Michael E. Bernard · Oana A. David
Editors

Coaching for Rational Living

Theory, Techniques and Applications

Springer

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Foreword

This exciting book, *Coaching for Rational Living: Theory, Techniques and Applications*, is a major contribution to the field. Co-edited by leading experts in the field, Dr Michael Bernard and Dr Oana David, this book focuses on three key areas: Foundations of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching; Processes and Techniques of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching; and Applications of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching. The chapters are authored by coaching specialists in different fields and topics including application of RE-CBC to life, couples, parent, motivational, resilience and stress management, managerial, executive, health and sport coaching.

The first part of this book considers the 'Foundations of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching'. In chapter 'Coaching for Rational Living: Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Perspectives', Oana David and Michael Bernard provide an excellent overview of RE-CBC theory, research and practice with an enlightening section on coaching rationality and acknowledging the foundational work of Albert Ellis and the application of the theory and practice of rational-emotive behaviour therapy to coaching. They provide an important introduction to the different framework and models used in RE-CBC. In the following chapter, Michael Bernard focuses on how Albert Ellis (see Ellis, 1962) helped coach clients to tackle the hassles of daily living and includes transcriptions of Albert Ellis in action. In the chapter 'Rationality in Coaching', Michael Bernard describes in depth how to integrate rationality in coaching in order to assist clients to solve emotional and practical problems leading to happier and more fulfilled lives. The realism of this book is illustrated in the following chapter by Michael Bernard that points out that there are psychological blockers to rational living such as anger, procrastination, performance anxiety and perfectionism, which need to be addressed by RE-CB coaches. Bernard highlights how the blockers can be conceptualised from an RE-CBC perspective and overcome. In the past two decades, interest in the new subdiscipline of positive psychology has really grown. In chapter 'Enhancing Positive Psychology Coaching Practice', Timothy Sharp reviews positive psychology and discusses the irrational beliefs that people bring to coaching which can inhibit positive psychology coaching.

The next book part on the 'Processes and Techniques of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching' starts with a chapter by Kristina Gyllensten on the coach–coachee relationship. She provides an excellent research-based overview of the topic and the importance of the relationship within coaching. She reminds us of the importance of all coaching practitioners continuously self-reflecting on their practice and their own reaction to coaching needs to be considered in order to tackle any issues arising within the coaching relationship. In the chapter 'Assessment, Case Formulation and Intervention Models', Oana David and Angela Breitmeyer focus on assessment, case formulation and intervention models within RE-CBC. This is a significant chapter as it highlights how RE-CBC differs from standard forms of coaching. Their Table 1 provides an interesting and insightful comparative view on REBT and RE-CBC characteristics literally in a nutshell. For RE-CBT therapists who are about to transition into the coaching field, this table is essential reading. In the following chapter by Windy Dryden, he shares his step-based framework for RE-CB coaching practice. He makes a thought-provoking distinction between development-focused RE-CBC and problem-focused RE-CBC. In chapter 'Brief Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching', Dryden, then, explains 'brief' RE-CBC, step by step. Crucially, he discusses the indications and contraindications for brief RE-CBC. In the final chapter of this part, Oana David, Radu Şoflău and Silviu Matu share with us what types of technologies can be used in coaching and particularly in RE-CBC. An exciting development is RoboRETMAN a robotic device that has been developed based on REBT to coach specific emotional skills in children. Are we now entering the fourth wave of RE-CBT and RE-CBC practice?

Moving on from the foundations, processes and techniques of RE-CBC, the last part of this book is the 'Applications of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching'. Thirteen chapters cover a wide range of applied areas. Windy Dryden starts this part describing rational-emotive, cognitive-behavioural life coaching (RECBLC) which promotes enhanced development and also tackles emotional problems. In chapter 'Motivational Coaching', Michael Broder introduces motivational coaching based on his innovative seven-Stage Climbing model. This is an RE-CBT based system designed to recognize attitudes, beliefs and behavioural patterns characteristic of different developmental life stages. In the next chapter, Michael Neenan challenges the myth that resilience is bouncing back from adversity. He prefers to describe it as, '*Marshalling your resources (e.g. psychological, spiritual, social) to cope adaptively with tough times and emerging from them sometimes a better, stronger, wiser person*'. He highlights how RE-CBC can be used to enhance resilience. The next chapter by Michael Bernard focuses on workplace stress management coaching. He introduces the subject by using an enlightening case study to illustrate some of the key aspects of stress. Then he discusses stress models and interventions with a useful image of 'The Catastrophe Scale'. In chapter 'Coaching High Workplace Performance', Michael Bernard focuses on coaching high workplace performance. He skilfully introduces the 'architecture' of

the high-performance mindset and lists coaching suggestions for handling tough work situations. Managerial coaching and rational leadership are important developmental areas for the workplace that can be addressed using the RE-CBC approach. Oana David and Alina Cîmpean highlight how Ellis' ABC model can address these areas, and also they list a useful range of tools that can be used to measure manager and leadership competencies. In chapter 'Executive Coaching', Diana Dudău, Nastasia Salagean and Florin Sava introduce rational-emotive behavioural executive coaching (REBEC), which can be applied to enhance an executive's performance. Their interesting case study demonstrates the approach. In the following chapter, Russell Grieger shares with us how he started developing a coaching approach for organizational change. He describes how he successfully 'stumbled into organizational consulting and coaching quite by accident'. His seven-point guidelines to organizational consulting and coaching will assist mental health practitioners in making the transition from the therapy office to the business setting. For many years, couples work was the realm of the therapeutic domain. However, Pedro Mispireta and Rossana Bringas show us how couples work can be undertaken using rational emotive couples coaching (RECC). Although this approach incorporates aspects of the REBT theory and practice of emotional regulation, it also includes a range of other specific coaching strategies. In chapter 'School Coaching', Demetris Katsikis, Stella Kassapis, Chrysoula Kostogiannis and Michael Bernard introduce us to rational-emotive, behaviour coaching applied in schools (S-REBC). The approach is applied to help students tackle both school-related practical and emotional problems. S-REBC is based on the theory and practice of The You Can Do It! Education (e.g. Bernard, 2013; www.youcandoiteducation.com.au). This aspirational approach has an ultimate goal to 'support schools in giving young people the optimal chance to become resilient, rational thinkers, high achievers plus responsible, and caring adults'. In the next chapter, Oana David, Roxana Cardos and Horea-Radu Oltean look at the fairly new area of parent and family coaching (Ellam & Palmer, 2006). They highlight that a problem-solving process is used to achieve the main objective of parenting coaching which is to optimize parental and child functioning. Health coaching is becoming very popular as it can help coachees and patients address a range of minor to serious health-related issues. In chapter 'Health Coaching', Sharon Freeman Clevenger highlights how combining RE-CBC with motivational interviewing can enhance the coaching process when physical and psychological self-care deficits are being maintained. In the final chapter, Angela Breitmeyer and Martin Turner successfully examine the relevance and effectiveness of RE-CBC within the context of sport. They bring to our attention how RE-CBC needs to be applied in a flexible manner as sport coaching can occur in public places such as locker rooms, court side, rest areas, buses, trains and hotel lobbies.

This rational living book provides an excellent overview of the theory and practice of rational-emotive, cognitive-behavioural coaching. It will be of great interest to

trainees, experienced coaches and psychologists from various backgrounds including clinical, counselling, sport, health educational coaching and consulting psychology. In addition, rational-emotive, cognitive behavioural therapists wishing to expand their practice into the coaching field will find this book invaluable.

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Part I
Foundations of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching

Coaching for Rational Living: Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Perspectives

Oana A. David and Michael E. Bernard

Coaching continues to grow both as a professional occupation as well as a domain using a group of techniques for supporting people to achieve specific goals in various areas of their lives (life, leadership, work performance, career, health, parenting, sports). It is considered a personalized and systematic learning process dealing with non-clinical problems and challenges, which has gained much knowledge from psychotherapeutic approaches. The most evidence-based and popular psychotherapeutic approach that has been adapted to coaching is cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) which was adapted into cognitive behavior coaching (CBC).

Literature including research dealing with CBC practices for strengthening the reasoning and scientific thinking ability of coachees has flourished since 2000. CBC an integrative approach to coaching subsuming different types of cognitive, behavioral and problem solving, solution focused and positive psychology based techniques. As in CBT, there are various types of CBC that have in common the analysis and modification of the coachees' attitudes, feelings and behaviors to overcome personal problems and barriers to goals and life satisfaction and to replace them with more productive, goal-directed and happiness-producing ways of thinking, feeling and behaving. One form of CBC that has begun to be extensively written about and researched incorporates major elements of Albert Ellis' rational-emotive behavior therapy (REBT) and will be referred to in this book as rational-emotive, cognitive-behavior coaching (RE-CBC). In this book, we have positioned Rational

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Emotive, Cognitive Behvaioral Coaching (RE-CBC), based on Albert Ellis' Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) for the future. In this chapter we are syntethizing this by defining what it is, establishing its scientific respectability as best practice, presenting its robust theory for helping coaches understand their coachees differently from other coaching approaches, illustrating its professional practice as applied to diverse problems and coachees, and how RE-CBC offers a sound theory for both developmental coaching and problem focused coaching.

The first International Congress on Cognitive Behavior Coaching (Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 2014, June) recognized RE-CBC as one of the leading cognitive-behavioral coaching approaches. In part, RE-CBC methods focus on helping coaches recognize and re-structure irrational (rigid, extreme) to rational beliefs (flexible, evidence-based) using Ellis ABC-DE model and method plus oftentimes especially in the context of life coaching develop a long-term rational life philosophy. While RE-CBC is a form of CBC and shares its assumption about the primacy of cognition in human emotion and behavior, RE-CBC distinguishes itself from the typical practice of CBC by its philosophical emphasis on core irrational beliefs (e.g., self-depreciation, low frustration tolerance) as the major contributing factors to negative, self-limiting, self-defeating and thoughts, emotions and behaviors and through explicit presentation of rational principles of daily living (e.g., self-interest, social interest, commitment to creative pursuits, self-acceptance, high frustration tolerance).

In the 1960s, Ellis wrote about and taught rational beliefs to people without mental health problems who were seeking ways to live happier and more fulfilled lives. He presented Friday night public lectures and demonstrations at the Institute for rational Living and authored a number of self-help books, *A Guide to Rational Living* (Ellis & Harper, 1961), a tradition he continued over the years (e.g., see Ellis & Becker, 1982, *A Guide to Personal Happiness*).

Ellis' *Executive Leadership* (1972) described how he applied REBT when meeting with oftentimes high functioning, successful executives who were not optimally efficient (e.g., perfectionists, procrastinators) and many who were experiencing high stress. He supported a new brand of REBT called rational effectiveness training, which developed into a corporate services division of the Institute for Rational Emotive Therapy.

Albert Ellis: A Pioneer Coach

At the age of 16, I studied philosophy as a hobby, long before I ever thought of becoming a psychotherapist. I was particularly interested in the philosophy of human happiness. So I started devising ways for people-notably myself-to reduce their emotional upsets and increase their sense of fulfilment in life….At the age of 40, I went back to ancient philosophers to see what they said about misery and happiness. Because of my passion for philosophy and especially for the philosophy of happiness, my early books on REBT not only told people how to ward off misery and neurosis but how to be self-fulfilled and more actualizing in their love, marriage and family affairs. Albert Ellis (1994)

Ellis was interested in helping people achieve satisfaction and fulfilment in the long-term (Bernard et al., 2010; Ellis, 1999) and REBT is the first CBT approach having a comprehensive theory on this (i.e., rational beliefs and rational principles). For Ellis, long-term happiness is a by-product of people achieving their goals and purposes in life; namely, (a) using strengths of character and personality traits, including rationality to achieve and excel at work (employment) and in other endeavours (hobbies), (b) relying on social competences and rationality to experience loving relationships that endure with one or more significant others including partner/spouse, family and close friends, and (c) deploying personal, coping resources, including rational self-talk and coping skills in order to only experience minimum periods of heightened, negative emotionality and stress.

What Is Rational Living?

"You can live a decidedly self-fulfilling, creative and emotionally satisfying life even in our highly unsatisfactory world." Ellis & Harper, *New Guide to Rational Living,* 1975

If we are going to coach people armed with the ABCs of REBT (Ellis, 1956, 1991) and rational beliefs, we should have the end game in sight (the final stage of coaching). Now, the end game or what people wish to achieve as a result of coaching can be very situational, contextual and problem specific ("I want to lose weight"; "I want to improve my relationship with my partner"). Alternatively and by no means exclusive to the problem solving coaching focus, those we coach who are seeking through coaching a way to live a happier, more successful and more fulfilled existence in specific life domains (work, relationships, health) or wholistically (life coaching) will internalize rational living as a philosophy of life. If we adopt Ellis' end game for rational living it is this:

…the alleviation of human misery and the enhancement of happiness and life satisfaction.

Coaching Rationality

When coaching people to overcome emotional issues and to move towards greater happiness and life satisfaction, the rational-emotive behaviour coach is seeking to strengthen the coachee's capacity for rationality. Over the years, Ellis focused our attention on three attributes of rationality that are the focus of REBT, REE (rational emotive education; Bernard, 2005; Knaus, 1974; Vernon, 1990) and RE-CBC: cognitive (logical, scientific thinking), semantics and philosophy.

When through coaching you can strengthen a coachees' rationality, not only does their ability to solve problems and make positive changes increase, but they become more autonomous and independent capable of continuing to grow (self-actualize) and maintaining and extending their ability to solve problems and change that was in some sense made possible through the coaching process for rational living.
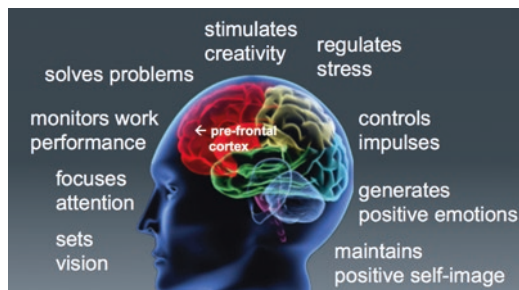
Fig. 1 The home of rationality: the pre-frontal cortex

In recent years, we have considered the findings from neuro-science of brain functioning with specific reference to the power and influence of the pre-frontal cortex on our ability to set long-term goals, regulate our emotions, inhibit behavioural impulses, focus our attention and monitor and where necessary correct our goal-directed behaviour (see Fig. 1). Promising research indicates the impact of CBT interventions on brain functioning including pre-frontal cortex (e.g., Månsson et al., 2016; Paquette et al., 2003).

Our view is that it is likely that Rational Emotive and Cognitive-Behavioral coaching interventions stimulate and change the functioning of the pre-frontal cortex giving rise to permanent changes in psychological functioning of individuals. Presumably, very brief cognitive coaching interventions would have more limited impact on brain structure and functioning beyond the coaching sessions.

Cognition

Logical and scientific thinking is of primary interest in RE-CBC. The role of the coach is to enable coaches to initially appreciate the ABCs (Ellis, 1956, 1991) and that "things are neither good nor bad but thinking makes them so." As well, the coachee is helped to consider that his/her assumptions, interpretations, conclusions and evaluations are hypotheses rather than facts and to adopt a scientific outlook to challenge and dispute (accept or reject) them. Additionally, coaches are helped to apply simple rules of logic in order to recognize ways of thinking that are not sensible or logical (e.g., non-sequitur—"Does it follow that because your prefer successful very much that you must always be successful?" "Does it follow that because you got fired from your job that you are a total failure?").

Semantics

RE-CB coaches are very much attuned to the words coaches use to express the way they are thinking about themselves, others, the world, the past, present and their future. Semantic precision is seen as being as important as logical and scientific

thought in the make-up of rationality. Words such as "always," "awful", "I am...", "I should..." and "I can't stand it" are seen as direct contributors to the degree of emotional upset of a coachee. REB coaches employ semantic disputing (e.g., "This is awful <u>means,</u> the worst thing in the world. Is getting fired the worst thing that could happen to you or in the world." "I am a failure <u>means</u> a total failure at everything. Do you really think you are a total failure at everything?").

Philosophy

REBT and, hence, RE-CBC is very philosophical based in part on ethical humanism which puts human beings in the center of their universe capable of making independent decisions and forming individualistic views of the world. Ellis indicated that the world view of individuals consist of both rational and irrational beliefs—the beliefs functioning as a filter and evaluative mechanism. RE-CB coaches are well familiar with the lists of rational and irrational beliefs identified by Ellis as major players in the individuals desire to live a life with a minimum of misery and a maximum of happiness and fulfilment. According to Ellis (1994), a belief is irrational if:

1. It distorts reality.
2. It is illogical.
3. It prevents you from reaching your goals.
4. It leads to unhealthy emotions.
5. It leads to self-defeating behavior.

Irrational Idea No. 1: *The idea that it is a dire necessity for an adult human being to be loved or approved by virtually every significant other person in his community.*

Irrational Idea No. 2: *The idea that one should be thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving in all possible respects if one is to consider oneself worthwhile.*

Irrational Idea No. 3: *The idea that certain people are bad, wicked, or villainous and that they should be severely blamed and punished for their villainy.*

Irrational Idea No. 4: *The idea that it is awful and catastrophic when things are not the way one would very much like them to be.*

Irrational Idea No. 5: *The idea that human unhappiness is externally caused and that people have little or no ability to control their sorrows and disturbances.*

Irrational Idea No. 6: *The idea that if something is or may be dangerous or fearsome one should be terribly concerned about it and should keep dwelling on the possibility of its occurring.*

Irrational Idea No. 7: *The idea that it is easier to avoid than to face certain life difficulties and self-responsibilities.*

Irrational Idea No. 8: *The idea that one's past history is an all-important determiner of one's present behavior and that because something once strongly affected one's life, it should indefinitely have a similar effect.*

Irrational Idea No. 9: *The idea that there is invariably a right, precise, and perfect solution to human problems and that It is catastrophic if this perfect solution is not found*

Irrational Idea 12: *The idea that you can give people (including yourself) a global rating as a human and that their general worth depends upon the goodness of their performances.*

Bernard (2011a, 2011b) in his book, *Rationality and the Pursuit of Happiness,* enumerated a list of rational beliefs he calls rational principles of living that he abstracted from the work of Ellis.

Rational Principle 1. Self-interest. *Rather than spending all of my time in meeting the needs of others, I make a point of spending some of my time doing things I find interesting and enjoyable.*

Rational Principle 2. Social interest. *In exploring my own interests, I make sure that my actions do not hurt others or interfere with their rights. I treat others with care and respect.*

Rational Principle 3. Self-direction. *I do not wait around for other people (family, work, government) to do things to make me happy. Rather, I actively plan for those experiences that I think will bring me pleasure and satisfaction. I also make decisions about those activities that bring me displeasure and see if they can be shared or minimised.*

Rational Principle 4. Self-acceptance. *When I have not been successful in important tasks at work or have been criticized or rejected by someone whose opinion I value, I do not put myself down or take it personally. I accept myself as a fallible human being who sometimes makes mistakes or who possesses traits that may not always be appreciated by others.*

Rational Principle 5. Tolerance of Others. *When someone behaves unfairly or disrespectfully, I am able to keep separate the person's negative behaviour and actions from my overall judgment of their value or worth as a person.*

Rational Principle 6. Short-term and long-term hedonism. *While I enjoy immediate gratification (fun, joy, pleasure, excitement), I also have a clear focus on what I want to achieve in the long term in order to be satisfied with my work, health and family life. I balance time spent having fun with the hard work and sacrifice needed to achieve my longer-term goals.*

Rational Principle 7. *Commitment to creative, aborbing activities and pursuits. I make a real effort to discover activities that are fun and exciting and when practised over an extended period result in fulfilment. When I discover what I am interested in, I commit time and energy to the activity.*

Rational Principle 8. *Risk taking and experimenting. In order to find experiences that bring me heightened or new enjoyments, I experiment with many tasks and projects to discover what I really want. I am prepared to step out of my comfort zone and I am willing to risk defeat or rejection.*

Rational Principle 9. High frustration tolerance and willpower. *When I make a decision about something I want to do that can bring me success at work, enrich*

a relationship, or improve my health, I follow up with hard work and effort no matter the degree of frustration or discomfort.

Rational Principle 10. Problem solving. *When I am faced with a problem at work or home, I apply methods that help to solve the problem such as time management or conflict resolution (practical problem solving). When I am faced with a problem, I apply methods that help me to stay calm. I take responsibility for my own feelings without blaming others. I base my thinking on the facts. I change my demands into preferences, I don't blow the 'badness' of the event out of proportion, and I use positive, rational self-talk (emotional problem solving).*

Rational Principle 11. Scientific thinking and flexibility. *I do not solely rely on the opinion of others about the way I should do things. I am open-minded and evaluate the best ways to live my life based on my experiences and opportunities. When I am in a rut or things are not working out, I am flexible in changing the way I do things.*

Especially when conducting developmental, life coaching dedicated time is spent with the coachee bringing irrational and rational beliefs to their attention.

Rational Living in an Irrational World

Rational living assists people deal with what Ellis referred to as the *muddles and puddles of life* and as a consequence, find it easier both to solve specific problems and to grow and flourish. Ellis was a pioneer in that he not only developed a cognitive-behavioral theory of deficits but also on how people can thrive and live a happy life.

Albert Ellis spoke on the topic of how to live rationally in a world filled with irrationalities and wrote and spoke about the many un-niceties or irrationalities that continue to exist in the world that impinge on our ability to live fulfilled lives including: war, political suppression, political skulduggery, pollution and ecological neglect, the population explosion, people's addictions (alcohol, drugs, over-eating), gambling, child abuse, the educational system, government budgets, excessive money spent on rituals (weddings, funerals), fashion trends, astrology, suggestibility, religious revivals, sexism and racism.

Ellis makes the case that one does not have to overly upset themselves when faced with irrationality and by adopting a rational viewpoint, you can do your best at helping change the outside world including the poor behaviour of others.

> Let's suppose you or I do perceive that the world is execrable in many respects. We don't merely say to ourselves, 'Isn't that fascinating! Since I live in a crummy society, what can I do about it? Or if I can't do much about it, how can I live happily in spite of it?' That would be sanity, but instead we make some crazy conclusions. We tell ourselves, first of all, 'Because that front-page news is bad, as it very frequently is, it's *awful,* it's *horrible,* it's *terrible. I can't stand* those wars, muggings, and superstitions.'

Now, it's *not* awful, terrible, and horrible. There are few things in the universe that are awful and terrible and horrible, if we define our terms clearly. The only things that exists in the universe are things that are obnoxious, deplorable, a pain in the ass. Bad things exist, and they exist by virtue of a value system that we bring to situations.

Comprehensive RE-CBC: Processes and Techniques

Over the past decades, coaches, especially CBC-oriented ones, have employed elements of REBT with people presenting with a variety of problems and challenges of daily living across all areas of their life to obtain a powerful change effect. Their main reference guides to RE-CBC practice and its methods can be found in REBT therapy books, which they have adapted as well as the books written on CBC (e.g., Williams, Edgerton, & Palmer, 2010) that have incorporated some REBT/RE-CBC methods.

In the next sections of the book we present how the theoretical foundations of RE-CBC contribute to a comprehensive guide of RE-CBC coaching techniques and illustrate the deployment of RE-CBC methods to areas currently addressed in all forms of coaching.

The RE-CBC Coaching Relationship

In RE-CBC, the coaching relationship is characterized by *collaborative empiricism*, which is seen as a partnership for collaboration in achieving the established goals, and adopting an experimental, curious approach to change. Thus, developing a collaborative coach-coachee relationship is considered the basis for co-investigating, problem solving and obtaining long lasting change. Additional to other important ingredients for a successful coach-coachee relationship (e.g., empathy, trust, respect), collaborative relationship is the main component RE-CBC (supported also by scientific evidences; Grant, 2014), which include mutual goal and task agreement.

Assessment and Conceptualization in RE-CBC

RE-CBC makes use of comprehensive assessment for raising awareness regarding the realities of the current state or issues presented by the coachee (e.g., skills, maladaptive behaviors). Also, mechanisms considered in the change process are assessed in order to be used during the formulation and change process (e.g., performance interfering cognitions, unhealthy emotions, behavioral contingencies, etc.). Assessment and feedback are considered important not only at the beginning of the RE-CBC but also during the change process, for offering awareness on the results

of action plan implementation, and at the end of the process for making known the level of goal attainment.

During the past few decades, CBC was oftentimes developed as a hybrid between RE-CBC, CT theories, and solution-focused approaches. Indeed, most of the research was done for CBC entitled solution-focused CBC (e.g., Grant, 2017) and the CBC as rational coaching based on REBC (e.g., Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008). In RE-CBC a coach will rely on the ABC model in order to raise awareness on the reasoning and its consequences, and discuss with the coachee the human tendency of interpreting and evaluating life events from both an unrealistic as well as a rational viewpoint—and that everyone has choices in the way they think. Coaches listen for and at times assist coachees to identify faulty ways of thinking (e.g., unrealistic beliefs; cognitive errors) as well as their use of emotionally-laden, subjective words that lead to emotional and behavioral obstacles. Thus, a core belief often discussed in coaching is *emotional responsibility*: namely, that people are not affected by events but by the view of events.

RE-CBC has developed a few valid assessment tools, such as standardized questionnaires (e.g., the Managerial Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale; David, 2013), observation grids (e.g., the Managerial Coaching Assessment System; David & Matu, 2013), the momentary assessment of functional/dysfunctional emotions and beliefs (the MoodWheel app; David, 2013), and makes use of the sound tools borrowed from REBT/CBT, such as functional behavior analysis. Performance assessment systems can be used in order to obtain important information for performance coaching. Multi-rater tools are often used in organizational RE-CBC (executive, managerial) for obtaining a realistic perspective on the situation, and the Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Assessment (Gavita, Freeman, & Sava, 2012) can be used with this purpose. Direct observation is an important RE-CBC tool, especially when working in skill coaching (e.g., assertive communication, social skills etc.).

The Change Process in RE-CBC

RE-CBC uses a variety of directive, experiential, and educational, coaching techniques and structured case formulation and change models in order to assist coachees to become aware of and overcome their thinking, emotional and behavioral barriers and to discover ways of thinking, feeling and behaving that can enable them to live enjoyable and fulfilled lives. In Table 1 we present how the our new contextual ABC model can be used to guide RE-CBC assessment, conceptualization and guide the intervention (see also chapter "Assessment, Case Formulation and Intervention Models").

In using RE-CBC, coaches form a collaborative alliance with coachees which results in establishing realistic and meaningful goals for change, identifying and evaluating new pathways for reaching them, and addressing internal (e.g., feeling anxious, angry, procrastinating) and external (e.g., maladaptive relationships) barriers.

