



**The Healing Collective**  
Therapy & Wellness

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# **RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY (REBT):**



## **A GUIDE FOR CLIENTS**

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## What is REBT?

- Developed in the 1950s by Dr. Albert Ellis, REBT is a structured, active-directive therapy focused on helping you identify and change irrational beliefs that cause emotional distress.
- Inspired by Stoic philosophy, it emphasizes that it is not events themselves that disturb us, but our beliefs about them.

## Core Concept: The ABC Model REBT explains emotional reactions through the ABC model:

- A (Activating Event): Something happens (e.g., a friend cancels plans).
- B (Belief): Your interpretation of the event (e.g., "They must not care about me; I'm unworthy of friendship.").
- C (Consequence): Your emotional or behavioral response (e.g., feelings of sadness, low self-worth, or anger).

By focusing on B (Belief), REBT helps you see how irrational beliefs lead to negative emotions and behaviors.

## Common Types of Irrational Beliefs

1. Demandingness: "I must/should/ought to..."
2. Awfulizing: Viewing situations as catastrophic ("This is the worst possible thing.").
3. Low Frustration Tolerance: "I can't stand this."
4. Global Evaluation of Worth: "I'm worthless if..."





## Rational Beliefs vs. Irrational Beliefs

- Rational Beliefs: Flexible, logical, and grounded in reality.

Example: "I would like people to appreciate me, but I don't need everyone's approval."

- Irrational Beliefs: Rigid, unrealistic, and absolutist, often leading to distress.

Example: "Everyone must like me, or I am worthless."

## The Goals of REBT

1. Identify Irrational Beliefs: Recognize beliefs causing distress.
2. Dispute Irrational Beliefs: Challenge their logic and evidence.
3. Replace with Rational Beliefs: Introduce more flexible and realistic thoughts.
4. Rehearse New Beliefs: Practice these beliefs in real-life situations.

## How REBT Works: The 13-Step Process

1. Identify the problem.
2. Define therapy goals.
3. Assess emotional and behavioral consequences.
4. Assess the activating event.
5. Identify secondary emotional problems.
6. Teach the B-C connection.
7. Identify irrational beliefs.
8. Link irrational beliefs to emotions.
9. Dispute irrational beliefs.
10. Establish new rational beliefs.
11. Plan homework reinforcement.
12. Review homework in the following session.
13. Revisit and reinforce new beliefs.





## Disputation Techniques To challenge irrational beliefs, your therapist may use the following:

1. Logical Disputation: Is this belief logical?

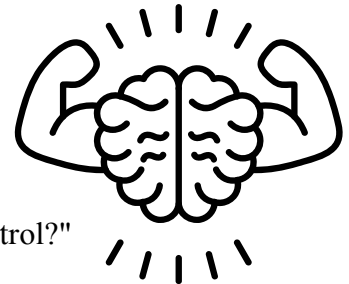
Example: "Does losing control always mean disaster?"

2. Empirical Disputation: Where's the evidence?

Example: "Is there proof that things always fall apart when I'm not in control?"

3. Functional Disputation: Is this belief helping me achieve my goals?

Example: "Does this belief help me stay calm or productive?"



## Practical and Emotional Solutions in REBT

- Practical Solution: Modify behaviors (e.g., improve time management to reduce stress).
- Emotional Solution: Change emotional reactions (e.g., practice self-compassion when making mistakes).

## Practice Exercises

1. Identify an Irrational Belief: What belief causes you stress?

2. Apply Disputation: Ask yourself:

o Is this belief logical?

o Is it supported by evidence?

o Does it help me achieve my goals?

3. Create a Rational Alternative: Replace the irrational belief with a more flexible and logical one.

PRACTICE  
MAKES  
PERFECT!





## Long-Term Benefits of REBT

- Self-Acceptance: Build unconditional self-worth.
- Emotional Resilience: Develop tolerance for discomfort.
- Adaptability: Learn to challenge and change unhelpful beliefs.



## Case Example: Applying the ABC Model

Scenario: Sarah, a perfectionist, feels anxious after receiving a low grade.

- A (Activating Event): Receiving a low grade.
- B (Belief): "I must be perfect; otherwise, I'm a failure."
- C (Consequence): Anxiety and self-criticism.
- Therapist's Approach:
  1. Identify Belief: "I must always succeed, or I'm worthless."
  2. Challenge Belief:
    - Logical: "Is it logical to expect perfection at all times?"
    - Empirical: "Are there instances when you didn't achieve perfection and still succeeded?"
    - Functional: "Does this belief help you enjoy or succeed in your studies?"
  3. Introduce New Belief: "I'd prefer to succeed, but I am still valuable even if I don't meet my expectations."
  4. Homework: Practice self-compassion when facing setbacks.



## Takeaway

REBT empowers you to identify, challenge, and replace irrational beliefs. By practicing the skills learned in therapy, you can build greater emotional resilience and self-acceptance.

### **Next Steps:**

- Reflect on the ABC model in your own life.
- Work with your therapist to dispute irrational beliefs.
- Practice rational alternatives daily.