, a new effect.
- In essences, the client will have a logical philosophy that allows her to challenge her own irrational beliefs.

A (activating Event)

- Therapists often divide activating events into two parts:
 - 1)what happened and
 - 2)what the patient perceived happened.
- Typically, therapists focus only on a few activating events at a time.
- Sometimes previous consequences (C) become activating events.

C (Consequences):

- Sometimes it is difficult for therapists to distinguish between consequences and beliefs.
- Consequences tend to be feelings such as “I feel so stressed out.”
- Feelings cannot be disputed, but beliefs that bring about feelings can.
- Changing beliefs (B) can alter consequences (C).

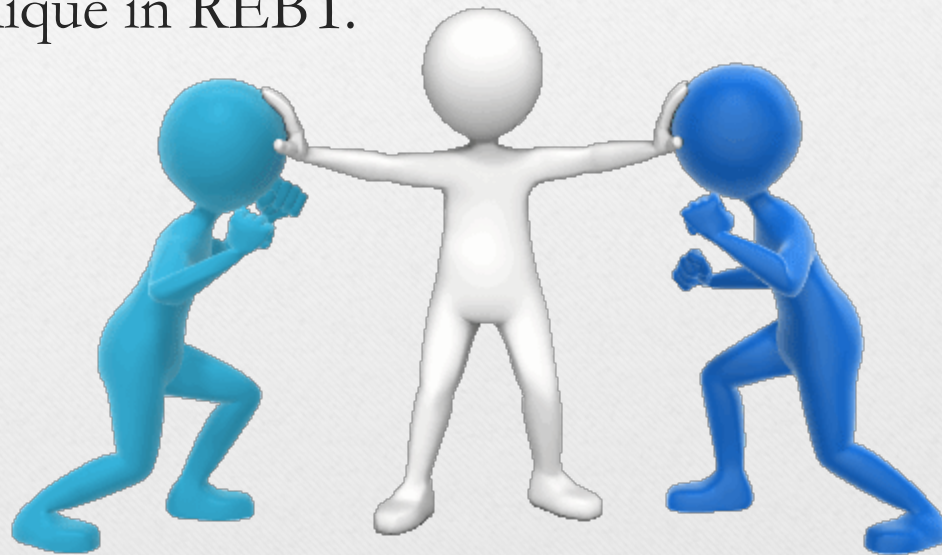
B (Beliefs):



- Irrational or self-defeating beliefs, rather than self-helping beliefs, are the focus of therapy.
- Changing irrational beliefs can change consequences.

D (Disputing)

- Disputing irrational beliefs is the major therapeutic technique in REBT.



Disputing is often done in three parts.

- 1. Detecting – the client and therapist detect the irrational beliefs that underlie activating events.



Disputing

- 2). Discriminating – the therapist and client discriminate irrational from rational beliefs.



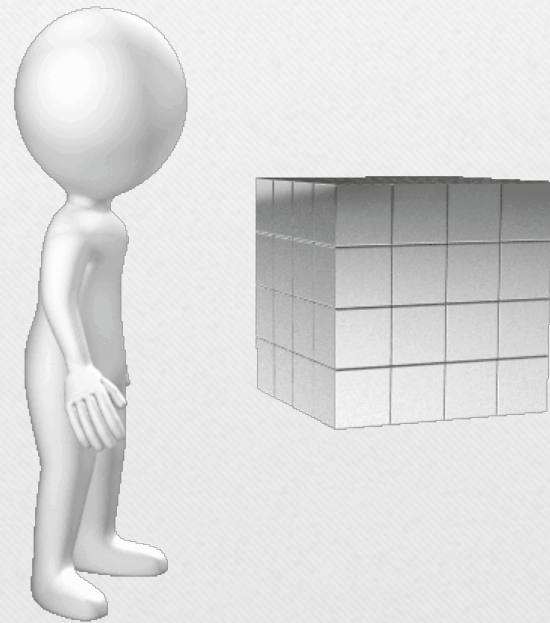
Disputing



3). Accepting 1 and 2, knowing that insight does not automatically change people, and working hard to effect change.

E (Effect):

- Developing an effective philosophy in which irrational beliefs have been replaced by rational beliefs is the product of successful REBT.

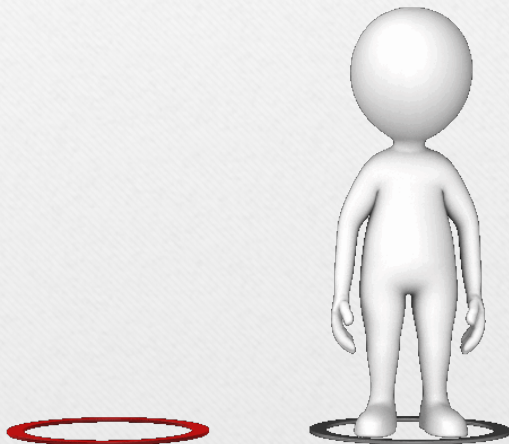


INSIGHT

- Three types of insight develop from REBT that can lead to behavioral change.
 - 1. Acknowledging that disturbances largely come from irrational beliefs not from the past.
 - 2. Learning how one has reindoctrinated oneself with irrational beliefs from the past.
 - 3. Accepting 1 and 2, knowing that insight does not automatically change people, and working hard to effect change.

REBT

- Ellis believes that when clients have achieved all three types of insight, “elegant” change takes place. Clients have thus made changes and know why they have made the changes.



Other Cognitive Approaches Used

- Coping self-statements
 - Turning demands into desires
 - “I must do perfectly well for my boss to accept me” becomes “I would like my boss to recognize my efforts



Other Cognitive Approaches Used

- Psychoeducational methods
- Teaching others
- Problem solving



Emotive Techniques Used

- Rational Emotive Imagery
 - Clients asked to imagine what they believe may happen to them and describe disturbing feelings
- Role-playing
- Shame-attacking exercises
 - Exercises aimed at increasing self-acceptance and mature responsibility



Behavioral Techniques Used

- Activity Homework
- Reinforcements & consequences
- Skill Training