Table 1 RE-CBC assessment guided by the contextual ABC model

Components/ Tools	A Activating events and context		B Beliefs–Strengths and weaknesses		C Consequences: Behaviors, emotions, physiology, cognitions	
Assessment focus and conceptualization	Opportunities, threats Environment: Context, roles, culture, changes		Strengths, weaknesses Schemas, Beliefs, Mindset, Perspectives, Values, Personality characteristics		Behaviors, Emotions, Physiology, Cognitions Meaning and motivation	
Coaching focus	Goal	Problem	Goal	Problem	Goal	Problem
G - Examples goals/problems per area	"I want more friends", "I would like to go out more often", "I want to be more engaged in pleasant activities"	"I do not have friends", "I spend too much time on FB", "I do not like what I do for living"	"I want more meaning in my life", "I want to find work-life balance", "I want to build a healthier life perspective"	"I have lost my life meaning", "My work-life areas are in conflict", "My life perspective is that is not worth the effort"	"I want to feel happier" "I want to have higher performance in my work" "I want to relate better with my team"	"I feel stressed at work" "My performance at work has declined" "I have problems relating with my team"
Main coaching strategy*	Solution focused/Development focused	Practical problem solving	Development focused	Cognitive restructuring	Development focused	Behavior change, Emotional problem-solving, Skills building
Model selection (example)	GROW/GRAPE	PRACTICE	Generic, GRAPE	ABCDEFG	Generic, GRAPE	ABCDEFG

More specifically, REBC coaching has in its center two main focuses of the coaching, depending on coachee goals or presenting issues, namely:

1. Development focused RE-CBC, which aims at strengthening the coachee's rational living principles that contribute to adaptive, flexible and positive ways of thinking, feeling and behaving, through using a variety of coaching different activities. This type of coaching makes use of the rational living principles and uses action plans for helping the coachee to implement changes.
2. Problem focused RE-CBC which aims at helping coaches to effectively solve life problems, be them emotional or practical. When confronted with emotional problems, the coach assists the coachee to identify, challenge and modify their irrational beliefs (based on the ABC-DE model for change), thereby creating more realistic and useful beliefs resulting in more helpful thoughts, emotions and goal-directed behavior.

Development Focused RE-CBC

In developmental REBC, various strategies are used to enable the coachee to adopt a rational living mindset allowing the coachee to be more happy and productive. Happiness goals are also brought to REBC by clients and Albert Ellis was especially dedicated to helping people achieve long term happiness, satisfaction and

fulfillment in life. Bernard (2011a, 2011b) collected a series of strategies that he proposed for long term happiness, that are constituting the basis of Development focused RE-CBC:

1. assisting coachees to assess their long-term goals in one (e.g., relationships; work) or all domains of life and then developing own rationality and social competences for reaching them;
2. helping coachees to discover and use their strengths (e.g., character and personality traits, hobbies), among which is rationality, in order to have success at work and be more happy;
3. helping coaches to use their adapting coping resources, including their rational mindset, for reducing the periods of negative emotionality and stress when confronted with adversity in all the domains of their lives (e.g., loss of job, loss of partner, low performance at work etc.).

Thus, the goal of Development focused RE-CBC is self-actualization and long-term happiness which can be reached by developing a rational mindset in coachees, and helping them in applying it to daily living situations based on specific coaching implementation models (e.g., GRAPE).

Emotional Problem Focused RE-CBC

Problem-focused RE-CBC refers to offering help to coachees in solving their *practical problems* or *emotional problems*. Thus, when clients seek the problem focused RE-CBC, they feel stuck regarding a specific life problem, but are generally highly functional at the important levels. Strategies used in this type of RE-CBC are directed towards developing a *problem-solving mindset in life*, using various models and strategies, depending on the type of the problem, emotional or practical.

The ABC/ABC(DEF) model is the main model of REBT (Ellis, 1962, 1994), postulating that our emotional, behavioral or physiological reactions (Cs—consequences) about regarding the adversity in which we may find ourselves (As—Adversities/Activating events) are determined in great part by our Beliefs about them (Bs). The ABC model was further developed by Dryden (see the "Life Coaching" chapter) into the situational ABCDEFG framework, in order to adapt change steps for the coaching field and underlie the need to assess the context of coachee's reactions. G step stands for setting a Goal for change (the new adaptive C), the D step being stands for Disputing or restructuring coachee's irrational thinking, using a dialectical process; E is referring to the effects of the new approach or rational beliefs, and the F standing for Facilitating the change or functional consequences or the new philosophy of life. The ABC model can integrate problem solving models for changing the As (such as the PRACTICE model) or can be integrated in other models, depending on client goals/needs, and this book gives a detailed comprehensive perspective on the models that can be used in RE-CBC.

There are four types of irrational beliefs (IBs; or Performance interfering thoughts—PITs) that are the focus of self-awareness and change efforts into rational beliefs (RBs):

(a) Demandingness (DEM), which is the primary absolutist, dogmatic and illogical belief (e.g., 'I must have high achievements at work'); its RB alternative is Preferences (PREF) type of attitudes, as flexible, realistic and logic beliefs concerning own desires (e.g., "I prefer to have high achievements at work, but this does not mean that I must have"). There are three types of beliefs that are considered secondary to DEM (Montgomery et al., 2007).

(b) Awfulising (AWF), which refers to a catastrophic evaluation of the adversities (e.g., 'It is awful to not obtain high achievements at work.'); its RB alternative is badness (BAD) or non-awfulizing type of beliefs, involving a realistic evaluation of the adversities (e.g., "It is bad but not awful when I do not obtain high performance at work");

(c) Frustration intolerance (FI), which refers to person's evaluation about the inability to tolerate the frustration steaming from the adversity (e.g., "I cannot stand not to have high achievements at work"); its alternative RB is frustration tolerance (FT) beliefs, when the person considers the negative situation/emotions tolerable ("I do not like this situation but I can tolerate it and move forward").

(d) Depreciation of self/others/life, which refers to making global negative evaluations (GE; e.g., "I am incompetent"); its alternative RB is unconditional acceptance (UA) beliefs, when the person considers herself/others/life acceptable without conditions, and commits towards changing specific aspects that could make them more successful/enjoyable (e.g., "I can accept my manager and try to check the reasons for his lack of appreciation regarding my efforts").

The main characteristic of RE-CBC, as compared to CBC, refers to using what Ellis has called the *elegant solution* in producing deep philosophical changes. This is accomplished by building a rational mindset and restructuring irrational core beliefs by strengthening rational beliefs. The elegant solution is considered preferable to only focusing on building client's self-esteem, by developing unconditional self-acceptance (USA) for eliminating any type of global self-evaluation and focusing on assessing behaviors that can be changed. The USA philosophical change refers to unconditionally accepting oneself as an imperfect human being, when doing well or poorly, and whether or not being loved or hated.

Socratic questioning is used as a powerful guided discovery and inquiry dialogue for cultivating awareness and changing their perspectives. This way, the coachee is encouraged in reaching own conclusions rather than the coach indicating a solution. In Socratic dialogue the coach uses questions in order to help clients to examine their thinking objectively in terms of accuracy (logical and empirical) and usefulness. Thus, there are three disputing strategies (Dryden, DiGiuseppe, & Neenan, 2002) that can be used in the dialectic enquiry process of RE-CBC in which the coach engages the coachee:

(a) Logical disputing, by assessing the logic of the belief held by the coachee;
(b) Empirical disputing, by questioning the empirical evidence of the belief held by the coachee; and
(c) Pragmatic/functional disputing, by questioning whether the usefulness of belief held by the coachee.

Emotions are commonly divided into positive and negative feelings. Ellis (1994) has proposed the binary model of distress, which distinguishes between two types of emotions that appear in various aversive situations (As):

- Functional (i.e., healthy/helpful) negative emotions (e.g., sadness, concern, annoyance, remorse);
- Dysfunctional (unhealthy/unhelpful) negative emotions (e.g., depressed mood, anxiety/panic, anger, guilt).

Functional and dysfunctional emotions can be distinguished based on specific criteria: their subjective experiences; their associated cognitions (e.g., rational or irrational beliefs); and the consequences of these feelings (e.g., adaptive versus maladaptive behaviors).

REBT and RE-CBC aim at helping clients solving their emotional problems, namely changing their dysfunctional negative emotions into negative functional emotions. In other words, when confronted with negative situations, it is adaptive to experience negative functional emotions, in order to be motivated to change the situation, but is maladaptive to experience dysfunctional emotions due to their maladaptive consequences (i.e., anxiety impedes people from adaptively solving the situation or performing adequately). Dryden (2018) proposes a series of criteria based on which a decision can be made for addressing an emotion in RE-CBC, among which is its dysfunctional character described above, and the coachee being stuck in terms of reaching its goal due to this emotional problem. Also, the emotion needs to be specific to a context, in the low-mild range, with recent onset and recognized by the coachee. In order to change the dysfunctional emotion (e.g., anxiety in Emotional Problem focused RE-CBC), based on the ABC(DEFG) model, the coach will follow a series of steps that involve identifying the irrational beliefs connected to the anxiety and challenging the client based on Socratic questioning to change them into rational beliefs.

Practical Problem Focused RE-CBC

Coaching and RE-CBC, based on its traditional REBT, are mainly about behavior change and action, and not only raising insight and awareness. Thus, a variety of tools have been traditionally developed for helping clients move to action, and implement the desired behavioral changes in their lives.

When working with clients on Problem focused RE-CBC, the coach is assisting clients in solving their practical problems or finding solutions for their behavior

change goals, using solution focused or problem-solving action oriented models (e.g., (e.g., PRACTICE, GROW; Palmer, 2008). Behavior change tools used to facilitate the RE-CBC change process are comprehensive assessment and feedback, action plans, assignments, and monitoring (e.g., using forms). Awareness regarding the behavioral characteristics and contingencies is raised using sound assessment tools, such as standardized questionnaires (e.g., the Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Assessment), observation (e.g., the Managerial Coaching Assessment System with direct role play of the behavior), interviews (e.g., performance) or functional behavior analysis. After conducting a comprehensive assessment, feedback is then given regarding the behavior in order to raise awareness on the current realities and its mechanisms. Then the coachee is assisted in developing a comprehensive action plan for changing the behavior in relation to her/his goal. Close feedback and monitoring is provided during the implementation of the action plan is provided and the goals and action plan is adjusted according to coachee's progress. Moreover, emotional obstacles and motivation stage for change are considered at all these phases and adequate cognitive change tools are used in order to address them (the ABC model, motivation interview).

RE-CBC: Personal and Organizational Applications

Over the past few decades or longer, RE-CBC coaching has been used with people presenting with a variety of problems and challenges of daily living across all areas of their life (leadership, professional etc.). RE-CBC has been used primarily in life coaching due to its perfect fit of already developed REBT theory. Dryden (2018) has done the pioneering work in this field and contributed to developing the RE-CBC theory with its distinctive features and processes. Life coaching based on the RE-CBC approaches life goals based on the principles, change process and the models presented above. There are applications of the RE-CBC for various fields described in this book, depending on the target population and domain, among which are Stress Management Coaching, Health Coaching, Performance Coaching, Motivational Coaching, Parent and Family Coaching, couples Coaching, Student Coaching for School Success, and Sport Coaching.

RE-CBC has been first extended to the organizational field by DiMattia (1990) in the form of Rational Effectiveness Training (RET), based on the work of Ellis 1972; Ellis & Blum, 1967; Ellis & DiMattia, 1991 on executive leadership. RET is the first comprehensive model specifying how to apply the REBC principles in the workplace. More specifically, DiMattia proposed a set of principles of rationality in organizations that can be the basis of executive DF-REBC, such as: Self-knowledge, Flexibility, Realism and reality acceptance, Unconditional self-acceptance and self-confidence, Respect for self and others, Discomfort and frustration tolerance, Aiming at long term benefits, Taking calculated risks, Being balanced: taking breaks and having an optimal life-work balance.

RET was conceptualized a four steps change process, corresponding to the ABC(DEF) model, that can be used both in individual or group work: Step 1: identifying the problems faced by clients; Step 2: establishing goals for change; Step 3: addressing behavioral, emotive and cognitive obstacles that interfere with the goals; Step 4: analyzing the above mentioned three components, with the behavioral one being primarily addressed. More recent developments brought further contributions to the theory of organizational RE-CBC, specify its use in the leadership development and work performance (Kirby, 1993; Grieger & Fralick, 2007; Bernard, 2016).

The RE-CBC was developed based on the *rational model of executive leadership* proposed by Ellis 1972; David, 2016. Ellis discussed essential leadership strengths such as rational sensitivity, concentration, discipline, rational decisions, effective communication and unconditional acceptance. Grieger and Fralick (2007) further developed these components under the name *the tree of extraordinary leadership*, using the categories of results, means and source. *The Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching model* (Gavita, Freeman, & Sava, 2012) uses an integrative and multi-modal framework based on an initial multi-source assessment and derives a profile with recommendations for change using RE-CBC based principles for developing problematic areas and capitalizing on the strengths of the executive. *The Rational Leadership Program* is a RE-CBC program developed by David, Ionicioiu, Imbarus, & Sava (2016) using executive coaching and integrating many of the models and techniques presented above. It consists of a 5 h workshop focused on managerial performance mindset, managerial coaching, leadership, and self-regulation strategies, followed by three executive coaching sessions. Another comprehensive RE-CBC program is *The Rational Managerial Coaching Program* (rMCP; 2014) which uses the models and rational leadership theory for developing leadership and gives a special focus on building managerial coaching skills.

Bernard developed a RE-CBC performance coaching program, named the *High performance mindset at work* (HPMW; Bernard, 2016), integrating REBT theory with positive psychology and various concepts from other theories (e.g., character strengths, psychological capital, mindfulness, authenticity, self-efficacy). This performance coaching program uses a *high performance capability framework* and focuses on developing the *architecture of the high performance mindset. The HPMW* uses a survey for identifying commitments, supporting beliefs and behavioral strengths of the coachee. Then, HPMW coach can use the results for designing an individual action plan for the person, using helping materials such as forms with sections for strengthening commitments and for planning how to deal with tough situations at work.

The Evidence-Base of RE-CBC

While the field of coaching has received pressured to develop ahead of its scientific knowledge, recently more and more research results have been published. Most of the studies conducted to date, using qualitative methods, have employed a

cognitive-behavioral approach to coaching, and meta-analyses have shown (De Meuse, Dai, & Lee, 2009; Jones, Woods, & Guillaume, 2016; Theeboom, Beersma, & van Vianen, 2014) that CBC (solution-focused) brings moderate to high effect size outcomes in the workplace (strong effect sizes for individual level performance and medium for the others). In other words, CBC is the best supported approach to coaching, and has been found to bring powerful effects.

RE-CBC has from the beginning a strong advantage given by the empirical support received by its positive applications relevant to coaching, such as REE, RET and REBT for the workplace (see Trip, Vernon, & McMahon, 2007; Klarreich, DiGiuseppe, & DiMattia, 1987). David and Szamoskozi (2011) conducted a meta-analysis on CBT effectiveness in the workplace and found that REBT had the larger effect sizes. Among the outcomes, high effect sizes were documented for changes in irrationality and medium changes for emotional distress and its consequences after participating in workplace REBT.

RE-CBC effectiveness was investigated mostly in relation to its workplace outcomes. Palmer and Gyllensten (2008) describe the effects of REBC on preventing client's depressed mood in a case study; they used multiple techniques for raising self-awareness of emotional reactions and to tackle procrastination. Using a quasi-experimental design, Gyllensten and Palmer (2005) investigated the effects of REBC on stress using a sample of 31 employees from a UK finance organisation. Their results showed lower anxiety and stress compared to the control condition for the participants in the REBC group. Effectiveness of the Rational Managerial Caching Program (David & Matu, 2013; Ratiu, David, & Baban, 2017) and Rational Leadership Program (David et al., 2016) were investigated in a series of studies and positive results were found in terms of their effects on performance, stress, rational mindset, and leadership. Moreover, mechanisms of change analyses supported the hypothesis that the rational mindset and mood improvement are determining predictors of change, which is supporting the REBT/RE-CBC theory.

Another recent study (Ogbuanya et al., 2017) documented the effectiveness of RE-CBC on occupational stress and work ability among electronics workshop instructors. Participants the REBC group (108 electronic workshop instructors) reported lower occupational stress, work related irrational beliefs, and an increase in work ability compared to participants in the waitlist control group, and these improvements were maintained at 3-month follow-up.

Effectiveness of the RE-CBC models presented above was investigated in several studies. David and Cobeanu (2015) investigated the effectiveness of the generic ABC(DEF) model in the personal development of students enrolled in a RE-CBC course. One hundred and five students used the ABC(DEF) form for monitoring and carrying out their established action plans. Results have shown that participants using the model reported at the end of the course lower levels of depressed mood and improved work performance. Changes in their irrational beliefs and the quality of their homework tasks were found as mechanisms of change for their outcomes. David et al. (2014) examined the active components of the ABC(DEF) model in a qualitative study. Three hundred and forty ABC(DEF) completed self-monitoring forms of the students were collected and coded by external raters in accordance with

the REBC theory. Results showed that DEM, AWF and GE are most frequently reported when forms are used for anxiety, while low FT is associated with anger. Pragmatic cognitive restructuring was the most frequently used by trainees and most of them reported functional emotions at the F. These studies offer evidence for the positive effects of using the ABC(DEF) model for personal development.

In another recent study (Comsa & David, in preparation) we investigated the comparative efficacy of the GROW (solution focused) versus PRACTICE (problem solving and REBT based) models in coaching. Our results supported the efficacy of both models without notable differences in terms of their outcomes. Thus, the superiority of solution focused model was not supported by our empirical investigation.

Based on the data presented above, one can conclude that RE-CBC is a form of coaching that is using evidence-based theory, models and programs. Moreover, since the studies mentioned above were conducted on various nations (Nigeria, Romania, USA and UK), we can conclude that there are important proofs of cross-cultural suitability of the RE-CBC. However, we need to temper our conclusions since there are important limitations that need to be overcome in coaching in general and in RE-CBC, especially concerning with the use of sound methodologies and investigating the mechanisms of change.

Future studies need to use strong designs and adequate measures in order to be able to draw clear conclusions in terms of RE-CBC efficacy and effectiveness. This is not an easy to so task however due to the characteristics of both the coaching and its clients (high costs, status, organizational contracts). Moreover, the RE-CBC field needs to develop its own methods since it was suggested (Stober & Grant, 2006) that methods specific to the clinical field might not be the most adequate for it.

Appendix: References: REBC Literature Chronology

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Albert Ellis Coaches Problems of Daily Living

Michael E. Bernard

This chapter shares much of the wisdom of Albert Ellis as reflected in how he conceptualized problems of everyday living as well as in the way he coached people to make significant changes in their reason, emotion and behaviour. The second half of the chapter includes transcriptions of Albert Ellis in his own words demonstrating how the ABCs of REBT helps people to overcome emotional problems and to be better at solving problems.

One of the reasons I can integrate the theory and practice of REBT into the lives of people I coach who are experiencing stress, work problems, challenges with their children, other problems of daily living as well as those who simply want to be happier, productive and more fulfilled in different life domains is that I have listened to hundreds of hours of tape recordings of Albert Ellis conducting Friday night sessions for the general public, *Problem of Everyday Living* conducted at the Albert Ellis Institute in New York as well many hours of his public lectures delivered all over the world. Ellis shared with me these tapes from his archives while I was preparing the book, *Rationality and the Pursuit of Happiness. The Legacy of Albert Ellis* (Bernard, 2011).

To my knowledge, Ellis never used the word *coach* to describe his role in helping people without mental health problems live self-actualized, fulfilled lives. Yet, when you read accounts (e.g., case studies) of his work with high functioning leaders and managers that appear in his early writings including teaching them the ABCs and rational beliefs, (e.g., see Ellis, 1972, *Executive Leadership: A Rational Approach*), it is apparent that he was an incredibly talented coach. One reason was his intelligence and capacity to understand and, therefore, empathize with all sorts of people. He wrote about how REBT provided practitioners with

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advanced empathy, the ability to understand people's thoughts, feeling and actions very quickly—sometimes, before people recognized these qualities in themselves. Additionally, Ellis was an amazing practical, problem-solver, a skill he passed onto to his clients at the same time as he was guiding them to solve emotional problems.

Ellis frequently said he had a *gene for efficiency*—he liked to get things solved quickly and this gene he applied when helping solve the problems of his clients and coachees. He didn't spend time cultivating warm relationships with people he was seeing before taking action—he took action quickly knowing that solving people's problems was what mattered—and helps develop relationships.

As far as what might be called Ellis' *style of coaching*, it was more directive and psycho-educational than current 'best practice' coaching guidelines indicate. Ellis hopped straight into a problem-solving mode frequently opening the communication asking: "What problem would you like to talk about?" He assumed that most people seeking guidance and support had the goals of long-life, happiness and success with a minimum of emotional misery. He had implicit faith in his REBT methods and showed people the benefits of rational beliefs and using the ABCs to identify and change irrational beliefs. He quickly zeroed in on people's irrationalities challenging them to justify and explain their thinking: "Where is the evidence?", "Where it is written?" "Does it really make sense to demand what you prefer" are some of the questions he would ask and frequently answer didactically—especially early on in his sessions.

We have learned from experience in training others in REBT and REBC methods that people do not have to adopt Ellis' style and, instead, incorporate the wisdom of REBT theory and its' powerful method of changes to suit their personalities as well as the perceived needs of individuals in therapy and those being coached.

REBT Retrospective

Based on the thought of Albert Ellis over the past 70 years, an approach to modern-day living has evolved. This approach not only shows how the distinctly human mental faculty of *rationality* can help most everyone to be less unhappy and emotionally miserable when faced with adversities, unfortunate or frustrating events, but also how they can live an enjoyable, pleasurable, fulfilled and happy life.

When employed in counselling and therapy, the approach is called *rational emotive behavior therapy* and was created by Ellis as a new way of helping people who experience significant emotional distress and interpersonal problems. As a guide for people with and without emotional difficulties, who seek greater happiness and fulfilment, the approach is called *rational living* and was first written about by Albert Ellis in the 1960s (e.g., Ellis & Harper, 1975).

The rational approach to modern-day living involved Albert Ellis teaching people that they are the center of their own universe who are largely in control of their own destinies and, in particular, who can control their own emotional well being.

"REBT, then, has dual goals: 1. To help people overcome their emotional blocks and distur-
bances and 2. To help them grow according to their own goals and designs, to become more
fully functioning, more self-actualizing and happier than they would otherwise be." (Ellis,
1962)

Rational beliefs, also referred to as *principles of rational living* are the essential
ingredients of a philosophy of personal happiness that Ellis provided for people to
help them to live enjoyable, enriched, satisfying and pleasurable lives. Millions of
people have profited from these principles that have helped them to think, feel and
act in ways that aid their search for happiness. Ellis' well known self-help books
have sold millions of copies world-wide including his best seller, first published in
1961 written with Robert Harper, '*A New Guide to Rational Living*' and re-written
in 1975.

One of the unique and appealing aspects of Albert Ellis is that he discussed both
the philosophy of happiness and the psychology of and therapy for emotional mis-
ery in a way that can be readily understood. When REBT is practised as a form of
counselling or coaching, it is very educational without relying on the extensive use
of psychological jargon. Rather than analyzing early childhood experiences and
intra-psychic conflict amongst the id, ego and superego, Ellis spends his time with
people in therapy showing them how to use a very simple scientific method called
the ABCs of REBT in order to think more scientifically and flexibly about them-
selves, others, and the world.

Ellis is quite clear in his assertion that reduced emotional unhappiness and
increased emotional health is necessary, but not sufficient for people to achieve hap-
piness and fulfilment. For Ellis, there is another journey that needs to be taken.
Here, the specific direction is less well charted. Because of the wide range of differ-
ences amongst people in terms of their interests, desires and pleasures, the pursuit
of happiness needs to be more experimental, including the need to take risks. The
journey towards happiness can be made more efficient if the captain of the ship
(you) are employing your capacity for rationality to its fullest. As I describe in
another chapter of this book, *Rationality in Coaching,* there are a dozen or so prin-
ciples of rational living that Ellis offers to help people to think, feel and act in ways
that help them discover more ways to enjoy life and have a ball.

The Purpose and Goals of Life

What people choose to do in life is naturally enough associated with the overall
goals and purposes they have for living. Ellis proposesd the following goals and
purposes as those that most human beings in western societies would accept for
themselves.

Ellis proclaimed that the most general and far-reaching goal most people share in
common is to live a long and happy life. According to Ellis, the attainment of this
goal is facilitated when three conditions (or sub-goals) exist: (1) People are achiev-
ing to the best of their ability in their chosen field of work endeavour that they find

interesting and absorbing, (2) People are involved in satisfying and loving relationships with significant others (partner, family, friends, social group), and (3) People experience a minimum of needless pain and emotional misery as well as a maximum of comfort and pleasure.

Ellis recognized that there are many different life strategies or personal philosophies that determine how people go about realizing these goals and purposes. Which one works best is an open question. That is, it is impossible to say in any final, absolute sense, which approach will be most beneficial for an individual.

Coaching Emotional vs. Practical Problems

Ellis helped illuminate two types of problems that people who are considering coaching present with. *Practical problems* are those that people experience with reality. Common examples are sub-standard work performance (e.g., failing a test; not achieving monthly performance goals) and interpersonal difficulties and challenges with family, friends and at work (e.g., partner giving you a hard time, colleague not following through on a commitment, manager treating you disrespectfully, ending of a relationship, meeting someone new).

Emotional problems are generally those extreme emotional reactions inside you (e.g., panic, depression, self-hatred, rage) about a reality problem with something or someone. Ellis says that once you recognize your reality problem, you can try to solve it,—or you can foolishly choose to make yourself extremely upset about it.

Ellis encouraged people to do their best to solve their practical problems and provides many methods that are widely employed in business, industry, management, and education. The following lists some of the methods he suggests (from Ellis, 1999, *How to Make Yourself Happy and Remarkably Less Disturbed*).

- Avoid taking on to many problems that have deadlines and that require quick solutions.
- Try a number of possible answers both in your head and sometimes in practice, even when at first blush, only one of them really seems suitable.
- Evaluate the pros and cons for each of your answers you consider and rank them for their possible good results.
- Try to rehearse some of your possible strategies and behaviors before you actually try them out.
- You can also achieve high frustration tolerance: that is. Convince yourself that life would be better if you solved your problems quite well, but it's not awful if you don't. You can still stand it. And you can also arrange to have a reasonably happy life when some of your important problems remain unsolved.

According to Ellis, people who are operating rationally seek to as quickly as possible become aware of and solve both their practical problems and emotional problems they have about practical problems.

"As you attempt to solve your practical life problems, look carefully to discover whether you have any emotional problems—such as feelings of anxiety or depression—about these practical issues. If so, actively seek out and actively dispute your dogmatic, musterbatory thinking that leads to emotional difficulties. When working to reduce your neurotic feelings, go back to your practical difficulties and use effective self-management and problem solving methods to tackle them." (Ellis, 1988)

In terms of practical problem solving, Ellis encouraged people to creatively explore the full range of alternatives to the problem with a particular eye on how people can still enjoy themselves in spite of their practical problems.

Happiness

Ellis' theory on the pursuit of happiness is not entirely objective and value free. Once the goals of long life, happiness, success, comfort, and love are chosen and Ellis sees these general purposes as matters of choice rather than as absolute givens—then Ellis proposes 'best' ways for people to think, feel, and behave including principles of rational living. Whether these ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving work for most of the people most of the time can be determined.

A very important point that Albert Ellis makes about happiness is that for many people, happy is not achieved through inertia and inactivity. Happiness does not fall in your lap because you are deserving. Rather, it is generally an outcome of work and practice in discovering those things you do well and enjoy doing (and those that you do not).

While Ellis would say that sustained levels of accomplishment at work and other avocations including satisfying loving relationships that provide individuals opportunities for emotional health (minimum emotional distress) are possible without large doses of rationality, he is a strong believer that by developing one's capacity for rationality, and applying a rational mindset to daily living, self-actualization and long-term happiness would be maximized.

Ellis' guide to rational living encourages people to experiment with their lifestyle and make choices based on personal knowledge and discovery that would bring them higher levels of excitement, passion, pleasure and zest in the short-term as well as pleasure, satisfaction and fulfilment in the long-term.

Ellis has said that while some people may experience significant pleasure and enjoyment of passive involvements such as watching television and reading the paper, most people tend to experience the highest levels of happiness both in the short-term and long-term when they actively participate in creative, and vitally absorbing activities.

Overcoming human inertia to experiment and discover individual pursuits and partners that bring pleasure and satisfaction in the short- and long-term and, then, maintaining and extending these involvements, is a cardinal principle underpinning Ellis' view on the successful pursuit of personal happiness.

In the short-term, Ellis considered happiness to be synonymous with the feelings of enjoyment and pleasure. In his early days, he was, perhaps, most known for his

pioneering work in sex and helping liberate people from conventional attitudes towards sexual experience. He provided people advice not only in therapy but also in his many self-help books. (e.g., *The Art and Science of Love* (Ellis, 1960)).

Ellis did not restrict his ideas on how to increase one's short-term happiness to the pleasures of the body. He encouraged people to experience life to its fullest in diverse areas of their potential interest to see what they would find stimulating, exciting and, yes, pleasurable.

Ellis provides guidelines for people to discover things to do that are personally absorbing and that bring them pleasure. In his book with Irving Becker *A Guide to Personal Happiness* (1982)*,* the kinds of actions people can take to bring about fuller living include:

1. You can attempt to get vitally absorbed in some persons or things outside yourself. Ideally, you can love both persons and things (and ideas).
2. Try to find some persons or things in which you can honestly get absorbed *for their own sake* and not for 'ego-raising' reasons. You have a perfect right as a human, to selfishly devote yourself to the most attractive person in town or to an avocation, such as coin collecting, which has relatively little social value.
3. In devoting yourself to any field of endeavour, try to choose a challenging, long-range project or area rather than something simple or short-ranged.
4. Don't expect vital absorptions to develop quickly. You may at first have to push yourself, experimentally and forcefully, into a certain field of endeavour, and make yourself stick at it for a reasonable period of time before you really begin to get absorbed in and fascinated by it.
5. Think about varying your interests and having some minor side project going, even if you get absorbed in some major endeavour. Humans dote on variety as well as sustained goals; and you can go stale if you only concentrate on one pursuit.
6. You can combat inertia and inaction by tracking down your own anxieties and hostilities that lie at their source.
7. It takes more than self-talk. In the final analysis, you often would better literally force yourself, propel yourself, and push yourself into action.
8. You can deliberately adopt a different role for a period of time and force yourself to live up to this assumed role. …for a week, act as one of the most outgoing and assertive individuals you may know.

Ellis discussed ways for ferreting out vital pleasures that may well apply to the individual. Uncovering people's idiosyncratic likes and dislikes largely involves them asking themselves-and as honestly as possible answering—several key questions.

1. "What might I like?" Ask this question on a regular basis. Ellis provides a list of some of the major areas in which people often find highly satisfying pursuits. He encourages people to find out more about those they find interesting. He encourages people to experiment with those they think they might enjoy.
2. "What things would I find zestful?" The challenge here is for people to discover what they uniquely like and dislike. The individual is never obligated to enjoy those

things that a majority of people seem to enjoy. "You, just because you are you, are fully entitled to your 'odd' or 'peculiar' values and disvalues. Remember that!"

3. "What do other people enjoy?" One of the best ways to discover what an individual really wants to do is to learn as much as they can about other people's gratifications, to think about how they might work for them, to try some of them on for size, and then to see how pleasing they really are. People would rarely love music, art, science, or anything else unless they had some real *information* about these interests.

4. "What will I probably like later?" Many pleasures of today not only pall tomorrow but also produce distinct disadvantages—smoking, for example, drinking alcohol- or running when you have problems with your feet. Other enjoyments—e.g., becoming adept at ballet or basketball—may serve your interests for awhile but be impractical in your later life. So people can look for enjoyments that will bring them pleasure today-but that will also probably provide a long-range involvement.

5. "What would probably be more enjoyable than some of the things I now do?" People's range of possible pleasures is so wide and their available time to pursue them so limited that choosing almost anything to throw themselves into often provides them with relatively limited gain.

6. "What are the costs of some of my pleasures?" Joining a country club may be a fine interest but can it be really afforded? Playing golf is a great sport but do people really have time for it? All pleasures have obvious or hidden costs of time, energy and money. So people had better ask themselves not only "Do I enjoy this pastime?" but also "Is it worth it?"

7. "How can I experiment with possible pleasures?" People can learn about what they like and dislike through experimentation—by trial and error. If they are wise, they will inform themselves about many possible pleasures and then experiment with at least several that they think they may personally enjoy.

8. "How long shall I persist in my pleasure-hunting experiments?" People had better try a would-be possible pleasure a reasonable number of times before they decide that they don't, and never will, like it.

9. "Need I ever feel ashamed or guilty about my enjoyments?" When people are feeling ashamed or guilty, they are telling themselves, a. "My acts are bad or wrong." and b. "I am a really rotten person for committing these rotten acts." The second belief is irrational. A person can make himself or herself feel like a person who is acting irresponsibly (to others and/or yourself) and who had better change his/her poor behavior. But that person had better not see himself or herself as a putrid, undeserving human.

Ellis was equally if not more interested in helping people achieve satisfaction and fulfilment in the long-term. For Ellis, long-term happiness is a by-product of people achieving their goals and purposes in life; namely, (1) using one's strengths of character and personality traits, including rationality to achieve and excel at work (employment) and in other endeavours (hobbies), (2) relying on one's social competences and rationality to experience loving relationships that endure with one or

more significant others including partner/spouse, family and close friends, and (3) through the use of personal, coping resources, including rational thought, experiencing minimum periods of heightened, negative emotionality and stress as a consequence of environmental adversity of one form or another (e.g., lack of achievement, loss of loved one, frustrating circumstances including deprivation and over-stimulation).

Finding Happiness: No Apologies Needed

Ellis wrote that anyone who tries to give you a prescription by which you can always feel happy, speaks foolishly or knavishly. Happiness, or a positive feeling of pleasure, joy or elation, tends to be a by-product of what people do, and people cannot easily gain it by prescription. What you as a unique human individual do and how much pleasure you get from doing it largely depends on your personal preferences, which others cannot very well predict. How much pleasure you get from going on a walk or sleeping with your spouse is individual.

As people are biologically, socially and culturally different from all other human beings, Ellis indicates happiness-advisors, coaches and psychologists had better not to too presumptive and try to tell people what they can most enjoy and how to go about achieving pinnacles of pleasure. In most ways, this is for the individual, and no one but the individual, to discover.

For almost six decades, Ellis advocated that everyone has the right, as a unique person, to choose to seek self-actualization.

> "If you look for an absorbing interest, try to find persons or activities in which you can honestly absorb yourself for your own sake. …You have a right as a human with your own personal tastes, to devote yourself 'selfishly' to an avocation—such as coin collecting or restoring antique cars—that has little 'social' value." (Ellis & Blau, 1998)

Ellis Live

What follows are the ways Ellis expressed to those he was coaching (members of the general public) how rationality, the ABCs and principles of rational living could be used by anyone as part of an action plan to overcome emotional and practical problems in order to live happier, more productive and fulfilled lives.

Ellis Uses the ABCs to Strengthen Self-Acceptance

Ellis' therapy of REBT and its derivative, rational-emotive behaviour coaching, is best known for its' ABC model of irrational thinking and emotional problems. Frequently, coachees present for coaching with emotional problems—that do not

quality as mental health disorders—but which are interfering with their progress towards important goals they have in life—at work, in relationship and healthy living. This is because human nature is such that almost everyone experiences intensely negative feelings and associated behaviors which if overcome through coaching can lead to them living happier and more fulfilling lives.

In the following public demonstration, Steven a counsellor who works with alcoholics, volunteers to discuss his desire to improve his work satisfaction including overcoming feelings of inadequacy.

Ellis: What problem would you like to start with, Steven?

Steven: Well, it has to do with my confidence in counselling. I work for an alcoholic rehabilitation centre. It's sort of a conflict between the expectations that I place on myself and those I feel others place on me too. I feel obliged to get success, even though I know in reality that you can't be successful all the time.

Ellis: Therefore, how do you feel when you're not successful?

Steven: Like a failure.

Ellis: All right. So at 'A' you failed at something-and certainly with your kind of clientele you will fail lots of times. And at 'C' you feel like *a failure.* Now what are you telling yourself at 'B' that makes you feel down?

Steven: 'I'm not competent, I lack skills. Other people are looking at me and saying, "He lacks skills" or "He's not competent".'

Ellis: Well, but, how can you prove this? I want evidence that just because you failed and someone says you're not competent as a counsellor where is the evidence that you are a Failure, with a capital F?

Steven: In the failures that I experience.

Ellis: But suppose, for example, you have a client who is psychotic, which you often do. And suppose you are unable to reach that client-very often you won't be able to reach a psychotic client. Now how does that prove that it was your doing, your failing?

Steven: In such an extreme case, it doesn't. But I'm talking about less extreme cases. You know, someone who seems fairly well adjusted but who wants to do something about his drinking.

I wouldn't call him psychotic.

Ellis: Well some of them are, let's face it! But let's suppose it's a normal nutty man and he's drinking a lot and you don't succeed in getting him to give it up. Do you see what your *must* is on yourself, when you say 'I'm a failure?' What's your *must?*

*S*teven: Well, I must get him to stop drinking, must be successful.

Ellis: I must what? 'I must get him to stop drinking?'

Steven: Right.

Ellis: But isn't your must a little stronger by saying, 'I must get *any* non-psychotic client to get better and stop drinking?' Well, what's your probability?

Steven: Apparently not very good.

Ellis: That's right! And as long as you're saying 'I *must* get any non-psychotic client to stop drinking or being otherwise disturbed,' you're going to fail at times. Then 'I am a failure' is a derivative of your *must.* But if you gave up that *must* you would tell yourself, 'I have failed this time but I'm not a total failure.' Do you see that that's so? Your self-downing stems from the *must.* Now, again, suppose you had a friend your age and your background and he's an alcohol counsellor at your center, too, and he fails at times. *Must* he succeed each time with each client?

Steven: Yeah.

Ellis: He must?

Steven: Well, I would have the same standards for that person as I have for myself.

Ellis: And if he didn't succeed what would you think of him?

Steven: Less than successful.

Ellis: Well he's less than successful with that client but would. you boycott him? What would you do?

Steven: My respect for him would be less.

Ellis: So you would put him down as a person. Is that right?

Steven: I tend to do that, yes.

Ellis: All right. Now do you see why that's wrong?

Steven: Yes.

Ellis: Why?

Steven: Well it's not allowing for human error, for fallibility.

Ellis: And also let's suppose we could prove that your friend was consistently rotten at counselling. Doesn't he have some other traits and acts?

Steven: Yeah, but he should change his job, he shouldn't be counsellor.

Ellis: Well, it might be wise if they could get better counsellors than he-which is a supposition. But if they really could and if he's lousy, consistently, at counselling, it would be okay for him to change his job. But suppose he decides, 'I have tenure and I decide to keep this job.' Is he a louse for keeping that job and not doing as well as some other counsellor would do? Is he a louse?

Steven: I would have trouble saying he's not. I would say that part of him is. I mean, I would still be able to see the other parts.

Ellis: You could say, if you want to, 'He's pretty lousy at counselling.' That would be okay. 'Much of the time he's pretty lousy.' But it still sounds like you're putting *him* down rather than his *behavior* down. And consistently, you are putting yourself down. So you're getting poetic justice! As long as you put

people down, disrespect *them,* despise *them,* for their crummy or inadequate *behavior,* you will be in trouble. Isn't that true?

Steven: Yeah.

Ellis: How could you not put people down when they act poorly, incompetently? How could you *not* damn them as humans?

Steven: Be more accepting.

Ellis: And how could you be more accepting? What could you do to become more accepting. That's the right answer, but that's a little vague. What can you do to become more accepting?

Steven: See the difficulty of their or my situation, see the realities that you can't be totally successful all the time.

Ellis: Very few can be!

Steven: Be less judgmental of their *being,* not less judgmental of their *actions.* Because you could be equally judgmental of their actions and say their *counselling* is not good. That's okay. You're jumping from rating their counselling to rating them, you see. And acceptance doesn't mean accepting their actions as good, it often means accepting their actions as *bad* but nonetheless accepting *them* as humans who do bad actions. You see? And you're downing people as I said, consistently-castigating you and them. And that's not going to work. But when you do it to you, when you down yourself because you failed with someone, how does that help you succeed with the next client?

Steven: It doesn't.

Ellis: Does it help you sabotage yourself with the next client?

Steven: Yes, it puts more pressure on me.

Ellis: That's right and if you say 'I'm a rotten counsellor' or 'I'm a rotten person' how can a shit be de-shitified? How is that possible?

Steven: (laughter)

Ellis: You see you're in an impossible bind and you're going to get a self-fulfilling prophecy. 'A shitty counsellor or a shitty person like me is *doomed* to act shittily with the next and the next and the next client! That thought will help you keep doing poorly. Isn't that so?

Steven: Yeah.

Ellis: So you're not going to be able very well to *correct* your shitty counselling or to do better with the next client. Does putting yourself down like that have an advantage? Self-rating does have an advantage. Do you know what it is? What do you think the advantage of downing yourself is? There is one advantage that you may not see but which is probably implicit in your negative thinking. Do you know what it is?

Steven: Always the expectation of success, it diminishes the feeling of failure.

Ellis: Well, that's true to some degree, but then you're going to still say 'I *should* have been successful' and you're going to knock yourself down. So

no, that's not a great advantage. The advantage is nobility. The reason we *rate* ourselves and *down* ourselves is because some day, hopefully we'll be perfect, *up* ourselves, and thereby get into heaven on the golden chariot.

But there isn't very much chance of that, is there? If you were perfect, that self-rating would be good. 'Oh boy, I'm going to rate myself and always do well and then I'll feel great and noble and king of the goddam May!' That would be okay! But, again, what are your chances?

Steven: Nil.

Ellis: Isn't that why people really rate themselves'? Don't they all aspire to nobility, to perfectness, to heaven? Isn't that the basic reason for doing the self-rating?

Steven: Well, yes. It's kind of like being a superhero and trying to get to heaven.

You can see from this session that Steven's self-downing resulted from not only the way he viewed his failure to live up to his own standards, but also because of his need for the approval of his job performance by others. As is the case with many self-downers, their irrational needs not only for achievement but also for people's approval causes them to upset themselves about their poor performance because they failed and also because they cannot tolerate being judged poorly by others. These 'self-downers' are, however, the poorest of mind readers. Because of the approval that they crave so much, they are very likely to over-estimate and misinterpret the extent to which others are putting them down for their imperfections.

Ellis Shows How to Overcome Rigid, Extreme and Irrational Beliefs

This is now Ellis explains the role of 'demandingness' to his clients. Helen is a 33 year old schoolteacher who is seeking relief from her feelings of inadequacy and anxiety.

Ellis: Let me give you a model which I frequently give to my clients the first session and if you understand the model-which I'm sure you will-you'll see how humans upset themselves. You leave here soon and imagine that you don't know how much money you have in your purse or pocket. Imagine that you're totally ignorant. You could have a dollar or you could have fifty thousand. You just don't know and you're only saying one single thing to yourself: 'I wish, I prefer to have minimum of ten dollars. Not a hundred, not two

hundred, just ten. I wish. I'd like, I prefer to have a minimum of ten'. That's *all* that you're saying to yourself. Then you look in your pocket and you find nine instead of ten. Now, how would you feel if you preferred ten and had nine? What would your feeling be?

Helen: Well, I'd just as soon have nine and that's it.

Ellis: So you wouldn't feel very upset?

Helen: No.

Ellis: You'd feel slightly disappointed.

Helen: Yes, but not upset.

Ellis: Not upset at all. Right, now the second time-forget about the first time-this time you're going out, this time you're devoutly saying to yourself and really believing 'I *absolutely must* have a minimum guarantee of ten dollars at all times, a guaranteed ten. I *have to,* I *must,* I've *got* to!' And you *believe* that. Then again you look in your purse or pocket and again you find nine. Now how would you feel if you *must* have ten and you only have nine?

Helen: Very frustrated, angry, and depressed.

Ellis: Yes, you'd be off the wall and quite disturbed because of your *must.* Finally, here is the end of the model. The third time you go out imagine that you're saying the same stupid, devout thing to yourself as the second time: "'I absolutely *must* have a minimum guarantee of ten dollars at all times, I *must,* I *must,* I *must!'* Then you look in your purse or pocket and find eleven. Now how would you feel"?

Helen: Really excited and happy.

Ellis: Right, really grateful. 'I need a *minimum* of ten, I now have more than ten. Great!' But a minute later, with the eleven dollars still in your purse-you haven't lost it-something would occur to you, to panic you. Why would you panic? You've still got the eleven and you're overjoyed about it. Why would you then panic?

Helen: Maybe because I'll lose some.

Ellis: That's right. 'I now have a minimum of ten, more than ten. I've got eleven. But I must have a *guarantee* of ten at all time! Suppose I *spend* two, suppose I *lose* two, suppose I *get robbed.* All of which can happen!' You see there *are* no guarantees.

Now this model shows that anybody in the whole universe—a 1000 years ago, today, a 1000 years from now, black or white, young or old, male or female, rich or poor, good family or rotten family, these things don't matter, anyone who takes a desire for *anything,* I used money to make it simple but it could be love, schooling, or success-and makes it into a *must,* a *guarantee,* first is miserable when she doesn't have what she thinks she *must* and second is panicked when she does have it. Because she could always lose it. Do you see that this is true?

Helen: Yes, you're right. I now see it.

Ellis on Procrastination

Perhaps, the biggest obstacle to people realizing their potential at work is what appears to be the irrational human tendency to put off till tomorrow that that preferably should be done today.

There is little question that top achievers in all professions have the ability to put in sustained effort, especially on the hard or unpleasant tasks that have to be done in order for them to reach their goals.

REBC, perhaps, more so than any other approach provides insights as to why people procrastinate and, more importantly, how they can overcome the problem. Indeed, Ellis' book 'Overcoming Procrastination' (co-author, William J. Knaus, 1977) has helped over 250,000 people do something about improving their efficiency at work or in other areas of their life.

*W*hy do people procrastinate? According to Ellis, the cause of procrastination is their *reaction* to hard, unpleasant or boring events, rather than the events themselves. Achievers in life react differently than non-achievers to paper work, deadlines, repetitive work, long hours, 'demeaning' activities and the general drudgery of work. The difference can be found in the rational ways achievers evaluate having to perform these various activities.

*W*hat follows is almost the complete transcript of a public demonstration conducted by Ellis with a woman who volunteers for help for her procrastination. The only background information available is that the woman, Marsha, has been trying to motivate herself to complete her doctoral dissertation and has had little success:

Ellis: Okay, what problem do you want to start with?

Marsha: Well, it's my dissertation. I can't seem to motivate myself to get it done.

Ellis: That's a common problem, yes. And what's the problem?

Why don't these bastards give you your dissertation?

Marsha: (laughter) Well, because I'm just not doing it.

Ellis: You're not doing it. How many centuries have you been working on your dissertation?

Marsha: (laughter) It just seems like many. Actually I started about four years ago.

Ellis: Four years ago you started, and how far along are you on that lovely dissertation?

Marsha: No place.

Ellis: So you're no place on the dissertation-you mean you didn't do any of it, or what?

Marsha: Oh no, no, no. I do lots of things, I do computer runs, I register every semester for exorbitant amounts of money-you know all those things— but I don't write the dissertation.

Ellis: Do you have a topic?

Marsha: Oh yes.

Ellis: Have you done anything on it, on the topic? Have you read literature?

Marsha: Oh yes.

Ellis: Oh you read the literature. And it's a study?

Marsha: Experimental, yes.

Ellis: Did you do the study?

Marsha: No.

Ellis: Okay, so the one thing you better do before you write it up is the study. Of course, you could write the study first, but it would be impractical to do it first. And you know what to do because you have the outline and it's accepted. Now when you think of doing something on the study, on the experiment, what do you tell yourself to block yourself from doing it? I can guess right away, but let's see if you can figure it out. I think I already know.

Marsha: I can think of just a number of things that at that moment in time are so much more critically relevant than writing.

Ellis: Such as eating ice cream, looking at TV?

Marsha: No, no, even things that I can really justify.

Ellis: Yes, right. Supermarket shopping?

Marsha: No, no, no, my practice.

Ellis: But those we call *rationalisations*. 'Instead of doing my study I'll do something else useful.'

Marsha: It would have to be useful.

Ellis: Okay, 'Because if I stop the crap and *did* the study-?' You're ignoring what you're telling yourself about doing it. 'If I just ignored those extra things, did a few of them to stay alive, but did the study right now for at least an hour or two a day what-?' What are you telling yourself about doing it? Forget about the excuses for the moment. 'If I did it right now, today, tomorrow-?' What?

Marsha: If I started doing something really constructive in terms of the experiment?

Ellis: Yes.

Marsha: What would happen, the immediate result?

Ellis: You're saying something blocks you from doing it, forces you to make up excuses about the other *very* relevant things, which aren't so goddam, relevant. 'If I did that study today, if I worked on it, what would be the minimum number of hours it would be wise to work on it-minimum, per day?'

Marsha: It would be very minimal. I think it's just a matter of, you know, if I could just start off with an hour, 30 minutes.

Ellis: All right, let's take an hour. 'If I put my ass to the chair and did an hour today, what?'

Marsha: I think that would break the block-whatever it is.

Ellis: I know. But what are you telling yourself *not* to do?

You're right, that might lead you to work for five hours. In my book with Bill Knaus on overcoming procrastination we have a technique where you force yourself to do something even for 15 minutes minimum and what do you know, you start doing it for 30, 60, etc. 'But if I sat my ass down and did this *right now* you're saying something about it that's blocking you, and I know what it is. What do you think it is?'

Marsha: Tell me because I'm not really certain.

Ellis: Well you're not saying it would be a rare *delight.*

Marsha: Well, to do it would be a rare delight.

Ellis: No, no, to have it *done* would be a rare delight.

Marsha: To have it done, yes. (laughter) I thought about that too.

Ellis: 'If I sat down to do it, it would be,' what? It wouldn't be a rare delight. What are you telling yourself it would be? 'If I just sat down, no shit, and did it,' it would be what?

Marsha: Okay, to just sit down and do it, and that would be the problem. Getting myself to sit down is the problem. Once I'm sitting there doing it that's no problem.

Ellis: Well, all right, you're okay once you start 'But if I *forced* myself to *sit down* and start it,' what? You're saying something negative about that. What is your belief about forcing yourself to sit down and start?

Marsha: Maybe that's the problem, because I'm not really certain, I really don't know.

Ellis: It's something unpleasant. You do know, you see. You're copping out.

Marsha: Maybe I am because I'm seeing that starting it-to be starting is finishing and that is very positive. It's the *not* starting it that I'm focusing on and why I'm not starting.

Ellis: Oh, I see what you're doing. Yes, you're right. And that was my error because I went back to the primary symptom instead of the secondary one. Your primary symptom is called 'C' procrastination, at 'A' you decide to do something, then at 'B' you tell yourself something that makes you not do it. We'll get back to that later. But then you take 'C' and you make it into a new 'A': 'I am procrastinating'. Now how do you *feel* about procrastinating? How do you feel *about* it?

Marsha: I don't feel very good about it because I've committed myself. I've made promises to myself and others, but primarily to myself to finish it.

Ellis: Yes. What do you mean by 'not very good'? Let's be a *little* more concrete. How do you *really* feel if for the next 50 years you don't do this, you procrastinate for 50 years. What's your *feeling* about the procrastination?

Marsha: I guess I'd feel very disappointed, very disappointed in breaking a promise I made to myself.

Ellis: So you would feel disappointed, that's right. But is that your *only* feeling? Let's be honest.

Marsha: No.

Ellis: What's the other one that's more important?

Marsha: That I'd failed a goal that I'd set for myself.

Ellis: And *because* I failed to do it, continued to procrastinate, that makes me what?

Marsha: It makes me not quite-let's see, it makes me feel very much like a failure.

Ellis: Right, 'and that makes me a failure.' Now as long as you say 'I'm a failure for procrastinating, I'm a failure for procrastinating, I'm a failure for procrastinating', you'll be so hung up on your failureship that that will help you procrastinate, you see.

That's your secondary symptom or symptom about your symptom. So if you stop saying, 'I'm a failure for procrastinating', we then get back to the procrastination itself, for solving the secondary symptom. The primary one doesn't solve it. But why are you *not* a failure for procrastinating? Because you're not. Now why are you *not?*

*M*arsha: I don't know why I'm not a failure for procrastinating.

I can think of reasons why I'm not a failure generally.

Ellis: Right. But even let's suppose you procrastinate forever.

Why are you still not a failure for that, for procrastination? You sort of implicitly just answered it, but not clearly enough.

Marsha: Because I succeed at other things.

Ellis: That's right, so you're never *a* failure. You're failing *at* this dissertation, but how does that make *you* a failure-with a capital F? How does it?

Marsha: It doesn't, and maybe that's what's keeping me from doing it. Because I can sort of justify sometimes being successful here, even though I'm failing there.

Ellis: Well that's a rationalisation, again. You're saying, 'because I'm not a *total, total, total,* failure therefore I'm allowed to procrastinate.' We'll get back to that. But you are also telling yourself 'At times, not all the time, I am *a* failure for procrastinating. Look what a failure I am! I *should* be doing the thesis!' And that's going to help you procrastinate *more.* You had better face the fact that you are a human who is procrastinating—who is failing doing your thesis period. And that's too goddam bad! Unless you accept this, you won't get back to the original procrastination-your secondary symptom is interfering with your primary one, you see? You're guilty about procrastinating and your guilt is stopping you from working on the procrastinating because your feelings of guilt are absorbing you. And you can obsess yourself with the guilt—otherwise known as self-downing or self-deprecation. It has lots of names. Usually we call it guilt or shame when it's about procrastination and if you would get yourself to say 'Yes, that is bad, my procrastination, because it won't get me where I want. But I am never under any condition a *bad person.* It is too damn bad that I'm procrastinating but, *I* am not a failure,' then we could get you to tackle the procrastination. Do you see that you're not

going to get back to working at reducing your procrastination while you're absorbed in putting yourself down for engaging in it? Do you see that that's going on?

Marsha: I now can see it.

Ellis: So your first step is to first accept *you* with your crummy procrastination. We're not exonerating your procrastination. We're not rationalizing and saying 'Oh, but I'm doing these other good things.' Horseshit! You're screwing yourself. But you can still accept *you* while screwing yourself. You see that you can do that? That's what you'd better work on. Now once you start working on that-. Now we'll just assume for the moment that you take a while to work on it and give up your guilts. Let's suppose you're no longer guilty. At 'A' you decide to work an hour, we'll just say an hour to make it easy, on your thesis. And at 'C' you put off doing it because you are now saying what about the work? Not about you, but about the work, that's stopping you from just unpleasantly doing it-and it will be unpleasant at the beginning. Now what are you saying about that hassle that stops you from unpleasantly putting your ass to the chair and working on the thesis?

Marsha: That it's boring and hard.

Ellis: Right. Getting started. It's boring. It's hard. But if you only stopped at 'It's hard and boring,' you'd do it. Do you know why you'd do it if you *only* said that to yourself? Because it's *more* boring and *harder* if you don't do it. You see? So you're saying more than it's boring and hard. There's another idea you're sneaking in there. Now what do you think that is? '*Because* it's boring and hard,' what? 'I shouldn't *have* to do it!'

Marsha: Yes, that's it.

Ellis: So you see, you're saying 'It *shouldn't* be *that* boring, that hard. It's *too* hard! How *awful* that it's that hard! Damn it, I won't do it! You see? *That* is LFT, low frustration tolerance; and almost every person who procrastinates about a thing like a thesis, has it. They have generally one other thing that goes with it and that is as follows. '*If* I did that thesis-no matter how hard it is'-and let's suppose you did it, what does it *have* to be? When you do it, what are you demanding that it has to be?

Marsha: Perfect.

Ellis: Ahah! I *must* do it *perfectly* like all *other* thesis are perfectly done!' Right? As long as you have that in your head -.

Marsha: I know, it will never get done.

Ellis: Right. So you see, you have two ideas and they're both leading you to procrastinate. One. 'It's *too* hard. It *shouldn't* be that hard! How awful!' Then, two, 'I *must* do it perfectly well—a great, noble, marvellous thesis. And if I don't do a great, noble, dissertation, then back to shithood go II'

Marsha: I don't think it's really that hard. It's the boring part and it's the perfect part, because it's easy really.

Ellis: That's right, it *is* boring. But you'd better face the fact that it's *more* boring if you don't do it. Do you know why it's *more* boring if you don't do it?

Because you'll fart around with this boredom forever. Isn't it a *bore* saying, 'I'll do it, no I won't.

I'll do it, no I won't'?

Marsha: I know, my friends are already bored.

Ellis: That's right and you'll get bored with it. While if you did it, it would be over, you see. In all these things whether it's procrastinating on a thesis, on a term paper, on being late for an appointment, or whatever, it's harder if you *do* procrastinate and you're saying 'It's harder if I do *it,* the thesis.' And that's false.

Marsha: You're right. It's harder procrastinating, it's much harder than doing it and getting it over with.

Ellis: That's right, but you'd better really get convinced. You're saying the truth right now. But as soon as you start to do the thesis, you may easily go back to saying, 'Oh shit, look how boring it is!' And you'd better write down a list of the pains of procrastination. Take a few days to write down all the disadvantages of procrastinating and all the advantages of getting the thesis out of the way. Then go over those.

Marsha: No comparison. It's more disadvantageous to procrastinate.

Ellis: An right. But you'd better sink those disadvantages in, because at the time you're about to work on the thesis you only focus on the advantages of *not* doing it and the disadvantages of doing it. You see *that*'*s* your focus.

In this demonstration Ellis shows Marsha the three separate problems that are de-motivating her (self-downing, low frustration tolerance, and perfectionism) and, helps her achieve, probably for the first time, real insight into her problem.

Ellis on Better Relationships

"You will be more self-actualizing (and happy) if you make yourself distinctly 'attached' (involved) and "non-attached" (not desperately involved)." (Ellis, 1962)

Ellis has in his 1:1 *problems of everyday living* sessions help members of the general public reformulate their expectations and demands concerning relationships.

In the following problem-focused coaching session, Patricia, a 28-year-old single woman, discusses with Ellis her desire to improve her relationship with her mother. As will be seen, although not displaying clinical anxiety or depression, her lack of assertiveness with her mother (practical problem) is more difficult to overcome due to her feelings of anxiety and anger (emotional problem). Here, Ellis is his characteristic directive but respectful style, employs the ABC model of cognitive

re-structuring to help a coachee overcome emotional problems in order to take positive action steps to improve her relationship with her mother. lack of assertion with her mother because of her guilt, her feelings of depression because of her unassertiveness, and her anger with her mother for asking too much of her.

Ellis: Patricia, what problem do you want to discuss?

Patricia: Well, I'm kind of a wimp in my relationship with my mother and it drives me crazy and it's ruining all my friendships.

Ellis: What happens when you feel upset about your mother?

Patricia: Well, I want to do one thing and my mother won't like it and so if I go ahead and do it, it will make her mad and then she won't like me any more. If I don't do it then I get mad because I'm not doing what I want to do. I usually end up doing what she wants me to do and it's driving me crazy, because it's ruining my life, and this is the only life I have to live.

Ellis: So-you correct me if I'm wrong-you're not as assertive as you'd like to be. At 'A' activating event, she asks you to do something that you really don't want to do and at 'C' behavioral consequences you unassertively do it, because you're telling yourself what at 'B' your belief systems-that is driving you into lack of assertion?

Patricia: I tell myself that I can't live without my mother's love.

Ellis: Prove that. That's a fascinating hypothesis: you *can't* live without your mother's love. Where is the evidence that you *can't?*

Patricia: I know intellectually that I can live without my mother's love but my need for her love is still killing me.

Ellis: But *intellectually* means *lightly.* You see, whenever you say you know a thing intellectually, you mean you know it lightly: 'I know lightly that I *can* live without my mother's love but I know strongly I really *can't!'* You'd better acknowledge that you're unassertive because you think you *need* your mother's love. Now how could you give up that nutty notion, not that you like your mother's love-there's nothing wrong with wanting it-but that you *need* it and therefore you *have* to do things her way to win her love? How can you give up that crazy notion?

Patricia: I don't know. I mean, I can recognize it intellectually but I really don't know. I want to tell my mother, I want to tell her, 'Look mother you're driving me crazy!' Then she says, 'Oh you're messed up' or she acts like a wounded bird or as though something is wrong with me. I want her to realize that 'Mother, I'm going to do my thing; you do your thing.'

Ellis: That would be lovely if she realized it. But she's not going to. Suppose you have a woman friend approximately your age and your education and she has a mother much like yours, now does *she* need her mother's approval? *Does* she?

Patricia: No I don't think she does. At my age, I certainly should not need my mother's approval I should be an adult.

Ellis: Why doesn't *she* need it. What is her evidence that she doesn't need her mother's approval?

Patricia: She's not dead.

Ellis: She hasn't dropped dead yet. What else? There's a better reason than that. If she *absolutely needed* it she would drop dead without it. OK. But why else doesn't she *need* it?

Patricia: I don't know. She needs her own approval.

Ellis: No she won't drop dead without her own approval. She doesn't *need* it because she could be a happy human without it. She wouldn't be *as* happy without her mother's approval as with it, for I assume she likes her mother's approval. But couldn't she live an enjoyable life even if her mother didn't approve of her?

Patricia: Yes, yes I think she could. Because I think I can.

Ellis: How could you really live an enjoyable life if you didn't do what your mother wanted-you just firmly, not nastily, held your ground and said, 'No mother, you want me to "X," but I'm doing "Y".' Now how could you still lead an enjoyable life?

Patricia: By not saying to myself 'Oh Patricia you're such a bad daughter because you haven't done "X".'

Ellis: That's exactly right! You see, we're now back to guilt. 'If I didn't please my mother and she upset herself, which she well might, then I would be a rotten daughter.' Now why is that false that you would be a rotten daughter?

Patricia: Because I'm not a rotten daughter. I'm just doing what I want to do with my life.

Ellis: And you're a *daughter who does some rotten things,* according to your mother. But do you only do rotten things to your mother?

Patricia: I do rotten things all the time.

Ellis: But I mean you do some good things to your mother too, not only rotten ones. Isn't that right?

Patricia: No, I do some good things. I'm really a pretty good kid, in fact, I'm too good. I wish I were worse. I wish I could say, 'Forget you. I want to do what I want to do'.

Ellis: But I just want to show you that you practically never would be a rotten daughter because a rotten daughter would kill her mother, spit in her face, and all kinds of things *all the time;* and you just do some of them some of the time. Even if you were rotten at daughtering and you were no good at being a daughter, would you be a *rotten person?* Suppose you were just lousy at being a daughter, much worse than other daughters, would that make you a rotten person?

Patricia: No.

Ellis: That's right. Why wouldn't it?

Patricia: People I know, friends that I enjoy very much, are rotten children but they're good friends of mine.

Ellis: That's right. You have good friends, people who are rotten at being a daughter but are good at many other things. Some of the greatest women in the world were probably rotten daughters.

So you are overgeneralizing. You're saying 'If I hurt mother by refusing to do what she wants I'm no good as a person!' That's crazy! Now when you don't go along with your mother and she feels hurt, who hurt her?

Patricia: She did.

Ellis: That's right. What did she do to hurt herself? What did she say to herself?

Patricia: She says, I don't know exactly ...

Ellis: She's saying, 'After all I did for her, my daughter, she *should* do exactly what I want!' Is that correct? And she's also believing, 'If my own daughter doesn't treat me well , what does that make *me* as a person?' So she's probably putting herself down.

Patricia: Well I know she plays the martyr role, the wounded bird all the time. It just drives me crazy.

Ellis: *You* drive you crazy. Your mother can't drive you crazy, even with a whip. I haven't seen that done yet! What are *you* doing to drive *yourself* crazy?

Patricia: I'm saying that I'm a bad daughter because my mother is hurt.

Ellis: Instead of thinking 'In my mother's eyes, I'm acting badly'. Because that is true and she is entitled to think that. Her frame of reference is, 'She's a lousy daughter, and that makes me a lousy mother.' But she also had better take the consequences of her philosophy: 'Because I raised this child, Patricia, she *should* do the right thing and she should do my bidding!' Isn't that what she's telling you?

Patricia: Yes.

Ellis: So you could, first, stop damning yourself when you are acting badly in her eyes. Then second, you could force yourself to assert yourself. Now what are some of the things you would like to do with your mother that you don't allow yourself to do? Give me an example.

Patricia: Because I haven't done what I want to do with my life I want to say to her, 'Mother you did this, this, and I reacted to it this way.' I want her to acknowledge the fact that I'm not the one who is wrong, that she is sometimes wrong. But I guess I won't change her. You know, I guess I shouldn't want to change her because she's never going to change.'

Ellis: You'd better *want* to change her, as long as you don't *need* to change her. And you could, if you want to experiment, say to her exactly what you said before. 'Now, look mother. I realize that all these years I've been no angel. I've done a lot of wrong things. But don't you also realize that some of the things you've done might not have been right?' Now we don't know if she'll acknowledge that, but if you're not hostile and you're not upset, she might acknowledge it.

(continued)

Patricia: Yes. I'd like her to acknowledge some things because they're not all my fault.

Ellis: Well that's true. It's not all your fault but even if it was, you don't have to feel guilty or self-downing. But let's now suppose that you continue feeling guilty. Why can't you deal with the guilt? What stops you from dealing with the guilt and getting rid of it-which you could do with REBT.

Patricia: Well, you see, the way I deal with the guilt is to do more of what she wants me to; and I get madder and angrier because I'm not doing what I want to do. But I feel guilty if I don't do her bidding and I can't get out of that syndrome, you know.

Ellis: Yes. That's because you've got two negative things there. First of all, you make yourself guilty: 'I did the wrong thing, I hurt my mother as I *should* not. Isn't that *awful!* What a bad person I am!' So you can work on that and change it to: 'I'm a person who did rotten things in my mother's eyes but I'm entitled as a human to do that.'—But then you give in to her because of your guilt, and then you feel guilty about *you: 'I* shouldn't have given in! What a wimp I am!' Now let's suppose you give in for the rest of your life because of your guilt. How does that make you hopeless?

Patricia: But I don't want to give in.

Ellis: No, but let's just suppose you stupidly kiss your mother's arse for the rest of your life. Now how does that make *you* no good?

Patricia: If I do that I'm stupid because I'm not doing what I want to do with my life.

Ellis: You're *acting* stupidly. But how does that make you a *stupid person* because you are acting stupidly?

Patricia: I think that a person who acts stupidly is a stupid person.

Ellis: But why is that a wrong conclusion?

Patricia: A person can act stupidly sometimes and act smart in other ways.

Ellis: Yes. Did Einstein act stupidly at times?

Patricia: Yes.

Ellis: Was he a stupid person?

Patricia: No.

Ellis: So you are at times *acting* stupidly. But you'd better say 'I'm a person who acts stupidly. I'm allowed to act stupidly. That's my nature. All humans act stupidly at times'. The most talented humans act stupidly at times. 'Too bad, how can I act *less* stupidly?' And there's an answer. Do you know what the answer is?

Patricia: Well, I want to be more assertive and I fall apart when she doesn't like what I do.

Ellis: We're back to your guilt 'I *must* do my mother's bidding or else I'm a no good, worthless daughter. And if I do her bidding then I would be a no good wimp! Therefore I won't do it!' Then you blame yourself for being unassertive. So you are in a box. There's no way out, because if you do your

mother's bidding you're going to be unassertive and a shit; and if you don't do your mother's bidding you're going to be assertive and a shit! Now how can you win with that philosophy?

Patricia: I want to change my philosophy. I want to be assertive and think, 'I don't care what you feel or think!' I *do* though.

Ellis: No, no, no, that's too strong. 'I don't care *too much* what you think.'

Patricia: OK, I'm not going to care so much that it's going to ruin my life. Because it has ruined my life in the past five years and I'm sick and tired of it.

Ellis: That's right. Now if you would really work on that, we could get you to do several assertive things, one at a time, and force yourself to uncomfortably do them until you become comfortable. Such as what you said before, 'Now, look mother, I'm not an angel but I think you may have done some wrong things too, and I would just like to tell you this. And if you want to feel hurt while I'm telling you that, that's your prerogative. But you'd better read 'A New Guide to Rational Living' by Albert Ellis and Robert Harper and not feel hurt!' So you could force yourself to say this, not feel guilty, and be more assertive. We don't want you to run roughshod over your mother and not have any feelings at all—just give up feeling *over-concerned.* Be concerned about your mother because you love her, but not over-concerned and not walk on eggs. And not put yourself down if you ever do walk on the eggs.

Patricia: Yes.

Ellis: Let me give you rational emotive imagery. Close your eyes and imagine that you continue to be nauseatingly unassertive, just give in to your mother, kowtow, and don't do what you want. Can you vividly imagine that?

Patricia: Yes.

Ellis: And how do you feel in your gut?

Patricia: I think it's disgusting.

Ellis: Make yourself feel really *disgusted* with yourself. Tell me when you feel really disgusted.

Patricia: I already feel really disgusted.

Ellis: All right, now change that feeling and you're still nauseatingly unassertive, to only disappointment. Make yourself feel disappointed about your *behavior* but not disgusted with *you. T*ell me when you're able to do that.

Patricia: OK.

Ellis: How did you do it?

Patricia: I did it by not saying, 'Oh, Patricia, you're such a shit for being so unassertive.'

Ellis: And saying instead to yourself-what? How did you make yourself feel disappointed? How did you feel un-nauseated with yourself?

Patricia: I said, 'My preference is that I probably would be happier if I were more assertive so therefore I'd better be more assertive.'

Ellis: 'And it's too bad when I'm not?'

Patricia: Too bad when I'm not assertive.

Ellis: Good! Now, will you practise that for the next thirty days, until you start automatically feeling disappointed when you're not assertive. Then get back to work on being assertive rather than feeling down. Would you do that? And if you do that at the end of thirty days you're still at times unassertive, you'll automatically tend to feel disappointment, which is good. For we want you to feel disappointment in your *behavior* but not disappointment in *you.* See?

Ellis Legacy

As can be seen, there are many aspects of Ellis' work that continue to influence coaching practice and that he was well ahead of his time. Of immediate relevance for this book on the coaching of reason, is his instinct that helping people exercise the rational faculty of the mind in order to improve the way they think and how their mind operates including their capacity for emotional regulation has modern-day support in the research in neuro-science and neuro-plasticity that shows that cognitive forms of therapy change brain structure and improve brain function (e.g., Goldapple et al., 2004).

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Rationality in Coaching

Michael E. Bernard

At the age of 16, I studied philosophy as a hobby, long before I ever thought of becoming a psychotherapist. I was particularly interested in the philosophy of human happiness. So I started devising ways for people-notably myself-to reduce their emotional upsets and increase their sense of fulfilment in life....At the age of 40, I went back to ancient philosophers to see what they said about misery and happiness. Because of my passion for philosophy and especially for the philosophy of happiness, my early books on REBT not only told people how to ward off misery and neurosis but how to be self-fulfilled and more actualizing in their love, marriage and family affairs. Albert Ellis (1994)

Over the past 50 years, a rational approach to modern-day living has had a positive influence on a variety of areas and forms of coaching (e.g., life, sport, couples, health, executive leadership). Its origins can be traced to the writings, public lectures and audio recordings of Albert Ellis (e.g., 1988, 1999; Ellis & Becker, 1982; Ellis & Harper, 1962) and many others (e.g., Bernard, 2011; Broder, 2006; Dryden & Gordon, 1990), who practice rational-emotive behaviour therapy (REBT) and rational-emotive, cognitive-behavior (RE-CB) coaching. This approach illuminates how the mental faculty of *rationality* as well as *rational principles of living* (originall*y*, Ellis referred to as *rational beliefs)* can help people to not only be less unhappy when faced with adversities and unfortunate or frustrating events, but also can contribute to people living enjoyable, pleasurable, fulfilled and happy lives.

As a guide to happiness for people with and without emotional problems, Albert Ellis first wrote about *rational living* in the 1960s. *Principles of rational living* (rational beliefs) are the essential ingredients of a rational philosophy of personal happiness that Ellis provided for people to help them to live enjoyable, enriched, satisfying and pleasurable lives (Bernard et al., 2010). Millions of people have profited from these principles that have helped them to think, feel and act in ways

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that aid their search for happiness. Ellis' well-known self-help books dealing with rational living and happiness have sold millions of copies worldwide.

When employed in counselling and therapy, the approach is known as *rational emotive behavior therapy* (*REBT*) (Ellis, 1962, 1994) and was created by Albert Ellis as a new type of therapy for helping people who experience significant emotional distress, interpersonal difficulties and other disorders (e.g., substance abuse) to overcome problems and to live more fulfilled lives. REBT has dual goals: (1) To help people overcome their emotional blocks and disturbances and (2) To help people grow according to their own goals and designs, to become more fully functioning, more self-actualizing and happier than they would otherwise be (Ellis & Becker, 1982). Today, Albert Ellis is recognized as one of the most popular and significant figures in the field of counselling and psychotherapy in the world.

This chapter will document Ellis' rich contribution to the promotion of human happiness and flourishing and, in particular, how rational principles of living help people live pleasurable and fulfilled lives. From a theoretical perspective, this chapter will delimit the range of rational beliefs enumerated by Ellis that can contribute to growth and change. RE-CB coaches frequently discuss these beliefs with coachees during moments of the coaching process where the goal is shifting the default mindset of coachees from rigidity and self-limitation to flexibility and openness in order to view their world differently.

Some of Ellis' more important books in the area include: Ellis and Harper's (1962, 1975) '*A Guide to Rational Living*', Ellis' (1973) '*Humanistic Psychotherapy,*' Ellis and Becker's (1982) '*A Guide to Personal Happiness,*' Ellis' (1988) '*How to Stubbornly Refuse to Make Yourself Miserable about Anything, Yes Anything!*', and Ellis' (1999) '*How to Make Yourself Happy and Remarkably Less Disturbable.*' The most up-to-date review of Ellis and his work in the area of happiness including transcripts of his therapy sessions and his comments on happiness covering 50 years can be found in '*Rationality and the Pursuit of Happiness: The Legacy of Albert Ellis*' (Bernard, 2011).

Over many years of writing, public lecturing and professional conferencing, Ellis offered guidance for the general public on how to utilize their innate capacity for rationality to live happier and more fulfilled lives. He founded the Institute for Rational Living in New York City to serve this function. At the same time, he operated the Institute for Rational Emotive Therapy (formerly the Institute for the Advanced Study of Rational Emotive Psychotherapy) that provides training for counsellors and therapists with a focus on helping people with mental health problems.

To summarize Ellis' position on happiness, he believed that by developing people's potential for rationality through their practice of rational principles of living (e.g., self-direction, commitment to creative and absorbing pursuits, hedonism, risk taking and experimentation, problem solving), they will likely experience pleasure including positive affect in the short-term and satisfaction of life's goals (achievement, love, minimum of pain, maximum of pleasure) in the long-term. Ellis expressed the view that while everyone has the potential for rationality, the potential requires cultivation. Ellis also firmly believed that given people's irrational propensity for experiencing emotional problems about life's inevitable hassles and misfor-

tunes, they can benefit from a scientific, cognitive-restructuring method such as the ABC-DEs of REBT for managing and solving their emotional problems that block their happiness.

Defining Constructs of Albert Ellis

The Dual Nature of the Human Psyche

One of Ellis' unique insights is the duality of human psychological functioning. He theorized that all human beings have dual biological tendencies that operate in opposition to one another and that explain much of the way the mind operates including how people think, feel and act. There is the self-defeating tendency he called *irrationality* as well as the self-enhancing tendency he referred to as *rationality* (Ellis, 1962, 1973, 1988, 1994, 1999, 2004a). The rational side of people's psychological functioning guides them in their pursuit of happiness and self-fulfilment.

The irrational dimension of psychological functioning is characterized by high negative emotionality (e.g., anxiety, depression, anger, self-pity, guilt) and self-defeating behaviour (e.g., aggression, avoidance, procrastination, substance abuse). The cognitive aspects of irrationality are dogmatic, rigid, un-scientific irrational beliefs and associated irrational thinking that Ellis referred to as *absolutizing* or *musterbation* (e.g., Ellis, 1962, 1994). Generally, when people think irrationally about adverse situations and events and, as a consequence experience extreme anger, anxiety and depression, they express their preferences, desires and wishes as demands, commands, shoulds, needs, oughts, and musts (e.g., "Because I prefer success, approval and/or comfort, I must be successful, loved and/or comfortable"; "I must have what I want"). Ellis proposed a biological tendency of all humans to greater or lesser extents to think illogically as seen in their absolutizing. Thinking in absolutes is generally illogical. It does not logically follow that because someone prefers or desires a set of conditions to exist, they must exist. Ellis also proposed additional irrational thinking processes that derive from absolutizing including *awfulizing* (blowing the badness of events out of proportion)*, I can't-stand-it-itis (low frustration tolerance)* and *global rating of self, others and the world.*

Co-existing with people's irrational tendencies are their rational potentialities that contribute to happiness. Rationality is characterized by positive emotions (e.g., pleasure, joy, and excitement), an absence of dysfunctional negative emotions, a determination to solve life's problems, and goal-directed behaviour. Cognitively, rationality and rational beliefs are expressed in preferential ways of desiring and seeking goals and dealing with life's obstructions and hardships. Ellis' aim in therapy as well as his advice for all people seeking happiness and fulfilment was for people to maintain strong preferences for what they desire and value including happiness while refraining from believing that they must have what they want. Giving up demanding beliefs often has the effect of people working harder to achieve what makes them happy. Believing that one is entitled to things that one wants can make attempts to achieve them irrelevant.

Self-Actualization

Ellis asserted that biologically, all humans are born with a drive to develop their innate potentialities (Ellis, 1994). The drive, which Ellis and other humanistic psychologists refer to as the self-actualizing instinct or tendency, results in high levels of happiness and satisfaction when people discover areas of living where they can express their unique talents and aptitudes and achieve fulfilment. Increased happiness and freedom from disturbance can be achieved because all humans are born with constructive and creative tendencies and are born with the ability to sharpen and increase their self-fulfilling tendencies (Ellis, 1973).

Ellis indicated that to more fully actualize themselves, people had better choose to work at achieving more growth, development and happiness. More fully functioning people can consciously choose the goal of becoming more self-actualized. According to Ellis, self-actualization involves the pursuit of excellence and enjoyment; whichever people choose to desire and emphasize.

The Purpose and Goals of Life

What people choose to do in life is naturally enough associated with the overall goals and purposes they have for living. Ellis proposed the following goals and purposes as those that most human beings in western societies would accept for themselves. For Ellis, the most general and far-reaching goals people have are to live a long and happy life. According to Ellis, the attainment of these two goals is facilitated when three conditions exist: (a) people are achieving to the best of their ability in their chosen field of work endeavour or in an area of life that they find interesting and absorbing, (b) people are involved in satisfying and loving relationships with significant others (partner, family, friends, social group), and (c) people experience a minimum of needless pain and emotional misery as well as a maximum of comfort and pleasure.

Ellis recognized that many different life strategies or personal philosophies can determine how people realize these goals and purposes. Which ones work best for the individual is an empirical question.

Short-Term and Long-Term Happiness

In recent years, well-being researchers have studied *hedonic happiness* (pleasure seeking, avoidance of pain). Hedonic happiness is close in meaning to "subjective well-being" and consists of the three components of: (1) frequent positive affect, (2) infrequent negative affect, and (3) high life satisfaction (e.g., Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Ellis would say that the exercise of rationality through the application of principles of rational living helps people to attain the three aspects of subjective well-being. People are likely to experience higher degrees of life satisfaction

through deployment of rational principles in daily living including people creatively experimenting and discovering what brings them pleasure, what activities they enjoy and which pursuits bring them satisfaction and fulfilment. As a means of reducing negative affect, people learn how to use the REBT scientific method for cognitively restructuring irrational to rational beliefs. He has also said that rationality helps people to self-manage and direct the process of self-actualization frequently resulting in people living life to its fullest.

Ellis encapsulates happiness as striving for the long-range pleasure of tomorrow as well as the short-range satisfactions of today (Ellis & Harper, 1962, 1975). In the short-term, Ellis' happiness takes on the hallmarks of hedonic happiness as he encourages people to have fun, enjoyment and experience pleasure without emotional misery when confronted with life's muddles and puddles.

In his early days, perhaps Ellis was most known for his pioneering work in sex and helping liberate people from conventional attitudes towards sexual experience. He provided people advice not only in therapy but also in his many self-help books (e.g. '*The American Sexual Tragedy*' (1954/1966), '*Sex without Guilt*' (1958), '*The Art and Science of Love*' (1960/1969) on sexual gratification including different ways to become sexually excited and to achieve orgasm.

Ellis was equally if not more interested in helping people achieve satisfaction and fulfilment in the long-term. For Ellis, long-term happiness is a by-product of people achieving their goals and purposes in life; namely, (a) using strengths of character and personality traits, including rationality to achieve and excel at work (employment) and in other endeavours (hobbies), (b) relying on social competences and rationality to experience loving relationships that endure with one or more significant others including partner/spouse, family and close friends, and (c) deploying personal, coping resources, including rational self-talk and coping skills in order to only experience minimum periods of heightened, negative emotionality and stress.

Rational Principles of Living

> *How can you make yourself happy? Increased happiness and freedom from disturbance can be achieved because all humans are born with constructive and creative tendencies and born with the ability to sharpen and increase their self-fulfilling tendencies.* (Ellis, 1988)

Ellis identified a number of *rational beliefs* that help people to solve emotional and practical problems and to seek out experiences and people that lead to happier and more fulfilled lives.

Rational Principle 1: Self-Interest

According to Ellis, sensible and emotionally healthy people tend to be first or primarily interested in themselves and to put their own interests at least a little above the interests of others (Ellis & Bernard, 1985). They sacrifice to some degree for

those for whom they care—but not overwhelmingly or completely. Ellis maintained that everyone has a right to be happy and to search for pursuits and experiences that are pleasurable to them in the short-term and fulfilling in the long-term.

Ellis believed that the attainment of happiness was more likely to be achieved from individuals becoming absorbed in pursuits that bring them pleasure in the short- and long-term and not from defining the purpose of their lives as serving the needs of others. He exhorted people to explore life in order to experience the enjoyments and satisfactions that accompany the involvement in activities that may have little to do with meeting the needs of others (e.g., stamp collecting).

Rational Principle 2: Social Interest

According to Ellis, emotional health and self-actualization had better always include people being concerned about the present and future welfare of others. Although Ellis stressed the inalienable right of all humans to their own personal happiness, he espoused a form of rational morality consisting of two basic rules: (1) Be kind to yourself, and (2) Do not harm others (Ellis & Becker, 1982). First, he encouraged people to follow through on their natural and self-actualizing desires and to pursue individual and personal freedom without feeling guilty. Second, he encouraged people to be ethically responsible in their pursuit of happiness so that their individual actions do not hurt others or interfere with their rights to being treated with respect nor harm society.

Ellis accepted that social interest and involvements abet personal happiness. Some of the most fulfilling aspects of people's lives are when they make concerted efforts to become involved in helping other people realize their potential.

Rational Principle 3: Self-Direction

Ellis was clear that it is risky for people to hope for and expect that other people (family, partner) or the organization (employers, schools or governments) will be responsible for their happiness. Ellis noted that others are not infrequently self-concerned and engage in self-interested and sometimes unfair and inconsiderate behavior that can thwart the happiness of others. As a result, he was all for people thinking about how best to be happy as well as to realize that there is no law of the universe that says that anyone deserves to be happy. Ellis asserted that there is no point in waiting around for happiness.

To become more self-directed, Ellis indicated that people can decide to actively plan for those experiences and pursuits that they forecast will bring them greater short- and long-term pleasure and happiness. He advised people in his therapy sessions, public lectures, and books to examine their current and anticipated future life style and make decisions about those activities they are engaged in that bring them displeasure and see, sometimes through negotiation with significant others, if they can be shared or eliminated.

Rational Principle 4: Self-Acceptance

According to Ellis, self-acceptance is a rational belief that liberates people to grow. By eliminating the rating of self as much as possible, people can greatly reduce their anxiety and feelings of inadequacy and as a result feel free to make mistakes and risk rejection from others in their quest for discovering what they truly enjoy doing.

Ellis stressed that human beings are not rateable as there exists no universally accepted standard for judging human worth (e.g., Ellis, 1962, 1988, 1994). Nonetheless, people continue to rate themselves (and others) using arbitrary definitions of good and bad. Ellis rejected any notion of a universalistic definition of what it means to be a good or bad person and adopted the position that while it is beneficial for people to measure and evaluate their own traits and behaviors, it is not sensible to use their performances or other's opinions of them as a basis for globally rating themselves. Ellis consistently discussed the importance of people *enjoying themselves* rather than *proving themselves.*

Rational Principle 5: Tolerance of Others

There is little question that Ellis believed that people who are tolerant of others display high levels of social intelligence. This is displayed in two ways. First, they are aware of the many and varied positive characteristics in people who come from diverse cultures and different backgrounds. This awareness includes looking beyond specific disagreeable behaviors of individuals and groups and being open-minded in considering their strengths.

Second, people who are tolerant of others display what Ellis called unconditional other-acceptance. They do not make overall judgements of people's worth based on their behaviour, customs, characteristics or ideology.

Ellis discussed that all human beings are fallible, mistake-makers who from time-to-time act in ignorant and self-serving, selfish ways. Ellis endorsed the Christian position of accepting all *sinners* but not their *sins.* He said that people could then choose in a non-disturbed way to disengage themselves from people whose behavior they find immoral and harmful or to firmly try to induce them and even penalize them to change their behavior. However, having friends, lovers and companions requires relating to fallible people. Rejecting people because of their flaws from close relationships will leave one alone as all people are fallible. Rage, hostility and aggression stem from intolerance that is at the core of most bigotry including racism, sexism and ageism.

In his explication of tolerance, Ellis (2004b) also helped people refute the notion that because the world is so full of human suffering including cruel violence and terrorism that it is a totally despicable place and people cannot continue to live in it and be at all happy.

Rational Principle 6: Short-Term and Long-Term Hedonism

Ellis has been criticized for being crassly hedonistic (seeking pleasure and freedom from pain) and for teaching people to enjoy themselves at the expense of their deeper, or more rewarding commitments (to others). This view is false. Despite helping people to alleviate emotional distress and to pursue activities that bring immediate gratification and short-term pleasure, one of the main principles of rational living espoused by Ellis is the Stoic principle of long-range rather than short-term hedonism.

Ellis observed that well-adjusted people seek both the pleasures of the moment and those of the future, and do not often court future pain for present gain. People are hedonistic, that is, happiness-seeking and pain avoidant, but they assume they will probably live for quite a few years and that they had better think of both today and tomorrow and not be obsessed with immediate gratification (Ellis & Bernard, 1985).

Ellis discouraged people from doing things the easy way but rather counselled them to do things the more rewarding way that oftentimes require the delay of gratification which—in the short-run—is often more difficult.

Rational Principle 7: Commitment to Creative, Absorbing Activities and Pursuits

Without question, one of the most important insights Ellis offered on happiness is the importance of becoming involved in creative and vitally absorbing pursuits and activities. A journey for all people to take that increases the likelihood of happiness is discovering those activities that offer immediate pleasure and enjoyment in their doing and, when pursued over an extended period at work, in relationships and avocationally, result in satisfaction and fulfilment (Ellis & Harper, 1975). Ellis identified three main forms of vital absorption: (a) loving or feeling absorbed in other people, (b) creating or getting absorbed in things and (c) philosophizing or getting absorbed in ideas.

In the short-term, Ellis considered happiness synonymous with the feelings of enjoyment and pleasure. As indicated earlier, Ellis is known for his pioneering work in sex and helping people discover how they may enjoy sexual experiences. He also encouraged people to experience life to its fullest in diverse areas of their potential interest to see what they would find stimulating, exciting and, yes, pleasurable. In his book with Irving Becker '*A Guide to Personal Happiness*', Ellis provided areas of potential enjoyable activities and pursuits for people to explore including aesthetic appreciation, exercising, food activities, handicraft activities martial arts, mechanical activities, outdoor activities, performing arts, relaxing activities, socializing, sports, travelling, writing activities, and volunteering.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) discusses "flow experience" activities in which people become so intensively or flowingly involved that they derive unusual fun or joy. These activities are similar to what Ellis calls a 'vital absorbing interest' often adding to their enjoyment.

Rational Principle 8: Risk Taking and Experimenting

In '*Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy*' (1962, 1994), Ellis wrote that self-actualization and long-term hedonism are assisted when people experiment with many tasks and projects to discover what they really want and do not want. In order to achieve maximum involvement in life including heightened, deepened and new enjoyments, Ellis counselled that people keep risking new defeats and failures

Ellis encouraged people to design *risk-taking activities* where they believe there is a high likelihood of failure to help them combat their fear of failure and performance anxiety. People can design risk-taking activities to prove to themselves that failure is not the end of the world and that they can stand to fail. Risk-taking activities also help people to extend their usual, daily experiences and by moving out of their comfort zones, increase the opportunity and likelihood that they will find new interesting experiences that bring pleasure.

Rational Principle 9: High Frustration Tolerance and Will Power

Because of human inertia as well as the irrational proclivity for emotional difficulties, Ellis called for *will power* and *high frustration tolerance* as the trait or rational belief that can help people to achieve happiness. By ridding themselves of frustration intolerance and other irrational beliefs and their emotional problems, people are better able to engage their intellect in planning for how best to live their lives (Ellis, 1999). Ellis defined high frustration tolerance as preferring but not demanding that life provides you with what you want comfortably and easily and knowing that in order to achieve pleasant results in the long-term, you sometimes have to do unpleasant things in the short-term.

Ellis differentiated between having the *will* and having *will power* to work on becoming happier. "Will" means having or making a choice or decision. People choose to do (or not to do) something or they make a decision to do (or not to do something). The "will" to change (to be less upset about someone's behavior; to try out new, potentially rewarding activities) only means people decide to change—and then they may or may not work very hard at doing so. However, "will power" is different and harder than merely expressing the "will" to change for with "will power" people not only have the power to make the decision but they follow it up in

practice. Ellis recognized that the achievement of any goal, whether accomplishing a skill or forming a close relationship requires hard work and effort.

Rational Principle 10: Problem Solving

Ellis was a realist concerning life. He would often state the obvious. When people create goals to achieve in areas of work, relationships and comforts, these goals create and bring with them many practical problems to solve. How to get a good education? Where to find a suitable mate? Which profession should be chosen and how shall success be achieved? What recreations are enjoyable and worthy of people's time and effort?

Ellis provided guidance in the problem solving process by identifying two types of problems people experience when confronted with obstacles that block their goals.

Practical problems are those that people experience with reality. Common examples are sub-standard work performance (e.g., failing a test; not achieving monthly performance goals) and interpersonal difficulties and challenges with family, friends and at work (e.g., partner giving their partner a hard time, colleague not following through on a commitment, manager treating you disrespectfully, rejection including the ending of a relationship, meeting someone new). Ellis encouraged people to do their best to solve their practical problems and provided many methods that are widely employed in business, industry, management, and education.

Emotional problems are generally those extreme emotional reactions (e.g., panic, depression, self-hatred, rage) about a reality problem with something or someone. Ellis indicated that once people recognize a reality problem, they can try to solve it or they can choose to make themselves extremely upset about it. For Ellis, emotional problem solving means ongoing use of his ABC-DE model including the disputing and changing of irrational beliefs and self-talk.

Rational Principle 11: Scientific Thinking and Flexibility

In constructing his view of the rational mind, Ellis was enamored with the work of the psychologist George Kelly (1955) who pointed out that people are born as natural scientists.

Ellis agreed with Kelly that the scientific method of setting up plausible hypotheses and then experimenting and checking to uphold or disprove them is probably the best (but not the only) method for discovering 'truth' and understanding 'reality' (Ellis, 1994). Furthermore, Ellis asserted that science is not only the use of logic and facts to falsify a theory, science is also continually revising and changing theories and trying to replace them with more valid ideas.

Science is flexible rather than rigid, open-minded rather than dogmatic. Ellis called on people's inherent capacity for scientific thinking to play a central role in determining how to go about living their lives. Using experimentation and self-questioning, people may objectively go about rejecting and confirming ways to think feel and behave that are self-enhancing.

Ellis held that anti-scientific, irrational thinking is a main cause of unhappiness and that if people are scientific and flexible about their desires, preferences and values, they can refuse to become desperately unhappy. They can think: "I strongly prefer to have a great career and loving partner." but will not dogmatically and un-scientifically insist "I must have a great career and lover" and when they do not, conclude "I am a totally worthless and rotten person because I have not achieved and am not loved the way I should be."

Ellis showed people how to use the ABC-DE scientific method to dispute irrational beliefs ("Where is the evidence I'm a loser?" "Where is it written in the universe that I must be loved and approved of all the time?") to start thinking rationally again.

Rationality; The ABCS of Helping Coachees Overcome Emotional Blockers

It is difficult for people to be happy when they are actively disturbing themselves about an adversity and thus, a prime goal in rational-emotive, cognitive-behavior coaching is to help coachees overcome their high levels of anxiety, feeling down, anger and/or procrastination when faced with adversity. This coaching process is initiated by Socratic questioning (e.g., Neenan, 2012) followed by a coachee's active consideration and modification of those irrational (rigid, anti-empirical, self-limiting) ways of thinking that are not sensible, evidence-based nor helpful.

A challenging question for a coach is whether coachees can grow and flourish while they are actively disturbed about an adversity or even when they are actively dissatisfied about an adversity. It is certainly possible for a person to be relatively happy when in a dissatisfied state (although not about the adversity in question) while it is improbable for that person to be happy when in a disturbed state. Using Ellis' scientific, cognitive re-structuring method (the ABC-DEs of REBT), it will be shown in the following case study from the archives of Windy Dryden how REBT can help people to become less upset and desperately unhappy about adversity and misfortune (appearing in Bernard, Froh, DiGiuseppe, Joyce, & Dryden, 2010). While the case study is with an individual experiencing mental health issues, the ABCs of emotional changes that are illustrated is commonly used by RE-CB coaches with coachees experiencing degrees of anxiety, feeling down and anger that are interfering with their lives and coaching progress,

> Norman has come to therapy because he is depressed and anxious about his recently acquired tinnitus. Before he developed this condition, Norman was an avid train-spotter, an

activity that gave him much happiness. Since developing tinnitus he had stopped this activity in case he was exposed to sudden loud noises that he feared might worsen his condition. Well-meaning friends had encouraged Norman to resume his pastime, which he did, but his disturbed feelings of anxiety and depression prevented him from enjoying train-spotting. Norman then depressed himself about his failure to enjoy an activity that had previously brought him much happiness. The REBT view is that unless Norman addresses effectively his disturbance he has little chance of being happy.

Let us now imagine that Norman seeks REBT for his anxious and depressed feelings (emotional consequences—"C"). His REBT therapist would help him to identify his irrational beliefs ("B"), challenge and change the irrational beliefs (disputing—"D") that underpinned his anxiety and depression about his tinnitus (activating/adverse event—"A") and his depression ("C") about not enjoying train-spotting when he last went and would help him to construct a set of alternative rational beliefs (rational effects "E") and to act in ways that are consistent with these rational beliefs. Norman would thus feel concerned and sad that he had tinnitus rather than anxious and depressed about it, but he would still go train-spotting even if he did not enjoy it as much as he did pre-tinnitus. He would feel sad, but not depressed about this reduced enjoyment.

REBT theory (Ellis, 1994; Dryden, 2008) holds that concern and sadness are examples of healthy negative emotions as contrasted with anxiety and depression, which are seen as unhealthy or disturbed negative emotions. Healthy negative emotions are based on rational beliefs which make clear what the person desires, but does not demand. In this case, after challenging his irrational beliefs, Norman prefers not to have tinnitus and thus he is concerned and sad about having it, but he does not demand that he must not have it but accepts the condition as part of his life. Thus, he does not feel anxious and depressed about having it. These healthy negative emotions and the rational beliefs upon which they are based are deemed to be constructive responses to an adversity and help the person acknowledge the badness of the adversity and thence change it if it can be changed and come to a healthy adjustment if it cannot be changed. In Norman's case, he could not directly change his tinnitus, but with expert help, trial and error and a set of rational beliefs he learned what he could and could not do to avoid further damaging his hearing. As a result, Norman was able to focus on the pleasures of train-spotting free from the disabling effects of his previously held irrational beliefs and the disturbed feelings of anxiety and depression that they helped to create.

Norman's new rational beliefs about his adversity helped him to feel happy again when he engaged in his favourite pastime. He was not as happy as he was before he developed tinnitus, because the condition itself and some activities that he chose to avoid because they would probably damage his hearing reduced his happiness. However, the important thing is that he experienced far more happiness than he did when he held a set of irrational beliefs about tinnitus and its consequences.

This example shows three things: (a) when a person does not face an adversity at "A" then he is free, theoretically at least, to engage fully in meaningful activities and, thus, experience happiness when thus engaged; (b) when a person faces an adversity at "A" and holds a set of rational beliefs at "B", then he experiences a set of healthy negative responses at "C" which allows him to deal constructively with the adversity (i.e. to change it if it can be changed or adjust to it if it can't be changed) and thus engage in meaningful activity, but, perhaps, not as fully as when

the adversity is absent. Thus, the person does still experience happiness, but is not as happy as in the previous scenario; and (c) when a person faces an adversity at "A" and holds a set of irrational beliefs at "B", then he experiences a set of unhealthy or disturbed negative responses at "C" which prevents him from dealing constructively with the adversity and thus significantly interferes with his engagement in meaningful activity with an accompanying significant reduction or eradication of happiness.

In REBT, Ellis proposed that the "E" (new rational effect/beliefs) not only helps people to experience healthy negative emotions and to be less unhappy in the face of adversity, the "E" is also the attitudinal gateway to greater and long-lasting happiness.

Rationality and Happiness Survey

I have developed a survey check-list, *Rationality and Happiness Survey,* that can be used in the early stages of coaching that offers coachees self-awareness of the extent to which they practice rationality in their lives including opportunities for further development (see Appendix).

The first part of the survey consists of the following three questions and assists coachees in formulating goals that are focussed on increasing happiness and life satisfaction and/or reducing emotional stress.

The second part of the survey enable coachees to consider in greater depth the meaning of each principle of rational living in terms of their own lives, current context and experience. The final part of the survey enables coachees to imagine and to commit to daily actions where they will practice one or more rational principles.

Conclusion

As a dyed-in-the-wool scientist and realist, Ellis took the position that people had better be optimistic but not unrealistic about their potential for greater happiness through rationality. Rationality is no miracle cure but people can have confidence it may work. Issues surrounding people's developmental capacity for change, the extent of their emotional problems and their current life circumstances no doubt operate to moderate the impact of rationality in the pursuit of happiness.

Positive psychologists continue to search for and develop conceptual under-standings of the individual psychological traits that contribute to happiness and the good life. This chapter advances this search by highlighting the distinctive and, perhaps, unrecognized contribution of the human faculty of rationality and rational beliefs such as self-acceptance and high frustration tolerance to the delimitation of happiness-creating psychological strengths.

Appendix

Rationality and Happiness Survey

Hello. The following survey has been used by many people to help in their search for increased personal happiness. I hope you will find it of benefit.—Michael E. Bernard, Ph.D.

PART A. Reflect on the following three aspects of happiness. Which one(s) do you wish to experience more intensely or frequently?

1. Presence of Positive Emotions (short-term happiness):
    ☐ joy   ☐ flow   ☐ fun   ☐ pleasure
2. Absence of Negative Emotions (short-term happiness):
    ☐ depression   ☐ anxiety   ☐ anger   ☐ procrastination
3. Presence of General Life Satisfaction (long-term happiness):
"How satisfied are you with your life"?

PART B. Consider the following list of "rational principles of living." Indicate <u>how often</u> you put the principle into practice.

	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Rational Principle 1—Self Interest			
Rather than spending all of my time in meeting the needs of others, I make a point of spending some of my time doing things I find interesting and enjoyable.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 2—Social Interest			
In exploring my own interests, I make sure that my actions do not hurt others or interfere with their rights. I treat others with care and respect.	☐	☐	☐
I become involved in helping other people.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 3—Self-Direction			
I do not wait around for other people (family, work, government) to do things to make me happy. Rather, I actively plan for those experiences that I think will bring me pleasure and satisfaction. I also make decisions about those activities that bring me displeasure and see if they can be shared or minimized.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 4—Self-Acceptance			
When I have not been successful in important tasks at work or have been criticized or rejected by someone whose opinion I value, I do not put myself down or take it personally. I accept myself as a fallible human being who sometimes makes mistakes or who possesses traits that may not always be appreciated by others.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 5—Tolerance of Others			
When someone behaves unfairly or disrespectfully, I am able to keep separate the person's negative behavior and actions from my overall judgment of their value or worth as a person.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 6—Short-Term and Long-Term Hedonism			

	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
While I enjoy immediate gratification (fun, joy, pleasure, excitement), I also have a clear focus on what I want to achieve in the long term in order to be satisfied with my work, health and family life. I balance time spent having fun with the hard work and sacrifice needed to achieve my longer-term goals.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 7—Commitment to Creative, Absorbing Activities and Pursuits			
I make a real effort to discover activities that are fun and exciting and when practiced over an extended period result in fulfilment. When I discover what I am interested in, I commit time and energy to the activity.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 8—Risk Taking and Experimenting			
In order to find experiences that bring me heightened or new enjoyments, I experiment with many tasks and projects to discover what I really want. I am prepared to step out of my comfort zone and I am willing to risk defeat or rejection.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 9—High Frustration Tolerance and Will Power			
When I make a decision about something I want to do that can bring me success at work, enrich a relationship, or improve my health, I follow up with hard work and effort no matter the degree of frustration or discomfort.	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 10—Problem Solving			
When I am faced with a problem at work or home, I apply methods that help to solve the problem such as time management or conflict resolution (practical problem solving).	☐	☐	☐
When I am faced with a problem, I apply methods that help me to stay calm. I take responsibility for my own feelings without blaming others. I base my thinking on the facts. I change my demands into preferences, I don't blow the 'badness' of the event out of proportion, and I use positive, rational self-talk (emotional problem solving).	☐	☐	☐
Rational Principle 11—Scientific Thinking and Flexibility			
I do not solely rely on the opinion of others about the way I should do things. I am open-minded and evaluate the best ways to live my life based on my experiences and opportunities. When I am in a rut or things are not working out, I am flexible in changing the way I do things.	☐	☐	☐

PART C. Consider the aspect(s) of happiness most important to you (Part A). Which of the 11 Rational Principles of Living can you put into practice more often? Be as specific as you can as to where, when, how, and with whom you will apply the principle(s).

Action Plan for Personal Happiness

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Psychological Blockers to Successful Coaching Outcomes

Michael E. Bernard

> *You can consider a psychological blocker as an established habit involving a way of thinking, feeling and behaving that interferes with the ability of someone to achieve their goals and may in themselves be unpleasant to experience.*
>
> *Michael E. Bernard*

As a coach, it is very important for you to have a thorough understanding of the different internal psychological blockers of coachees that significantly interfere with their problem-solving ability, growth and capacity to change. These blockers such as procrastination, social anxiety, perfectionism, anger and feelings of inadequacy may present themselves in initial goal setting discussions or quite commonly as coachees undertake to implement new patterns of behavior.

A few words on whether you need to be a psychologist to identify psychological blockers and help coachees overcome them. These blockers are well known to everyone. When your coachees experience one or more of these blockers frequently and intensely, and as a result the impact is disruptive (ex. with subjective pain), then they will often need treatment from a mental health practitioner (psychologist, counsellor). A coach needs to be alert to the existence of and severity of these blockers and if not a therapist with suitable training, s/he needs to be able to refer individuals for mental health services.

We also know that almost everyone who is being coached experiences from time-to-time common psychological blockers that are disruptive and stressful, but which are not evidence of more serious mental health problems. How do I know this? Because of my background in rational emotive behavior theory of Albert Ellis that discusses that irrationality is a natural part of the human psyche due to evolutionary and biological-hereditary factors and that everyone experiences irrationality to

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greater or lesser degrees (e.g., Bernard, 2009; Ellis, 1962, 1998; Ellis & Harper, 1975; Ellis & Lange, 1994). And so as a coach, you will want to be equipped to understand, anticipate, identify, empathize with and provide using RE-CB and other methods to help coachees overcome these normal psychological barriers that may sometimes be a large part of why they are not taking positive steps forward in different areas of their lives.

This chapter refers to content rather than process. It will provide an orientation to many of the more common psychological blockers coachees regularly encounter at various stages of the coaching process. You will, hopefully, find illuminating and helpful the way rational-emotive, cognitive-behavior theory conceptualises each blocker.

Case Study: Spot the Blockers

When conducting professional development of trainers and coaches, I often provide the following case study and ask them to 'spot' the different internal issues that are interfering with an employee's successful work performance including ability to manage work-related change. I present the case of Jordie Blake, English, male, 28 years of age, a creative director working for an advertising agency, Pure Concept. See how many internal issues you can spot.

Jordie is a talented developer of on-line advertising campaigns. He emigrated from the UK and has worked for Pure Concept for 18 months. Full of energy and addicted to the creative process, Jordie had initially impressed the company with his fresh ideas and technical knowledge for developing on-line content for brand building and web-based marketing. He currently has a client allocation of two blue chip companies and he prides himself on the strong relationships he has built with both clients.

Three months ago, Pure Concept underwent a business restructure and recruited two new senior managers including the female Account Manager, Agatha Johnson, who Jordie now reports to. As a result of these changes and the downturn in the economy (including less dollars being spent by existing clients on projects), the business direction has shifted in emphasis from servicing existing clients to acquiring new ones, with all personnel now expected to participate in business development activities. For Jordie this is not the greatest of news as he prefers to work with the creative team and he feels that his new manager is not appreciating his strongest skills set. He is feeling increasingly under the pump and is becoming more and more anxious as his perceived value, indeed his survival at Pure Concept, now depends not only on the creative-technical assistance he provides to his existing clients and other in-house projects, but also on how successful he is at generating new accounts.

Jordie arrived at his team's regular meeting feeling flat and looking tense, angry and tired. He threw his file onto the table with only a cursory greeting to his team. He opened the meeting by telling everyone that "*things are going to change around*

here" and proceeded to vent his anger about the e-mail he received this morning from Agatha. He referred to the new manager as "*a useless bean counter*" who "*clearly knows nothing about the value of the internet design in the process of establishing client branding*" and talked about having been through this before in the UK when "*developing new business became more important than servicing existing clients by adding value via the internet.*" Jordie ended the meeting by telling his team that they "*may as well go and get a job in PR rather than design*" and walked out. As soon as he is out of the room, Jordie realises that he has blown it by letting his team see his level of stress. This only adds to his currently high levels of anxiety about his performance at Pure Concept—how could they know he was tossing and turning all night knowing he has missed most of his new client targets for the last 2 months and the future wasn't looking good?

To make matters worse, his new manager has scheduled a progress review meeting at the end of next week. Initially consultative about the business direction and reasonably friendly, Agatha has recently become more formal in her communications with Jordie. She has sent him several requests for progress updates by email and yesterday while having a brief discussion with him in the staff lounge room, she even suggested that he "*needs to buckle down and do some serious prioritising or else the business may not be able to carry you for that much longer.*"

Jordie returns to his office resigned to getting to work on sourcing some new clients. He knows that he has procrastinated about this aspect of his role and he doesn't know where to start. His desk is a disorganised mess, he does not have a strategy and when he checks his multiple missed deadlines he feels a sense of panic overwhelm him. "*How dare she do this to me, doesn't she understand that I am a creative GENIUS? She doesn't value what I do and she thinks I am hopeless. Why should I waste my time?*"

Jordie puts his head in his hands and thinks "*What's the point—she's making it impossible for me to do my job effectively. I can't see how, with her around, I can do it. Maybe it's time to look for another job!*" He turns his computer off and heads for the door. To Jordie it feels just like the UK job he had to leave because he failed to build the business and consequently he and two of his colleagues were made redundant. He is terrified that he will be made redundant again and the horror of repeating this scenario has rendered him unable to sleep, unable to concentrate and he feels utterly inadequate: "*What the hell is wrong with me, maybe I am hopeless, maybe she is right*" and slamming the door behind him.

You probably noted the following blockers of Jordie: stress, tension, anger, anxiety, feeling inadequate and procrastination. Now, if you were coaching Jordie, how important is it to be able help him recognize and do something about these blockers that are making it quite hard to manage change and perform well?

Survey of Blockers

A useful tool for helping a coachee reflect on the strength of their blockers is the *Survey of Blockers* I have developed.

Please indicate how often you experience the following emotions and behaviors at work.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Doesn't Apply Not Sure	Often	Almost Always	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Feeling angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I get extremely angry when I am given something unfair to do.							
2. I find myself getting back at people who are unsupportive or critical of me.							
3. I feel like lashing out when I am not given recognition for doing good work.							
4. I can go on a work slowdown when I find people looking after their own interests and forgetting about mine or the project at hand.							
5. I feel furious when I've done a good job and only receive critical comments.							

Feeling worried	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I worry a lot about what others think of me and my job performance.							
2. I lack confidence in being able to get the really hard things done.							
3. I feel nervous and restless when I think about what I should be doing.							
4. I worry too a lot about making mistakes and not being successful at what I'm doing.							
5. I feel insecure in doing my job.							

Feeling down	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I think of myself as totally hopeless when I see myself putting off things I should be doing.							
2. When I compare what others have accomplished with what I haven't, I can think 'I'm a real loser.'							
3. I really give myself a hard time when I waste time on unimportant things.							
4. I get down on myself for not being as successful as I think I should be.							
5. I can get down when people are critical of my work.							

Procrastination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I put off until tomorrow what I should be doing today.							
2. I procrastinate at doing important tasks.							
3. I put off doing or saying things, which might make me, feel uncomfortable.							
4. I seem to leave things until the last minute.							
5. I can't be bothered doing boring and tedious work.							

Based on the results of having administered the survey to over 200 people in my classes and professional workshops, here's a general guide that can help coachees interpret their total scores for each performance blocker.

Total Score: 10 or below—blocker rarely interferes with performance at work and life

Total Score 15–20—blocker sometimes interferes with performance at work and life

Total Score: 25+—strong blocker that often interferes with performance at work and life

Meet the Blockers

Let's have a look at four of the most common four blockers that disrupt positive performance in tough situations and which in the case of worry/anxiety and feeling down can be experienced as painful. The point to keep in mind is that it is quite common to experience them especially when confronted with tough situations. However, it's when emotional reactions including procrastination become extreme that our work performance, relationships, well-being and quality of life suffers. Sometimes because of one or more of these emotional or behavioral reactions, we can spend 70 or 80% of our work time ruminating on the problem rather than focusing on finding the solution.

Albert Ellis has distinguished between *healthy and unhealthy negative emotions* (Ellis & Dryden, 1997). A healthy negative emotion may be viewed as stemming from a rational belief a healthy to an inferred or actual adverse event. It helps an individual strive to change what can realistically be changed, and/or accept, in a constructive way, what can't be changed. An unhealthy negative emotion results from irrational beliefs about adversity. Irrational beliefs and derivative negative emotional responses result in behaviour that makes it quite difficult for people to achieve their goals of being happy and achieving.

Unhealthy Negative Emotions:	*Healthy Negative Emotions*
Anxiety	Concern
Depression	Sadness
Guilt	Regret
Embarrassment	Disappointment
Anger	Annoyance

When coaching to help coachees overcome strong negative emotions, the goal is not eliminating negative emotions altogether but rather to help a coachee reduce the intensity of unhealthy negative emotional reactions and to replace them with healthy negative emotions.

A second important idea about emotional blockers to share with coachees is that they are not like an on-off switch. Rather, emotions vary in intensity from strong to

weak. An Emotional Thermometer (0 = no feeling, 5 = moderately upset; 10 = couldn't be any more upset) can be used to judge the intensity of one's own emotional reactions and to help understand the level of emotional intensity someone is experiencing when faced with adversity.

Probably the most important insight that Albert Ellis (1962) and the founder of cognitive therapy, Aaron Beck (1976), have written about that helps define the essence of rational-emotive and cognitive-behavior therapy and coaching is that the way people think about an event (past, present, future) rather than the event itself that is the main cause of the type and intensity of emotional reaction (anger, anxiety, feeling down, procrastination). Furthermore, and this is essential, Ellis and Beck have revealed that every person above the age of six has the capacity to think rationally (flexibly, objectively, reasonably) making few cognitive errors as well think irrationally (rigidly, illogically, not based on facts) making multiple cognitive errors. There is a substantial body of research that attests to the powerful role of rational and irrational beliefs in the emotional life of people (e.g., Bernard, 1998; Bernard & Cronan, 1999; David, Lynn, & Ellis, 2010).

One of the goals of RE-CB coaching that derives from these ideas is to help strengthen the abilities of coachees to use their capacity to reason (think rationally, make predictions, draw conclusions based on facts) which, in turn, will bring about a lessening of the intensity, frequency and type of a coachee's emotional (and behavioral) reactions to adverse events.

Anger

Anger is an emotion that often occurs in situations where unfairness, inconsideration, frustrating conditions or injustice is perceived. The anger I am referring to is focused on external people and events—not anger towards oneself, which can be considered as an element of depression. A colleague may have promised he would accomplish something for by a certain date and fails to deliver and you are forced to do it and carry your own load as well. A client you are working for refuses to support you as you initiate actions on her behalf. A senior executive fails to inform you in a timely fashion about changes that affect you. Your manager requires you to do work you perceive to be boring and very time-consuming yet fails to provide you with adequate resources and time.

Anger is frequently a misunderstood emotion in that it is viewed by the person who is angry as justifiable and normal. Some forms of anger are healthy, other forms are not. Healthy anger is an emotion of moderate intensity that helps people achieve their goals and which does not lead to negative consequences. Synonyms for healthy anger include irritation, displeasure, and annoyance. Synonyms for unhealthy anger include rage, hate and bitterness.

Extreme anger is almost always a blocker to positive work performance, problem solving and well-being. An important idea concerning anger is that when you are blocked from obtaining what you desire or when someone mistreats you, it is

perfectly normal and appropriate to be annoyed and irritated as such feelings will motivate you to take constructive action to see if you can make changes to a situation or to another person's behavior. However, when you become angry and hostile after being frustrated, it is quite likely that your aggressive behavior will not only be unsuitable to rectify a situation, your behavior will be viewed as provocative and will tend to exacerbate the situation.

There are physiological consequences of anger including, in the short-term, muscle tension, increased heart rate, stomach upset, and perceptual confusion and in the long-term, stomach ulcers, high blood pressure and heart attack.

As a coach, you can anticipate that a coachee who is very angry will be harboring the following anger-creating irrational thoughts (from Ellis, 1977):

1. People should act fairly, considerately, respectfully, in the way I treat the and in the way I think they should.
2. It's awful and terrible when they do not.
3. Their behavior is intolerable, I cannot stand it.
4. They are totally bad for acting so badly. They deserve to be severely punished.

As a coach, your goal will be to assist a coachee to understand why these thoughts are imprecise, extreme, rigid, do not make sense and are not true. Then, you can support a coachee to shift his/her thinking so that it is more flexible, reasonable, sensible and based on facts:

1. I strongly prefer but do not need people to act properly all the time. There is point in demanding that they are—it's not the way people really are all the time.
2. Unfair, inconsiderate, disrespectful behavior is bad but is rarely the worst thing in the world that could happen.
3. I can stand it (though I don't like it) when they do not.
4. People are mistake-makers and fallible who sometimes do the wrong thing. It doesn't make sense to condemn them totally for aspects of their behavior. While penalizing them for poor behavior may be sensible, condemning them as being totally bad is not sensible not ever likely to be true.

Other example of anger-reducing self-talk include:

- While it is preferable to be treated fairly, kindly and considerately, there is no law of the universe that says I *must be*.
- People who act unfairly, inconsiderately, or unkindly may deserve to be penalised, but never to be totally condemned as rotten no-goodniks who deserve to be eternally damned.
- Anger does not help in the long run; it is only temporarily effective at best.
- Anger towards others frequently prevents me from getting what I want.
- While it is undesirable to fail to get what I want, it is seldom awful or intolerable.
- I can cope successfully with unfair people even though I strongly wish they would act better.
- I wish others would treat me fairly—but they never *have to*.

- I do not *need* other people to act well—I only prefer it.
- People act the way they do because that's the way they act. Tough!
- I can live and be happy—though not as happy—with my significant other's fallibility.
- My supervisor is fallible and will not always act fairly or competently. Tough—that's the way fallible human beings work!
- I *can* put up with this negative and hostile person, though it would be better if he/she acted better.

A useful distinction Albert Ellis makes when he discusses the difference between healthy and unhealthy anger has to do with the impact of a person's anger on his/her relationships. As a result of extreme and rigid thinking, extreme anger towards another makes it impossible to carry on a reasonable working or loving relationship—with the person manifesting what Ellis calls a *relationship disturbance* (see Bernard, 2011). If, however, one is only irritated with another for behavior judged unacceptable, it is possible to continue to carry on a productive and satisfying relationship despite areas of disagreement; Ellis describes this *relationship dissatisfaction*.

Coaching goals when coaching coachees who are very angry are:

1. Helping coachees become aware of the degree or anger they are experiencing.
2. Helping coaches become aware of their behavior when very angry, how they behave (e.g., aggressively, bottling anger up).
3. Helping coaches become aware of the negative consequences for them when they act aggressively towards another because if their extreme anger.
4. Helping coachees develop a goal to feel less angry and to act assertively not aggressively when next faced with a provocation.
5. Helping coaches become aware of their extreme, rigid anger-creating thinking and to replace it with anger-reducing thinking that is sensible and not extreme.

Here are some further tips that can help anyone to be less angry and more in control in the face of unfairness, inconsideration, disrespect and someone letting him/her or his/her team down.

1. Focus your thinking away from the person and what he/she has done/not done. Remind yourself about the negative consequences for you when you get very angry.
2. Be aware when you gradually start to become angry and tense.
3. Employ a relaxation skill (deep breathing, positive mental visualisation, yoga) to manage your physical tenseness.
4. To request a change in behavior from someone, you need to:

   - describe the behavior you see and/or hear in the other person using descriptive rather than attacking words
   - *(optional)* express the feelings you experience as a result of the other person's behavior
   - ask for specific changes in behavior

- spell out the positive consequences for the person of his/her changing behaviour and the negative consequences if he/she does not

5. When you keep control of your anger, pay close attention to the positive consequences for you.

Anxiety

Anxiety or worry is the state of engaging in chains of thoughts and images of a negative and uncontrollable nature in which mental and real attempts are made to avoid potential threats. There are three types of anxiety to be on the lookout for in coaching (Ellis, 1998):

1a. *performance anxiety*—worrying about lack of success (mistakes, not being perfection)
1b. *perfectionism* (an extreme for of performance anxiety)—worry about not doing important things perfectly and avoidance of activity and responsibility in areas of life where individual perceives weaker skills
2. *social anxiety*—worry about possibility of disapproval, criticism and/or rejection from those whose opinions and judgments matter; lack of confidence in social situations and social avoidance; excessive approval seeking
3. *discomfort anxiety*—worry about a forthcoming situation or event where you expect to be very tense, nervous and uptight and uncomfortable; dodging of situations where discomfort is anticipated

An example of worrying about being uncomfortable is when we ruminate about how uncomfortable we will be when attending a forthcoming function where we do not know anyone. At the same time, we might also worry about what people will think about us when we talk with them, which is social anxiety. We may also believe we have to perform perfectly in our interactions with other (perfectionism).

Now, it is quite normal and regular to worry about upcoming situations where you might be not be as successful as you would prefer, where others might not rate you as positively as you would prefer and where you might have to endure higher levels of physical discomfort than you would prefer. However, when worry escalates to higher levels of anxiety and panic, we often experience negative effects such as not being able to think clearly, not being able to concentrate and undesirable levels of physiological arousal (sweaty palms, rapid heart rate, blushing, faintness, stammering voice) all of which can be not only extremely unpleasant but maladaptive. Extreme worry is almost always a blocker to positive work performance.

Irrational beliefs (extreme, rigid) to be on the lookout for when coaching people with performance anxiety (e.g., fear of public speaking, fear of taking risks and failure) include:

1. I should be/need to be/must be successful (or perfectly).
2. It is awful to make mistakes, do things imperfectly and to fail.

3. Lack of success is more than I can take.
4. Mistakes, lacks of success and imperfection prove my essential unworthiness and worthlessness.

When coaching individuals with performance anxiety, the goal, in part, is to have them shift these extreme, rigid beliefs to more reasonable and flexible ones. A central task is to encourage people to give up the demands for success (or perfection) and replace them with strong preferences and desires (e.g., "I prefer not do not need to be successful or perfection. It's not the end of the world (I can learn something from imperfection and failure). I can cope with setbacks. My value as a person cannot be determined by my performances.)

When coaching individuals with some degree of social anxiety, you can expect that as part of their mindset, not only do they strongly prefer to be liked and approved of, they illogically believe that they need to have people's approval and that they cannot stand rejection and disapproval (which everyone can).

When coaching someone who is socially anxious, a goal is for him/her to recognize the difference between things they do need (air, shelter, food) from things they just prefer but can do without such as love and approval.

Albert Ellis first wrote about *discomfort anxiety* in the late 1970s (Ellis, 1979) describing it as exaggerated threat to your future emotional stability. If you expect to feel afraid, and believe that you can't bear feeling tense while giving your talk, you are probably *catastrophizing*. You see yourself in a vulnerable, perhaps terrifying, position. You may distress yourself by describing yourself as emotionally falling to pieces (awfulizing). To avoid falling to pieces (whatever that means), you may avoid preparing for your presentation until you feel comfortable.

Coachees experiencing discomfort anxiety may hold one or more of the irrational beliefs including: 'I need to be comfortable, free from tension and stress. It's terrible and awful to experience tension and to feel uptight. I cannot tolerate feeling anxious and tense. My world is a very bad place for making things so intolerable and unpleasant."

Here's a summary of Ellis' suggestions for overcoming discomfort anxiety (Knaus, 2013):

1. Explore the advantages of avoiding discomfort versus living through discomfort. The advantage of avoiding discomfort is quick relief. That's a specious reward. Here's the downside of a specious reward: (1) You risk reinforcing tension avoidance. (2) You set yourself up to repeat this cycle. Consider an alternative. If you allow yourself to feel discomfort, you may discover that you don't need to fear the feeling. That's an advantage. You'll have one less anxiety. As a bonus you may simultaneously decrease secondary procrastination. This procrastination follows an emotional problem, such as anxiety. For example, you secondarily procrastinate when you put off dealing with your anxiety or directly facing your inhibiting fears. By productively facing your anxieties and fears you avoid this pitfall.

2. Teach yourself to describe how you feel without dramatizing the meaning of the emotion. For example, "I don't like feeling anxious" has a different meaning than "I can't stand feeling anxious." By reframing the issue with realistic toned-down language, you can avoid viewing yourself as inadequate and projecting this conclusion into the future.

3. Put yourself into challenging situations. Make learning to tolerate tension part of engaging in useful but uncomfortable situations. By behaviorally showing yourself that you can stand tension, you are less likely to rocket normal tensions into negative emotions that you may later describe as terrible.

Here are some tips that can help anyone to feel less worried and to be calmer and confident when under the pressure of performance, when faced with the possible negative opinions of others or facing discomfort if having to move out of a comfort zone.

When faced with a difficult person or challenging person or situation, and you notice yourself getting uptight (sweating, rapid heartbeat, shaking voice):

1. Prepare yourself ahead of time with what to think and what to do using the following self-talk.

   • 'Just think about what I have to do. That's better than worrying.'
   • 'No negative self-talk, think positively!'
   • 'Use a few calming, slow breaths to settle nerves.'
   • 'It's important to maintain my focus.'
   • 'I'll just psyche myself up—I can meet this challenge.'
   • 'One step at a time, I can handle this situation.'
   • 'I'm starting to get uptight; just breathe and relax. Focus on what I want to say.'
   • 'Even though the situation is tough, it's not the worst thing that could happen.' 'I can cope with this situation.'

2. Use physical relaxation skills such as slow deep breathing or tensing—relaxing muscle groups to stay calm.

3. Self-talk to help you reduce worry (select ones that apply to you).

• *'While it is very desirable to achieve well and to be recognised by others, I do not need achievement or recognition to survive and be happy.'*
• *'Mistakes and rejections are inevitable. I will work hard at accepting myself while disliking my mistakes or setbacks.'*
• *'My performance at work—perfect or otherwise—does not determine my worth as a person.'*
• *'Things are rarely as bad, awful or catastrophic as I imagine them to be.'*
• *'What's the worst thing that can happen? It's not the end of the world if I'm not totally successful or someone thinks badly of me.'*

Feeling Down and Inadequate

It is a fact of life that most people who hold high aspirations and expectations feel hopeless and inadequate when they have failed to achieve their goals or when they have been negatively evaluated by others. Feeling down is not depression though extended periods of negative thoughts and feelings about one's self-worth can end up as depression.

It is remarkable that in the face of setbacks we can make life doubly difficult by adding on feelings of inadequacy as a result of what happens. When our performance at work or home is not at a standard we desire and when people are critical of what we say and do, we have a significant practical problem to solve so that, in the future, we achieve our goals. However, feeling down about our state of affairs represents an additional emotional problem we have to solve as well. When we get down about practical problems at work, it is much harder to solve them. It is unfortunately the case that all of us to greater or lesser extents have tendencies to think irrationally about setbacks and rejections and it is our way of thinking that creates the emotional problem of feeling down about practical problems.

Because of its impact on your self-belief and energy and the accompanying feelings of emptiness and hopelessness, feeling down is almost always a blocker to positive work performance and wellbeing.

Beck (1976) described what he called the *cognitive triad* that creates feelings of depression and we need to be on the lookout for when coaching individuals who are feeling down and inadequate: (1) Negative view of self, (2) Negative view of the world and (3) Negative view of the future.

Ellis in his book *The Myth of Self-esteem* (2005) distinguishes self-esteem from self-acceptance:

"People's estimation of their own value, or worth, is exceptionally important. If they seriously denigrate themselves or have a poor self-image, they will impair their normal functioning and make themselves miserable in many significant ways. When people do not value themselves very highly, innumerable problems arise. The individual's judgment of his own value or worth has such an impact on his thoughts, emotions and actions, how is it possible to help people consistently appraise himself so that, no matter what kind of performance he achieves and no matter how popular or unpopular he is in relations with others, he almost always accepts or respects himself." Here's how Ellis proposed how to help people feel worthwhile: (a) define yourself as a worthwhile person because you exist, because you are alive, and because of your individual character strengths and abilities that make up your uniqueness, accept yourself whether or not you achieve or people approve of you, accept yourself with your errors and do your best to correct your past behavior; and (b) don't give any kind of global, generalized rating to yourself, you, only evaluate what you think, feel and do.

Here's some examples of self-talk that leads to feeling down: "Because I have not been as successful as I need to be and/or because others are not thinking as highly of me as I need them to, this shows how utterly worthless I really am. Not

only am I hopeless in this area, I am hopeless at everything I do and this will always be the case."

One of the goals of coaching coachees who are feeling down is to help them not to take rejection, mistakes and failure personally and to have as a default program in their heads when adversity occurs, self-talk that is reasonable, flexible and sensible that may include:

The goal of coaching is for coachees to feeling less down and only disappointed and sad, but still confident at those times when they have not performed well and/or have rightly been criticized for less than optimum performance.

Here are some tips for feeling less down and more confident that anyone can use when they have not been successful or when having received negative feedback, when you have made a mistake, not achieved your goal, said something stupid, not been acknowledged for a job well done, not received a '5-star' end of year performance review:

1. Put an end to self-deprecation.

    Suppose I said to a Martian, 'I'm talking to this intelligent Earthling and he's devoutly believing "One of my behaviours stinks, so therefore, I am a stinker." Let's suppose the Martian is intelligent, perceptive, and rational. What would he think about this Earthling? Probably, 'How can he be so nutty? His behaviour stinks, but he has millions of behaviours and they are all different and all tend to change. How can he, therefore, rate his self, his totality?' The Martian would be right. (quote from Albert Ellis, in Bernard, 2011, p. 36) .

2. Complete a self-concept analysis of yourself by writing down your positive characteristics at work and the rest of your life and your negative characteristics at work and the rest of your life. You will see that like all humans, you have many fine qualities and areas for improvement. Do you lose your positive qualities when something bad happens? Does it make sense to rate your overall self-worth based on just one or more negative characteristics.

3. Self-talk to stop feeling down.

   • '*I accept who I am, even though I may not like some of my traits and behaviors.*'
   • '*There are many things about me that I like and do well.*'
   • '*I have done many things at work successfully in the past. I will succeed in the future.*'
   • '*I am intelligent and talented enough to learn what I have to do and how to do it in order to accomplish my goals.*'
   • '*My performance at work—perfect or otherwise—does not determine my worth as a person.*'
   • '*I am confident that everything will turn out okay given that I have my goals, know what to do, and work hard.*'
   • '*I prefer people to like me, but I can live without their approval.*'
   • '*Mistakes and setbacks are inevitable. I will accept myself while disliking my mistakes and setbacks.*'

Procrastination

Procrastination is naturally by definition a psychological blocker. Procrastination means that you deliberately delay doing something at work even though you see the disadvantages of the delay. You might put off doing tasks because they are boring, time consuming or tedious. You can put off doing things as a pay back for someone treating you poorly. Or you can procrastinate at doing some tasks or trying something new because you are extremely worried about whether you will do it well enough. Procrastination becomes a significant work blocker when you put off doing important things and, as a consequence, your positive performance suffers.

Self-Talk that leads to procrastination: "Things I do at work should always be fun and exciting. I shouldn't have to do things that are boring and tedious." "I'll do it tomorrow when I'm more in the mood." "I work best under pressure so I'll wait until the deadline is tomorrow." "I can't stand doing tedious tasks." "I really do need to be relaxed and in the zone to do my best work."

Goal: When faced with tasks that that need doing but which you find deathly dull and boring, do them first as efficiently as possible before moving on to things that you enjoy doing. Put off putting it off!

In helping a coachee overcome procrastination, it is useful to discuss the variety of different reasons why people procrastinate (Bernard, 1991; Ellis & Knaus, 1977; Spada, Hiou, & Nikcevic, 2006; Stöber & Joormann, 2001) and to help set goals and develop plans for overcoming them.

1. Self-Depreciation. You have a poor regard for yourself and are always ready to put yourself down when the slightest thing goes wrong. You really don't believe a dope like you deserves a brighter future and, therefore, you have a hard time coming up with forward planning and challenging directions for yourself. As you procrastinate, you feel even more unsettled about yourself, which makes it hard to do the job.
2. Low Discomfort Tolerance. You find the thought of writing the plan frustrating, anxiety provoking or both. Since you find it difficult to tolerate frustration and anxiety, you divert yourself from the task thereby reducing your discomfort.
3. Pleasure-Seeking. You would rather be getting stuck into something more exciting at work than writing a boring plan for self-improvement. You find yourself being drawn to other more challenging and fulfilling activities.
4. Time Disorganization. You haven't scheduled enough time to write the plan along with everything else you have to do. This might also be revealed in you having difficulties setting priorities in terms of how you use your time to accomplish different
5. tasks of varying importance.
6. Environmental Disorganization. Your work area is too noisy with too many distractions to enable you to concentrate. You may also be missing important resource and reference material that you need to complete the plan.

7. Poor Task Approach. Even when you finally settle down to do the work, you are put off by not knowing where to begin and being overwhelmed by the size of the task. You might tend to become blocked by not knowing how to get started.
8. Lack of Assertion. You find it difficult to say "No" to requests made of you at work and find yourself with so many different things that you have committed yourself to that you really do not have enough time to get your plan done and honor all your commitments.
9. Hostility with Others. You might be very angry about having to do the plan in the first place. What a waste of time. As well, it might show a lack of confidence in you by the 'higher ups.' You feel like showing them by refusing to submit the plan.
10. Stress and Fatigue. You might be tired and spent from other work demands, hassles at home or simply that you are out of shape. You might be lacking fuel.

It's useful to know that most people dislike admitting to themselves that they are procrastinating. Most people feel ashamed or guilty. They make up rationalizations (excuses, justifications, explanations), which help them deny they are needlessly. As a coach, it can be helpful to help coachees struggling with procrastination to become aware of their rationalizations and help them eliminate them. Then, together, the 'real' reason for procrastination can be discussed and an action plan identified. Common rationalizations including the self-deceptive 'lie' include:

"I do not have time to do this today. It will be easier for me to do it tomorrow."

People have a tendency to veer away from doing tasks they find uncomfortable or frustrating—some people more than others. Rather than doing the task in the present, you re-schedule it to a time in the future. Whether the task is letter writing, sitting down and learning how to use the computer you've just bought for mega-bucks or talking to a significant person in your life about an important issue in your relationship, the mañana attitude not only helps you avoid doing a task you find unpleasant, it also helps you rid yourself of any guilt or shame by promising that you'll do it soon. You look optimistically to the future without having to do anything in the present.

The Lie. Unfortunately, this attitude doesn't really work. First of all, by putting off doing something, deep down you often experience nagging feelings of self-doubt and anxiety about ever getting the job done. The 'Big Lie' is of course that all too often, because the task is rarely easier to do tomorrow, you do not get around to doing the task at all?

"I can only do this work when my creative juices are flowing."

This rationalization involves the self-deception around avoiding certain types of work because you don't feel more inspired, creative, relaxed or in the mood or until other things get done. It is often a cop out for simply not feeling like doing it and can lead to big problems if you are someone who gets easily frustrated when getting started on a project. It is often only when you get past the frustration of getting into a project that your creativity is set free.

The Lie. As with the mañana attitude, this rationalization gives you temporary relief but doesn't really lead to getting the job done. In fact, this attitude can do more harm than good. If you've put 'on hold' doing something until after things in your life have changed, and if what you need to have changed is not very likely to change, then you might never see the green light to take things off 'on hold'. Suppose you would like to talk to your mate about not wanting to do so much of the housework and that you would like to work out a new, more sharing, arrangement. Because you get a bit anxious about opening up the topic, you decide that you'll wait until your mate shows some interest in what you've been doing and wants to discuss these issues with you. Your rationalization "I'll wait until my mate seems receptive" helps you dodge the discomfort of making an assertive request. However, if your mate is not the listening nor observant type, you may, because of your rationalization, never get what you want.

"Make hay while the sun shines."

If you embrace this motto as a basic philosophy, many of your decisions to do certain things involving hard, tedious or sustained effort will be interrupted by your inclination to play and have fun. Rather than making the sacrifices needed to achieve certain long-term goals, you procrastinate and indulge in short-term pleasures because you want to have fun, fun and more fun and are scared that you might miss out. So short-term pleasure seeking can be rationalized by the belief that you deserve fun and can lead to you becoming one of life's real under-achievers. After all, if you're playing and avoiding doing the hard stuff, which is almost always necessary in converting your potential into reality, how can you expect to be a success?

The Lie. There are a number of self-deceptions, which surround this rationalization. It is true that you will, by carrying through on a decision which involves you working hard and putting in sustained effort, miss out on a particular opportunity to enjoy yourself. It is, however, very unlikely that future opportunities of a similar kind will not come your way after you've completed what you've set out to do. Moreover, because people will actually look up to you because of making the sacrifice of short-term pleasure for longer-term gain, they will be more likely to invite you to partake of more pleasures than if you compulsively give in to your every impulse. Another irrational aspect of this motto, when used unquestioningly to justify avoiding certain tasks, is the notion that because past or present circumstances in your life have been so bad, you deserves to have fun all the time. Deservedness implies that the Universe watches over everyone and decides that certain people, because of their circumstances and suffering, deserve fun. If that were so, then why do we have so many poor and unhappy people?

"Since I do my best work under pressure, I'll just postpone this until the pressure builds."

This rationalization involves you defining the conditions surrounding you finishing a task as necessarily involving a large amount of pressure. You start off with some task or project, which has to be completed by a certain date. When you think about settling down to do it you experience an intense amount of discomfort.

Rather than admit that you are postponing working on the task because once again you don't feel like doing it, you convince yourself that your work is far better when you do it at the last minute.

The Lie. Now it is true that a certain amount of anxiety and pressure seems to fuel the intellectual machinery. Pressure also seems helpful to overcome the inertia in starting certain boring or time-consuming tasks. However, procrastinators carry this observation too far. They become far too dependent on pressure. They become addicted to larger and larger doses of pressure before they can get off their behinds and start to work. This becomes a particular problem when you've got multiple deadlines, which coincide, with one another. At these times, the "I work best under pressure" rationalizations really screws up you and your results.

"If I wait until the last minute to complete my work, I'll save myself lots of time and effort"

The self-deceptions you can come up with to justify putting off doing work
can really be very amusing. If you can convince yourself that you can make a big saving in time and effort by doing things at the last minute, you will not only be more likely to procrastinate, but also feel good about procrastinating. After all, time is precious and if you can save some with a little procrastination, then maybe procrastination isn't such a bad thing after all.

The Lie. If it were true that you save time by putting things off to the last minute, then I'd start to become worried about the fact that I'm not procrastinating more often than I do! The fact is that you only save time if you rush your work at the last minute. If your concern is saving time, why not rush your work well before its' due and see if you can maintain good quality. More often than not you cannot. An associated problem with this Lie is that you can also experience nagging or gnawing feelings of panic while you are ostensibly saving time. The panic, of course, surrounds the issue as to whether you'll actually finish it or not.

"There's no point in starting if I don't know how to do the job properly."

This rationalization is commonly invoked by people who have trouble sustaining the effort frequently required to get a project underway. It becomes a rationalization when you invoke it to help you escape the frustration of getting started on a task.

The Lie. The truth is that there is every point in trying when you are having trouble getting into a project. Most probably you know enough to make a start and in so doing, you will discover how the job should be done. 'Trial and error' learning is frequently a very useful approach to getting into difficult projects. And if you really do not know enough, find out as quickly as possible what you need to know and then hop into it.

"I really don't want to do this anyway."

This is a real killer of a rationalization. It tends to be used when you have

decided that what you've been putting off doing is really too hard, too frustrating and too painful to achieve and, therefore, not worth doing. What accompanies this rationalization are further self-deceiving reasons why you know longer wish to commit yourself to a particular course of action. An example would be if you were interested in meeting an attractive stranger at a party. You catch sight of the person and you make an instantaneous or considered judgment that you would enjoy knowing more about the person. Perhaps, you feel chemistry. However, for reasons to be covered in the next chapter, you never get around to going up to the person. As opportunities continue to present themselves and as you start to predict that you'll probably never take the first step, rather then condemning yourself as a weak coward', you justify your procrastination with the thought: "I really am not that interested in meeting new people. It wouldn't have worked out. Surface appearances are often deceiving. Phew, I'm glad I didn't say anything!".

The Lie. The Big Lie here is that deep down you really still want to accomplish the task that you originally decided before your procrastination and supporting rationalizations blocked you from achieving what you wanted. The Big Lie is one big cover up of your inability to follow through on a decision to act, which would bring you more enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction and happiness. Rather than looking at the "real reasons" for your procrastination and working on them so that you get what you want, you fall back on one of the most basic and harmful self-deceptions of the lot. It is sometimes very difficult to discover the specific rationalization you use to divert yourself away from your chosen activity. They are often ingrained so deeply in your 'psyche' that it takes a real effort to tune into them. We are not trained to listen to our thinking. Moreover, much of our thinking happens so quickly and automatically that it takes a trained listener to discover which, if any, rationalizations are interfering with performance. Cos

Finally, here are some "procrastination bypass" tips coaches can bring to the attention of coachees when they are avoiding tasks that need to be done and which they consider to be boring, time-consuming and frustrating.

1. Excuses: (select those that apply to you and stamp them out)

   - '*I don't have time to do this today. It will be easier for me to do it tomorrow.*'
   - '*I'll do it as soon as other things in my life have cleared up.*'
   - '*Since I do my best work under pressure, I'll just postpone this until the pressure builds.*'
   - '*Once before I did something just before deadline and it worked out well; I'll do it at the last minute again.*'
   - '*There's no point in starting if I don't know how to do this job properly.*'
   - '*How can I be expected to finish a project that I've lost interest in?*'

2. Techniques (do, don't stew)

   - The knock out technique. The harder and more distasteful a task, the better it is to do it immediately.
   - Worst-first approach. Identify the most difficult part of the task and do it first.

- Bits and pieces approach. Do anything you want in connection with the task you want to accomplish. Gradually do more and more until the task itself doesn't seem so impossible.
- Five minute plan. Take a task you've been procrastinating over and work on it a minimum of five minutes. Once you've finished five minutes, then you can set yourself another five minutes and then another.
- Establish a set time. Schedule a fixed time to begin the work tasks you have been putting off doing.

Conclusion

Having insight into the likely ways of thinking of a coachee experiencing a psychological blocker helps a coach display advanced accurate empathy—knowing what's going on inside a coachee's mind sometimes even before the coachee is self-aware. Additionally, the rational-emotive, cognitive-behavior perspective and derivative coaching tips and interventions avoids the trap of coaches offering superficial explanations and solutions ("Don't worry so much, everything will turn out OK.") to coachees who are stuck and are looking to a coach to help them become un-stuck, freer emotionally. While psychological blockers can be difficult to influence, over 50 years of experience clearly indicates that helping coachees identify and re-structure their thinking and belief system is a very powerful influence on their ability to set goals, reflect, formulate and enact action plans for self-improvement, change and overall life satisfaction.

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Enhancing Positive Psychology Coaching Practice

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Introduction

In this chapter, Positive Psychology and Positive Psychology Coaching will be reviewed and consideration given to how the well-established practices of Cognitive Therapy might be utilised and integrated to further improve the Positive Psychology Coaching process. In particular, common, unhelpful thoughts and beliefs held by coachees (and coaches) will be discussed and suggestions for using the Socratic Method for changing such thoughts to more helpful ones will be proposed.

What Is Positive Psychology?

There's much debate about when Positive Psychology was "born", but most date the beginning of this relatively new branch of psychology to 1998 when Martin Seligman, as President of the American Psychological Association, selected it as the theme for his elected term (Gable & Haidt, 2005). There's no doubt many if not all of the key constructs such as thriving/flourishing, optimism and hope had been considered, researched, written about and applied for many years previously; but this was arguably the first time they'd formally been brought together in a coherent way with a specific focus (Froh, 2004).

There's also been much debate about whether or not Positive Psychology is even necessary as a separate or distinct field of study and practice; but the reality is that most of psychology for most of its history had, for all intents and purposes, been "negative". That is, the focus had predominately been on pathology (such as

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depression), faults, weaknesses and dysfunction, rather than happiness, strengths, attributes and/or flourishing (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

For many, therefore, Positive Psychology is what all psychology should really be about—the science of thriving and the development of empirically supported tools and methods to help people live their best possible lives (even if or when they're starting from a position of distress or dysfunction).

Developed by Seligman (2012) as a framework for wellbeing, the PERMA model has almost certainly become the most famous and widely used and referred to model within Positive Psychology. PERMA is an acronym that summarises five key constructs considered to be most important for thriving and flourishing. PERMA stands for the following:

- P = Positive Emotions. Feeling good, not surprisingly, is an important part of living our best lives but positive emotions also motivate us to perform better in most settings
- E = Engagement. We don't thrive unless we strive; unless we're fully engaged with life and ideally, utilising our core strengths (positive attributes)
- R = Relationships. Real happiness isn't just feeling good, it's also doing good (to and for others). Real happiness, further, is not a solo-sport but more accurately, intimately connected to our connections. Happy people are not selfish and hedonistic but instead, have more and better quality relationships about whom they care and support
- M = Meaning. As just noted above, happiness is not just hedonism; pleasure is an important part of Positive Psychology but so too is living a life in which we contemplate and dedicate at least some of our time to something greater than just ourselves as individuals. This includes constructs such as purpose and spirituality
- A = Accomplishment. Although it's often said that life is more about the "journey" rather than the "destination", there's no doubt that "arriving" at something meaningful creates satisfaction, pride, a sense of achievement and other types of positive emotion. Setting and working towards meaningful goals, therefore, is a very important part of living a good life

It should be noted that although widely used and generally viewed favourably, there have been some criticisms of the PERMA model, most notably for the absence of any reference to physical health and wellbeing. Quite rightly, then, in more recent years a range of modified versions have been proffered with a view to including findings from the considerable and growing body of literature that supports the notion that exercise and activity, for example, are not just good for physical health but also for psychological health (Sharp, 2007). Exercise is increasingly being seen as a potent anti-depressant and mood enhancer (Cooney et al., 2013).

What Is Positive Psychology Coaching?

If Positive Psychology is the science of thriving and flourishing, built on the pillars of PERMA (plus physical health), how then is this applied or utilised to help any and all presenting clients (with any and all goals)?

Positive Psychology Coaching is an umbrella term used to describe the group of practical applications, strategies and interventions, derived from the integration of the empirically supported Positive Psychology principles and the practice of coaching (see Linley & Kauffman, 2007). Before describing exactly what this is, however, it's important to explain what Positive Psychology is not; there are many myths and misconceptions about and around Positive Psychology and Coaching that require clarification.

Positive Psychology Coaching is not just about enhancing happiness. As hinted at above, a focus on positive emotions certainly has its benefits (Sharp, 2011) but living one's best possible life should also involve the creation of meaning, attention to others and the diligence and perseverance required to stay strong in the face of adversity. It's also important to note that Positive Psychology Coaching is not the same as therapy or counselling. Although there may well be overlap, Positive Psychology Coaching is more often aimed at building on strengths and promoting high functioning as opposed to addressing or trying to fix weaknesses and remedying dysfunction (see Biswas-Diener, 2010; Biswas-Diener & Dean, 2007). An often used metaphor refers to Positive Psychology's goal of helping coachees move not just from minus ten (distress and dysfunction) to zero ("normal" or "okay") but further, from zero to positive ten (even if it's unanimously accepted that no one will be at positive ten every minute of every day).

What exactly is this "positive ten"? Positive Psychology Coaching aims to help individuals be as healthy and happy as possible, given their circumstances and aspirations; it's not just about 'hedonia' (the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain) but also about 'eudaimonia' (thriving in the context of living a good life, for oneself and for others). In short, positive ten equates to enjoying maximum marks in each of the PERMA (plus H) domains.

Positive Psychology has also been applied more widely than just in an individual context. In addition, it's been studied and utilised in schools (sometimes referred to as the discipline of Positive Education, Waters, 2011), teams and organisations (which has also garnered a separate descriptor, Positive Organisational Scholarship, Spreitzer & Cameron, 2011) and even at a national level" (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2018).

As with other approaches to "change management", those who practice Positive Psychology Coaching do so in slightly different ways. But one of the more common approaches, however, derives from a more generic approach to coaching and is typically referred to as the GROW model (see Alexander, 2010). GROW is another acronym, with the letters in this case representing:

- G = Goal (What does the coachee want to achieve?)
- R = Reality (Where is the coachee now?)

- O = Obstacles and Options (What's getting in the way? And what options are available to the coachee?)
- W = Wrap up and/or Way Forward (What will the coachee commit to doing and what plans do they have for moving towards the desired outcome?)

Regardless of whether or not one uses the GROW model, or one of the other available coaching structures, it's suggested that:

Positive Psychology Coaching works by collaboratively applying evidence based methods to achieve positively defined goals co-developed by the coach and the coachee.

As in therapy and counselling, addressing problems and deficits might be considered, the primary focus of Positive Psychology Coaching is on working towards attractive and desirable goals using the coachee's strengths and abilities.

Specifically, strategies used within such an approach are often referred to as PPI's or "Positive Psychology Interventions". As outlined by Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson (2005) and others (e.g. Bolier et al., 2013), these include (but are not limited to):

- Building gratitude
- Developing hope and optimism
- Building positive relationships and connectedness
- Increasing awareness of what is positive about oneself
- Identifying and utilising character strengths

As with traditional and widely used forms of therapy, such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, Positive Psychology Coaching should not be prescriptive but rather, individually tailored to suit each coachee and their goals, and individually tailored following assessment of and in consultation with the coachee (e.g. Beck, 1979).

Positive Psychology Coaching Assessment

As stated, therefore, the first step in Positive Psychology Coaching involves a thorough assessment process; but whereas traditional therapy focuses predominately on assessing distress and dysfunction, and errors made in the past with a view to determining solutions that might improve the future. A Positive Psychology Coaching assessment would focus more on the coachee's strengths and attributes that have contributed to his/her successes in the past and how they can be used to achieve desirable goals in the future. There's a much greater focus on what's going well and what can be done to enjoy even more health, happiness and productivity as opposed to what hasn't gone well and how this might be remedied (Lopez & Snyder, 2003).

Not dissimilar to most approaches to therapy, formal Positive Psychology coaching assessment can involve the use of formal psychometric tools with a focus on strengths and on what's going right (including measures of happiness and optimism, as well as

classic assessments of strengths such as the VIA Signature Strengths Survey), structured interviews including history taking, and exercises designed to imagine and clarify a positive vision for the future.

Key assessment questions might include:

– What would you most like to achieve?
– If I could wave a "magic wand" and your life became perfect, what would it look (and feel) like?
– If you were looking back on your life in 5, 10 or 20 years' time, and you'd achieved everything you set out to achieve, what (exactly) would you list as your accomplishments and what did you do to make them come about?
– What are you best at and how can you use this to enjoy even more happiness and success in your life?
– For what are you most thankful in life?
– What gets you excited? Where and when do you feel most energised?
– Who, in your life, supports you and assists you to feel and be your best?
– What do you most value?
– In what or whom do you find meaning and purpose?

The ultimate goal of assessment is to determine, as much as possible, a clear set of goals and/or a direction in which to head, as well as identifying the core factors that will help achieve these goals. As hinted at earlier, whereas traditional therapy begins with the assumption that something is "broken" and needs to be "fixed", Positive Psychology Coaching starts from the premise that individuals already have most, if not all of what they need and that what's required is for coachee's to focus more of their time and energy on using their existing attributes and qualities, in more areas of their lives, and more effectively.

Once appropriate and motivating goals are established, therefore, the focus then shifts to building on existing strengths, finding new and different ways to use existing strengths, and learning and mastering new skills and strategies collaboratively determined to be necessary or helpful (Snyder & Lopez, 2006).

Positive Psychology Coaching Interventions

Bringing this all together (see Linley, Joseph, & Seligman, 2004), the range of interventions or strategies could include (but would not be limited to):

• Goal setting and action planning
• Progress monitoring
• Creating meaning and purpose
• Motivational strategies
• Healthy lifestyle changes (e.g. nutrition, exercise, sleep)
• Building hope and optimism
• Building positive relationships

- Identification and utilisation of core strengths
- The practice of gratitude and mindfulness

Enhancing Positive Psychology Coaching with Cognitive Therapy

Many scholars have already written much about Positive Psychology Coaching (e.g. Lyubomirsky, 2008); however, much less has been written about what makes it more or less likely that coachees will achieve desirable results.

As with any attempt to achieve meaningful life changes, one of the more significant factors that can impede or promote successful outcomes are coaching related cognitions; that is, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and expectations about goals, therapy, coaching, change, success, happiness and any other relevant or related construct (Seligman, 1998). It has been well established that thoughts influence feelings and behaviours and as such, unhelpful coaching or change related thoughts will indubitably affect coaching outcomes.

Accordingly, the remainder of this chapter will focus on common unhelpful thoughts that might obstruct or facilitate the coaching process and suggestions given for how a coach can help a coachee to modify these thoughts, develop more helpful ones, and thereby maximise the chances of enjoying a more positive process and outcome. Further, the Socratic method, including specific questions and behavioural activities, will be reviewed in a general sense; and then, it will be discussed more specifically focusing on a range of common unhelpful, or "irrational" thoughts (see Beck & Beck, 2011).

A full list of potentially unhelpful cognitions held by clients would be too long to include, so only the more prevalent ones will be addressed shortly. But before doing so, it the Socratic Method will be reviewed, most famously developed by the early proponents of Cognitive Therapy (such as Aaron Beck, Albert Ellis and others), and subsequently becoming an integral component in most forms of therapy and coaching.

The Socratic Method is named after the Greek philosopher Socrates who believed in teaching via the art of questioning, rather than simply the provision of information. It works hand in hand with "guided discovery", which is an approach based on asking a series of questions that allows information to be brought into the coachee's awareness. The coachee is encouraged to discover things for him/herself.

Guided discovery incorporates one of the other underlying principles of Cognitive Therapy, namely its empirical nature. There is the data gathering element, looking at the data in different ways with the coachee, and inviting the coachee to devise her own plans for what to do with the data and information (Padesky, 1993). Beck, Rush, Shaw, and Emery (1979) coined the term 'collaborative empiricism' which encapsulates the idea of a joint approach where the coachee provides raw data to be investigated with the coach's guidance. This notion of the coachee and coach working

together via collaboration and negotiation comes from Kelly's idea of both working as "personal scientists" (Kelly, 1955). Beck, Wright, Newman, and Liese (1993) point out that "questions should be phrased in such a way that they stimulate thought and increase awareness, rather than requiring a correct answer".

Padesky (1993) suggests that Socratic questioning consists of four stages:

1. asking informational questions
2. listening attentively and reflecting back
3. summarising newly acquired information
4. asking analytic or synthesising questions to apply the new information to the coachee's original problem or thought

The Socratic Method will now be illustrated with a number of specific unhelpful, cognitions held by coachees which can interfere with coaching progress.

1. *I can't change. What's the point? Nothing I've tried before has worked so why will this?* (predicting the future or jumping to conclusions)

   These pre-existing (often unhelpful and unrealistic, yet sometimes strongly held) beliefs about coaching outcomes are a well-known reality for any experienced coach, yet the fact that almost all coachees have tried to "change" before presenting for treatment/coaching, and almost by definition that they've "failed" (because otherwise they wouldn't be presenting), is rarely spoken or written about. This is, however, significant as the experiences coachees have prior to engaging in coaching can (and do) substantially influence their beliefs about the chances of success (or otherwise). Confidence and self-efficacy beliefs are vitally important, regardless of what ever specific approach is being used, and so it's suggested that these types of cognitions need to be identified and addressed as soon as possible.

   Accordingly, coachees should be encouraged and helped to reflect upon any thoughts relating to the ease or difficulty of change, and some of the following (Socratic) questions might be worth proposing:

   • Just because you feel you didn't succeed completely, is it possible that you had some partial success?
   • Have you had any success, in any areas of your life in the past? And if so, how?
   • Just because you didn't achieve as much as you would have liked with previous attempts, does that mean you can't or won't achieve success in the future? Especially if you receive some help?
   • Clearly you're not entirely happy with your previous attempts to change, but what went well and/or what can we learn from the past?

   So what would be a more helpful thought for coaches to adopt towards the coaching experience? Ultimately, it would be ideal if coaches could guide their coachees towards something like:

   1. assessing unhelpful beliefs that interfere with coaching process
   2. socratic, collaborative questioning where coach help coachee to consider the negative impact of the belief, why it might be negative
   3. coach guides coachee to change

"Change can be difficult, but I have achieved change before (in some or in other areas of my life) and if I've done it once I can do it again. I just need to break it down and take it one step at a time; learn what I need to learn, and persevere through the tough times".

2. *I shouldn't need to see a coach; I should be able to do this on my own* ('should') statements and/or unrealistic expectations)

It's well known that only a small proportion of those who could benefit from therapy actually present for therapy; there's little doubt the same could also be said about coaching. There are many reasons people don't present but one of the more common ones is stigma; or embarrassment about being labelled and/or needing help. Not surprisingly, this is important because it could and would affect the coaching relationship and so if not tackled head-on, and early on, might directly and markedly impact on the chances of a successful coaching outcome.

With this in mind, coachees could be prompted to reconsider their beliefs with the following questions:

– Is seeing a coach any different, really, from seeing any other professional (such as a doctor or dentist, accountant or lawyer, or even a car mechanic)?
– Where is it written that we should be able to do and/or cope with everything all on our own? How can any of us possibly be expert or knowledgeable in everything?
– The best athletes and sportspeople in the world have coaches; do you judge them negatively for seeking and utilising expert help?

What, then, would be a more helpful thought? In short, coaches should aim to help their coa1chees reformulate thoughts that include acceptance of the reality that we all need help sometimes. Further, it would be important that coachees be helped to acknowledge that needing and seeking and accepting help is NOT a sign of weakness or personal failing but rather, a normal occurrence, a sign of strength in fact, and something that will ultimately contribute to a better and more positive outcome for all involved.

3. *I don't deserve happiness* (black and white thinking)

Somewhat surprisingly, this is a very common belief. Due to lessons learned early in life and/or through cultural or religious experiences, happiness is not infrequently perceived as something for others; those who are always good and perfect. That is, for many, happiness is seen as something that only the best deserve; which in reality means none (or very few of us) would enjoy such positive emotions!

But what if happiness were viewed as something we could all, even given our faults and failings, experience (even if not all the time)? Similarly, what if happiness were perceived as something quite separate to the experience of negative emotions and/or the committing of negative actions such that regardless of how good or bad we think we are some or all of the time, we can (quite

independently of this) still allow ourselves the positive experience of positive emotions.

Accordingly, coachees could be encouraged to reflect upon the following questions:

– Do you know other people who've made mistakes and/or done something "bad" or "wrong" at some point in their lives? If so, would you suggest to them that they don't ever deserve any happiness?
– If happiness is something that needs to be "earned" through hard work or achievement, then what would you say to a young child who's accomplished little or nothing of substance? Should they "wait" until they've done more before expecting to enjoy happiness?

4. *Happiness is frivolous* (focusing on the negatives and discounting the positives)

In her widely read and highly praised book, 'Positivity: Ground-breaking Research Reveals How to Embrace the Hidden Strength of Positive Emotions, Overcome Negativity, and Thrive', Barbara Fredrickson (2009) listed what she believed to be the top ten positive emotions, including joy, gratitude, hope, awe and love. She choose NOT to include happiness! Why? One reason was that it was too often used by too many people to mean too many different things. It was, she argued, too easily misunderstood and one of the more common misunderstandings was that happiness was essentially a synonym for fun and pleasure. Although most positive psychologists agree that fun and pleasure are important, most also agree that on their own they can lead to a life of hedonism and that real thriving and flourishing needs to include (among other things) meaning and purpose and connectedness and engagement with life. Accordingly, happiness has at times been seen by some as superficial and lacking in import.

Fredrickson's (2004) work, however, has shown that happiness (or positive emotion), if defined appropriately, is vitally important as it can create the "broaden and build" phenomenon that's been found to be associated with significant and meaningful benefits in almost all areas of life (including resilience, wellbeing, and even higher intellectual functioning).

As such, rather than seeing happiness as a limited construct that's only about smiling and laughing, coachees should be helped to expand their definitions of happiness, to incorporate a wider and more complex array of emotions, and to consider also the many and real advantages that come about as a result of creating such positivity. To help with this, coaches might consider asking the following questions and posing the following issues for reflection:

– Write a list of all the positive emotions you can think of
– Conduct an internet search and find as many words or descriptors for positive emotion as possible
– How do you function when you're feeling some of these positive emotions compared to when you're feeling anxious, stressed or depressed?

– Are you more likely to cope better when you're feeling positive and strong, or sad and down?
– If positive emotions do contribute to better performance and to higher functioning then is happiness really, frivolous and inconsequential?

5. *What's the point if I can't be happy all the time?* (dichotomous thinking)

One of the criticisms of Positive Psychology has been that it promotes unrealistic expectations about seeking or experiencing happiness all the time. Yet as far as I'm aware, no positive psychologist has ever suggested that happiness is an emotion that could or should be experienced all the time. Many have advocated that it's desirable, for a range of reasons, but all have also provided the caveat that the so-called "negative emotions", such as stress and anxiety and sadness and even anger, are all normal and appropriate feelings to have at times.

The criticism, therefore, is a 'straw man'. The goal (to be happy all the time), is most certainly unrealistic and unachievable. But that doesn't mean there isn't great value in doing all one can to create as much and as many positive emotions as possible, as often as possible. Accordingly, the headline thought in this section should be considered unhelpful because it's "all or nothing" approach effectively throws out the baby with the bathwater. To remedy this, coaches might prompt their coachees with the following questions:

– Just because you can't be happy all the time, does that mean you can't enjoy it some of the time? As often or as much as possible?
– What are the advantages or benefits to occasionally experiencing unpleasant emotions such as sadness or anxiety?
– Could it be that happiness is more pleasurable because of unhappiness?

6. *I'll be happy when…* (Fortune Telling)

A frequently held belief about happiness is that it comes as a result of achieving certain goals; and this is, to some extent, a reasonable and valid belief. Seligman (2011) included "accomplishment" in his PERMA model; and goal setting, as well as scheduling pleasurable and satisfying events have been used as interventions for overcoming depression for decades (e.g., Cuijpers, van Staten, & Warmerdam, 2007).

At the same time, however, there's always a risk that making happiness dependent on some future achievement might lead to the phenomenon sometimes referred to as the "hedonic treadmill" (Diener, Lucas, & Scollon, 2006) and further, it ignores the reality that just as accomplishment can lead to happiness, so too can happiness lead to accomplishment (Fredrickson, 2009; Sharp, 2011).

Accordingly, helping coachees to focus on building positivity as an end in and of itself, but also as a means to an end (i.e. as something that motivates, energises and inspires) has numerous advantages in coaching. The following questions, therefore, may well be worth asking:

– To what extent has putting happiness off really worked for you? When is this approach useful; and when is it not?

 – To what extent might you function better and be more motivated if you allowed yourself to enjoy some positive emotion first and foremost?
 – Would you be prepared to trial a strategy that created positive emotion as a means of then achieving something of meaning?

7. *Happiness is just a selfish pursuit.*

In the same domain as "happiness is a frivolous pursuit", this belief is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of happiness; or of how I'm proposing happiness should be defined, anyway. As already noted, happiness should not be defined simply in terms of pleasure or hedonism; although these might contribute to a good life, thriving and flourishing also very much involve the pursuit of meaning and purpose, as well as the consideration of others and their needs.

Fredrickson's "broaden and build" theory has also already been proffered; and along similar lines it's worth referring to research that suggests happy people are not just more productive and healthy, among other things, but that they're also more generous and altruistic (Steger, Kashdan, & Oishi, 2008)!

Taking this in to account, therefore, coachees should be helped to view happiness as something that's well worth creating for their own benefit, but also as something that will help them be better partners, mothers, fathers, friends and colleagues. To assist them move closer to such a definition, consider posing some of the following questions:

 – To what extent can you help others if or when you're sick and tired and miserable?
 – Are you more or less likely to be and to do good when you feel good?
 – What if we were try monitor your moods, and your acts of kindness, generosity and altruism, to see if there might be any relationship?

8. *Even when I achieve something it's nothing compared to what others achieve.* (mental filtering and/or discounting positives)

Social comparison is one of the most common and destructive forces working against our happiness and success in life; with the almost ubiquitous presence and constant use of social media, it's prevalence and the damage it does is only increasing (Panger, 2014). Unfortunately, social comparison and the discounting of achievements due to their perceived lack of worth when measured against others, are negative influences that also rear their ugly heads within the context of coaching.

David Burns (1999) has referred to this as 'reverse alchemy' where rather than turning 'base metals' into gold, some individuals become very adept at transforming golden moments of joy into psychological lead!

At the same time, however, Positive Psychology's focus on character strengths and innate, positive attributes has reignited the focus on becoming the best individuals we can be and as part of this, recognising that happiness and success need to be personally, individually and subjectively defined. Coachees should be guided, then, to fully appreciate their accomplishments for what they really are, regardless of what any other person might or might not have achieved.

With this in mind, therefore, coaches might find the following questions useful:

– Make a list of all the things you've achieved in your life
– Are these any less important just because others have also achieved?
– To what extent does it help to discount your achievements?
– What are the consequences of discounting your achievements?
– If we were to ask someone who knows you very well to list your achievements, with what would they respond?
– If your achievements were those of someone else, would you discount them in the same way?

9. *What if I try and fail? It will be devastating* (catastrophizing)

No one likes to fail; but if failure is so feared that no attempts are made to succeed then little, if anything, of value will ever be enjoyed; and if this occurs, then the life lived will involve little, if any happiness or fulfilment. As John F. Kennedy famously once said, "There are risks and costs to action. But they are far less than the long range risks of comfortable inaction."

One of the reasons failure is so often feared is that the consequences are deemed, by those who're anxious, as catastrophic and enduring. Rather than seeing failure as an event, some people see it as something that fundamentally defines who and their value as people. Not surprisingly, then, avoiding attempts to try new things is considered a "sensible" strategy to avoid negative outcomes, which it can do to some extent; but what this avoidance also does is minimise or even eliminate any chances of enjoying success and positive emotions such as happiness and satisfaction.

A more useful approach, therefore, would be for coachees to be prepared to take "calculated risks" and to view the possibility of failure as opportunities to learn and improve. Just as toddlers are encouraged to keep trying when they "fail" to walk the first time they try, so too should we encourage ourselves and each other to persevere if we don't succeed the first (or even the second and third) time we try something (including coaching).

Even the genius of Thomas Edison was frequently familiar with failure; but his view was "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." So with a view to helping coachees adopt more useful attitudes to trying, and beliefs that would more likely lead to perseverance and resilience, the following questions could be asked:

– Would it really be that bad if you didn't succeed?
– How much would it matter in a day, a week, a month or a year?
– Does "failing" the first (or even the second or third) attempt mean you'll never succeed with subsequent attempts?
– Do you know anyone that's failed, maybe more than once, yet gone on to achieve great things?
– What, if any, are the positive consequences of failing?

10. *I shouldn't need to "work" at happiness; it should just come naturally* (unrealistic expectations or "should statements")

There's a common belief that happiness is a natural state; one, therefore, that shouldn't require effort. The evidence suggests there might be some, partial support for this notion, but only some. According to Lyubomirsky (2008) and others, there are three main contributors to happiness, one of which is "nature" (or genetics). There's no doubt, therefore, that for some people some of their happiness may well come "naturally". But it's worth noting the other two contenders when it comes to generating happiness, thriving and flourishing, and they are context or environment, and intentional behaviours. So for all of us, some effort is required to enact those intentional behaviours; and this even applies to those with a favourable genetic makeup because even this (biological) advantage doesn't account for anywhere near 100%.

As such, coachees should be assisted to consider the notion that it's OK to "work" at happiness; in fact, it's something everyone does (even the "lucky ones"). It's possible, even, that greater satisfaction might come from something achieved through effort, rather than from something that "just happens" and so with this in mind, coaches could consider posing some version of the following questions:

– Do you think physical health and fitness should just come naturally? That they shouldn't require work or effort? Is happiness really any different?
– Where's it written that happiness should come naturally?
– If happiness does require some effort, but it still can be achieved, what's wrong with that?
– Is it possible that in the same way exercise becomes easier, or the learning of any other skill or talent becomes easier and the learner becomes better, that happiness might fall in to the same domain?

Conclusion

Although the growth was initially relatively slow, evidence has been gathered at a remarkably rapid pace in recent years supporting the principals of Positive Psychology (Bolier et al., 2013). Definitions of key constructs have become clearer and empirical support for applied strategies has also accumulated impressively (Donaldson, Dollwet, & Rao, 2014).

This chapter has added another dimension for those considering the utilisation of Positive Psychology strategies, in a coaching context, by integrating elements of Cognitive Therapy and by highlighting how they might be relevant and useful.

Identifying and addressing unhelpful beliefs of coachees, it is argued, should increase coachee engagement and enhance coaching effects. I conclude by inviting readers to test the aforementioned notions more thoroughly with a view to continuing to improve outcomes for all involved.

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Part II
Processes and Techniques
of Rational-Emotive,
Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching

The Coach-Coachee Relationship

Kristina Gyllensten

Introduction to the Coaching Relationship

Why should we consider the coaching relationship? Regardless of which psychological theories, techniques, and frameworks that are used within coaching, the coaching process rely on interpersonal interaction in one form or another. Indeed, "*the essence of coaching is putting people first*" (Palmer & McDowall, 2010, p. 1).

Since the early days of coaching literature, the coaching relationship has been viewed as an important variable in the coaching process and to coaching outcomes. There has been an increasing interest in interpersonal and relational variables since the shift from whether coaching works to how coaching works (O'Broin, 2016) and recent research has found that the coaching relationship is an active ingredient in coaching (De Haan, Duckworth, Birch, & Jones, 2013). This chapter will present a brief summary of the coaching literature with a focus on the role of the coaching relationship in the coaching process and in coaching outcomes. In addition, general aspect of the coaching relationship including trust, respect and collaboration will be highlighted. Trust, respect and collaboration have been found to play a supplementary role in coaching effectiveness (O'Broin, 2016). Furthermore, the chapter will outline differences and similarities between the coaching and therapeutic relationship. This topic has been frequently discussed in the literature. Indeed, it is an important topic as coaches have a lot to learn from the vast literature on the therapeutic relationship, at the same time as, coaches need to be aware of the important differences between coaching and therapy. The next section in the chapter leads on from this topic to discuss the coaching relationship within Rational Emotive- and Cognitive Behavioural Coaching. Various cognitive, emotive and behavioural aspects of creating a good relationship are discusses as well as potential factors that may interfere with the relationship. Moreover, the role of empathy and emotion

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within in the relationship are discussed. In the next section of the chapter, catering for individual differences within the coaching relationship is discussed with a focus on age, gender, ethnicity, and personality. Finally, dos and don'ts in the perspective of the coaching relationship are outlined with a particular focus on self-reflection. Hopefully, this chapter will help to answer the question 'why do coaches need to consider the coaching relationship?' and it will definitely provide a list of good references that can answer this question.

Definition, History and the Role of the Coaching Relationship

The coaching relationship has often been cited as an important change agent in the coaching literature. So what is the coaching relationship and why should coaches consider this topic? There are many different definitions of coaching and likewise there are different ways of defining the coaching relationship. The definition of the coaching relationship adopted in this chapter is as follows:

> *'a unique, co-created, evolving relationship comprising the coaching alliance plus additional client and coach contributions'* (O'Broin & Palmer, 2007, p. 295).

In discussing the coaching relationship, it is also relevant to mention the coaching alliance. These two concepts are very similar and the coaching alliance can be said to be expressed through a dynamic coaching relationship. A definition of the coaching alliance is:

> *'The coaching alliance reflects the quality of the coachee's and coach's engagement in collaborative, purposive work within the coaching relationship, and is jointly negotiated and renegotiated throughout the coaching process over time* (O'Broin and Palmer, 2010a, p 4).'

A full literature review of the role of the coaching relationship is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, a few illustrating studies will be presented in order to provide a brief history of the coaching relationship. In the 1990s the coaching literature consisted mainly of discussion papers, and the importance of the coaching relationship was highlighted in some of these (e.g. Levinson, 1996). A study on return on investment (ROI) in coaching by McGovern, Lindmann, Vergara, Murphy et al. (2001) found that a large proportion of the coaches in the study believed that the quality of the coaching relationship was critical to coaching success. In the mid-1990s several models of executive coaching, leadership coaching and human development involved forming a strong alliance or coaching relationship. The first outcome study to report the importance of the ability to form a strong coaching alliance was conducted by Wasylyshyn (2003). In a large web-based questionnaire study, De Haan, Culpin, and Curd (2011) examined those issues in executive coaching which coachees found most helpful in bringing their issues forward. They found that almost regardless of specific coach behaviours, coachees reported valuing the helpfulness of their coach indicating that coachees evaluate their experiences of coaching more generically, than with regard to specific techniques or interventions. In addition, a large scale global executive coaching outcome study found significant

correlations between both coachee- and coach-related strength of working alliance and the effectiveness of coaching (De Haan, Grant, Burger, & Eriksson, 2016).

General Aspects of the Coaching Relationship

Various aspects of the coaching relationship have been studied and found to play a role in coaching effectiveness including trust, respect, and transparency. The importance of building trust in the coaching relationship is a frequent theme in the literature (O'Broin & Palmer, 2010b; Passmore, 2010). A qualitative study investigating the coaching needs of high achievers identified 'ultimate trust in their coach' as an important coaching need (Jones & Spooner, 2006). Another study, with high level director coaches, investigated the characteristics contributing to the building of trust from the coachee perspective (Alvey & Barclay, 2007). In the analysis two themes were found. The first one being 'Individual receptivity', i.e. the willingness to change, disclosure, and openness to feedback. The second them was 'Connection depends over time', meaning mutual respect or trust. It was found that the bond between the coach and coachee increased subject to coachee perception of growth and confidentiality agreements. A further qualitative study investigated the experiences of workplace coaching and found that the coaching relationship was a main theme in the interviews (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007). One of the subthemes was 'trust' and the participants explained that the coaching relationship was dependent on trust. These studies indicate that trust plays an important role in the coaching relationship. However, O'Broin (2016) points out that the verdict remains out on whether mutual trust is necessary for a rewarding coaching relationship and successful coaching, or whether the coachee's view on trust is what matters.

'Respect' and 'collaboration' are further mutual aspects of the coaching relationship identified in the coaching relationship research (Alvey & Barclay, 2007; Boyce, Jackson, & Neal, 2010; O'Broin, 2013; O'Broin & Palmer, 2010b). In addition, the previously mentioned study by Gyllensten and Palmer (2007) found that transparency was a further main theme that together with trust created a valuable coaching relationship. Further factors related to respect and collaboration have been identified as important in the coaching process including an accepting approach (Gyllensten, Palmer, Nilsson, Regner, & Frodi, 2010), a non-judgmental attitude (Passmore, 2010), and credibility of the coach (Boyce et al., 2010).

Differences and Similarities Between the Coaching and the Therapeutic Relationship

Since the early years of coaching literature and research there has been much focus on the differences and similarities between the coaching and therapeutic relationships (Hart, Blattner, & Leipsic, 2001; O'Broin & Palmer, 2007, 2010b). The

coaching relationship has been viewed as more egalitarian, collaborative, and collegial compared to the therapeutic relationship (O'Broin, 2016). According to Grant (2006) the coaching relationship differ from the more hierarchical relationship in consulting, counselling, or clinical work where the psychologist or therapist is the expert who prescribe interventions or treatment. In most cases, the coach do have skilled expertise that their clients lack, if not there would be little reason for the coaching client to seek their help. Instead, the issue is about the role of the expert. Expert knowledge can be shared in coaching but depending on the stage and goal of coaching the coach aims to strike a balance between the ask-tell dimension (Grant, 2006). Grant (2014) later conducted an interesting study were multiple measures of the coach-coachee relationship were compared. Autonomy support, satisfaction with coach-coachee relationship, similarity to the ideal coach-coachee relationship, and a goal-focused coach-coachee relationship were the four aspects of the coaching relationship that were measured in relation to specific measures of coaching success. It was found that a goal-focused coach-coachee relationship was a unique and significantly more powerful predictor of coaching success compared to the other factors. Grant (2014) concluded that the findings highlighted the importance of goals within the coaching process, and illustrated important differences between working alliances in psychotherapy and coaching.

McKenna and Davis (2009) encouraged executive coaches to learn from psychotherapy and use some of the 'common factors' used in therapy including the therapeutic relationship. Broad principles of coaching practice, based on psychotherapy literature findings, were proposed in their article. According to O'Broin (2016) the article by McKenna and Davis (2009) received mixed reactions in the executive coaching world with both strong advocates and critics. However, a number of benefits were suggested in identifying functional overlap between the coaching and therapeutic relationships. In addition, there were advocates for getting inspiration from the psychotherapy context in creating research questions also applicable for coaching (O'Broin, 2016; Smither, 2011). However, it has also been pointed out that the possibilities for conducting research studies differs between psychotherapy and coaching (De Haan et al., 2013). Despite the fact that studies have found that coaching is effective it is unlikely that randomised controlled trials (RCT) will be produced to the same extent as in therapy research because of limited funding for research, lack of pressure from customers and practical reasons. De Haan et al. (2013) stated that the evidence to date justifies the assumption that coaching is effective and coaching research should therefore expand research effort on identifying the active ingredients of coaching. One of these ingredients could be the coaching relationship.

Regarding the comparison between the coaching and therapeutic relationship O'Broin (2016) concludes that an increased acceptance of the fact that the coaching relationship is similar (in some ways) to other helping relationships, especially the therapeutic relationship, has inspired coaching practitioners and researchers draw inspiration from other areas. Whilst the research on the coaching relationship remain in its infancy, it is somewhat pragmatic to assume functional similarity between the coaching and the therapeutic relationship. However, it is also important to consider

that the context of executive coaching is different from therapy, and the two relationships may have nuanced or significant differences (O'Broin, 2016).

Rational Emotive- and Cognitive Behavioural Coaching and the Coaching Relationship

The focus in this book is Rational Emotive (RE) coaching, however, there is a lack of literature on the coaching relationship in the RE-coaching literature. This section will therefore incorporate literature on Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) as well as RE-coaching. There has been references to the importance of the relationship in the CBC literature (e.g. Neenan, 2008) and O'Broin and Palmer (2009a) have written an article about the coaching alliance from a CB perspective. O'Broin and Palmer (2009a) state that within CBC, there is an emphasis on working collaboratively with the coachee. This is of course very similar to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) which is a collaborative approach.

As mentioned in previous chapters Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) which later became Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) was established in the mid-1950's by Albert Ellis. Ellis empahsised the role of dysfunctional thinking in emotional distress and historically the therapeutic relationship did not receive a great deal of attention within REBT (Garfield, 1995; Najafi & Lee-Baranovich, 2014). However, in later writings Ellis did acknowledge the importance of the therapeutic relationship and the therapist's unconditional acceptance of the client is mentioned specifically in Ellis writings (Garfield, 1995). REBT therapists can disclose examples from their own lives in order to show clients that they have experienced similar problems and describe how they solved the problems. Empathy and humor also plays a part in the therapeutic relationship (Najafi & Lee-Baranovich, 2014). These aspects of the therapeutic relationship can be translated to the coaching relationship. Moreover, the irrational beliefs highlighted in REBT can be highly relevant to consider in relation to the coaching relationship. Examples of irrational beliefs that can interfere with the coaching relationship include awfulising and terribilising where to coach believes that it is absolute awful or terrible that the coaching process does not proceed in a desirable way.

The Collaborative Characteristics of the Coaching Relationship Within RE and CB – Coaching

The founder of Cognitive Therapy Aron Beck (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979) has suggested a number of aspects that are important in creating a collaborative relationship in therapy and O'Broin and Palmer (2009a) have translated these into a coaching context as follows:

- Neither participant taking a superior role
- A team approach
- Joint efforts
- Both being open and explicit
- The coach has a collaborative stance and demeanor
- The coach provides rationales
- The coach offering techniques which the coachee can choose whether or not to use
- The coach admitting mistakes

The authors suggest that by adopting these attitudes and behaviours the coach and the coachee together can achieve a collaborative spirit. It is emphasized that collaboration is a superordinate principle involving sub-components such as empathy and the stance of the coach.

So how can these attitudes and behaviours be created? O'Broin and Palmer (2009b) suggest that it is important to have an explicit discussion, agreement, and renegotiation over time of the goals, tasks and bonds of the coaching alliance as this can help to create clarity and transparency in the coaching relationship. By explicitly negotiating and renegotiating the goals, tasks, bonds, and views of coaching the coach can use different kind of activities with different coachees in order to build an optimal coaching alliance. A focus on collaboratively negotiating with the coachee on the characteristics of the coaching alliance may also help to create a better balance of power in the coaching relationship (Spinelli, 2008). In addition, in order to create an optimal coaching alliance it needs to be adapted to the specific context and coachee. Indeed, several authors have advocated the adaption of the relationship to the needs of the coachee (De Haan et al., 2011; Kauffman & Bachkirova, 2008).

In the CBC framework it is fundamental that the coach explicitly discuss the CBC coaching model and the formulation (Szymanska, 2009). Similarly, O'Broin and Palmer (2009a) propose that an explicit discussion of the CBC model and formulation will contribute to the development and establishment of an effective coaching alliance.

It has been suggested, that within the CB framework the coaching relationship is likely to be strengthened when there is a good match between the interpersonal styles of both the coach and the coachee. Especially in the initial stages of the development of a coaching alliance. And the coach may need to modify their interpersonal style during the coaching process (O'Broin & Palmer, 2009a). Indeed, the need for the coach to adapt their interpersonal style was highlighted in a qualitative study by Jones and Spooner (2006). It was concluded that high achievers have specific coaching needs and that the nature of the relationship between the coach and the high achiever was of particular importance. It was found that high achievers wanted a coaching relationship built on trust, mutual respect and expected coaches to add value quickly. However, having a very good interpersonal match and liking a coach or a coachee too much may be counterproductive if it blocks the coaching progress. For example, it may be the case that the coachee want to portray themselves in a positive light and may therefore have problems discussing issues that

they need help to develop. Another possibility is that the coach feels uncomfortable asking challenging questions and may therefore hinder the coaching process.

Issues of the coachee that may have a negative effect on the coaching relationship within a CB framework include:

– The coachee having a negative perception of the behaviours, style and attitudes of the coach
– The coachee experiencing that they are not being listened to by the coach
– The coach not expressing sufficient empathy
– A lack of focus on the relevant issues from the coachees' point of view
– Other interpersonal issues within the coaching relationship.

These issues may cause thoughts, feelings and behaviours that interfere with the coaching. For example withdrawal from the coach and hostility.

Issues of the coach include:

– Thoughts of incompetence
– Unhelpful coach schema (thought structures)
– Avoidance behavior of difficult conversations with the coachee (O'Broin & Palmer, 2009a)

Neenan's (2008) article on CBC does not specifically focus on the coaching relationship, but it does highlight practice that could have a negative effect on the coaching relationship and the coaching outcome. Two examples of poor practice include rapid-fire questioning that may lead the coachee feeling that they are in a courtroom instead of a coaching session and the coach acting superior by having all the answers and the coachee is in the subordinate role of being an audience for the coach's wisdom.

Empathy Within a RE-Coaching and CBC Framework

Traditionally REBT and CBT has focused on more technical aspects of the approach and their influence on the outcome of therapy. Nonetheless, there has been an increasing interest in relationship factors within the therapy and the effect on outcome (Gilbert & Leahy, 2007). The role of specific relationship factors such as empathy has been highlighted. Indeed, empathy appears to play a central role in in the development of an effective therapeutic relationship in CBT (in other therapeutic frameworks as well) (Hardy, Cahill, & Barkham, 2007). O'Broin and Palmer (2009a) suggest that the question of whether empathy is as central for the coaching process in CBC as it is in CBT needs to be investigated in future studies. They further present the Therapeutic Model of Empathy (Thwaites & Bennett-Levy, 2007) developed to conceptualise therapeutic empathy adapted to a coaching context (O'Broin & Palmer, 2009a). Four components are included in the model:

– Empathic attitude/stance—a sense of interest and curiosity towards the coachee

– Emphatic attunement—the ability of tuning in to the coachee
– Emphatic communication—skillful and active communication of empathy
– Empathy knowledge—the learning from reading, training and personal development of the coach

The model focus on self-reflection in the development of empathy and highlights the cognitive perspective where the coach is able to conceptualise the coachee's situation on both cognitive and emotional terms. This is an addition to empathy experienced in everyday life. The emphasis on the collaborative relationship, via the empathic stance of the coach, may play an important role for, the sometimes, challenging changes expected from coaching clients. The empathic attunement within CBC may focus on the description of the problem, formulation and strategies. Coaching attunement may be present if there has been a disruption in the alliance or when the coach attunes to an in-the-moment experience of the coachee while undertaking an intervention (an example could be in-session role-play). Regarding emphatic communication strategies in CBC such as Socratic questioning can be useful (O'Broin & Palmer, 2009a).

Emotion in the Coaching Relationship

Working with emotion is relevant within a RE and CBC framework. Few studies have investigated the use of emotions in the coaching relationship, focusing on using and working with emotion in coaching. O'Broin (2016) points out that coaches differ in their theories of emotion and the degree to which they will examine them, and several authors recommend that coach training should include work on the role of emotions in individual change (Cox & Bachkirova, 2007; Cremona, 2010). Several studies have investigated critical moments in coaching and one study examined experiences of experienced coaches in critical moments in coaching (Day, De Haan, Sills, Bertie, & Blass, 2008). In critical moments the coaches reported anxiety and intense emotion and these moments tended to be turning points in the coaching process, with increased insight or distancing with the coachee. The outcome of these moments was influenced by the coach's containment of their and their coachee's emotions. A positive outcome was much more likely if the coach was aware of their own emotions, the coachees reactions and being able to link these in a manner that led to heightened awareness of the client. A more negative outcome, such as aggressive or avoidant responses, was associated with distancing from the critical moment. Coaches used supervision to better understand and to learn from the critical moments. The authors conclude that the findings demonstrate the importance of personal insight on the part of the coach, reflexivity in the coaching relationship, and emotional containment by the coach and the supervisor (Day et al., 2008). Another study investigated critical moments of coachees and coaches after their coaching session. Two types of critical moments were found to be part of the coaching practice, the first were run-of-the mill moments that were common in coaching and the second were rarer more extreme critical moments that could lead

to transformation, resistance or ruptures to the coaching relationship (De Haan, Bertie, Day, & Sills, 2010). Kemp (2008) advocates the use of self-management in which the coach develops a deeper understanding of their emotional, cognitive, behavioural and perceptive systems at the same time as developing self-insight and adaptive capability. This helps the coach to monitor and manage their impact within the coaching relationship and maximize the potential for client growth and performance. Kemp (2008) further suggests that the establishment of a relationship with a credible and competent coaching supervisor is a crucial step in ensuring progressive self-development, ethical and responsible practice.

Catering for Individual Differences

What is the role of age, gender, ethnicity, and personality in creating a good coaching relationship? Matching of coach and coachee on the basis of surface-level diversity factors such as age, gender, and culture has received little research attention and has received mixed results (O'Broin, 2016; Wycherley & Cox, 2008). De Haan et al. (2016) conducted a study investigating coaching effectiveness and found that matching between coach and coachee was not related to effectiveness. It was concluded that matching on personality or diversity factors was less important than focusing appropriate selection of the coach (De Haan et al., 2016). The role of gender similarity in executive coaching was investigated in a study by Bozer, Joo, and Santora (2015) and it was concluded that there were no need for gender matching of coaches and coachees. Coach age was explored as an influencing factor in coachee selection in a study by Dobosz and Tee (2016). Some considered age as a sign of credibility and experience, however, age in itself was not a significant criteria for the selection of the coach. Interestingly, rapport was rated as the most important coach attribute. In addition, it is important to recognise that culture plays an important role within the coaching relationship and Passmore and Law (2009) suggest that there is a growing requirement for coaches to integrate cross-cultural awareness into coaching. They further outline a universal integrative framework that incorporates cross-cultural dimensions within the coaching. In this framework, culture is a feature of all coaching relationships. Thus, one solution does not fit all relationships. In cross-cultural coaching there are advantages to using a coach from another culture to offer cross-cultural perspectives (Passmore & Law, 2009). Moreover, cation is needed to avoid unhelpful or negative stereotyping about culture in coaching (O'Broin & Palmer, 2010b).

What I Have Learned: Dos and Don'ts in RE-CBC Coaching

Self-awareness and reflection are keys in the dos in CBC coaching, and on the other side of the coin, lack of self-awareness and reflection are don'ts. Self-reflection can be helped by, supervision and self-practice/self-management, coaching, and therapy.

As highlighted in the section discussing emotion in the coaching relationship it is important for the coach to be aware of both the coachee's and their own reactions in the coaching process. Reactions involve emotions but could also be cognition, physiological responses and behaviours. For example, O'Broin and Palmer (2010b) point out the importance of the coach managing their own cognitive biases. In most therapy and counselling training it is mandatory that the practitioner attends coaching or therapy themselves in order to become aware and being able to handle any reactions that unfold during the therapeutic process that may influence the relationship. It would probably be unrealistic to suggest that all coaching practitioners should attend coaching or even therapy for a number of sessions. However, it is highly relevant that all coaching practitioners continuously self-reflect on their practice and their own reaction to coaching. This is important in order to prevent or deal with issues within the coaching relationship.

Coaching supervision is of course an important forum for the coach to reflect upon the coaching relationship and reactions that may block the process of coaching. A competent coaching supervisor could help the coach to reflect on their practice and the coaching relationship. In addition, to supervision it is important for coaches to practice regular self-reflection. Bennett-Levy, Thwaites, Haarhoff and Perry (2015) has written a self-practice/self-reflection workbook for therapists. This book could be just as useful for coaches in reflecting on their CBC practice including the coaching relationship. In conclusion, regardless, of the techniques or theories used in coaching the coach needs to consider the coaching relationship.

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Assessment, Case Formulation and Intervention Models

Oana A. David and Angela M. Breitmeyer

The use of assessment is well documented within the field of psychology (Berman & Song, 2013; Camara, Nathan, & Puente, 2000; Serpell, 2000). More specifically within the context of psychotherapeutic intervention, assessment has traditionally informed clinical practice (Beck & Steer, 1993; Beck, Steer, & Brown, 1996; Lazarus, 1997). Without the use of reliable and valid assessment tools, measures, and methods to inform diagnosis, case conceptualization, and intervention, clinicians are relying solely on their experiential knowledge and impressions to form the basis of their clinical judgements, which are subjective, at best, and inaccurate, at worst. As the practice of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT; Ellis, 1956, 1991) expands beyond traditional psychotherapy to Rational Emotive Cognitive Behavioral Coaching (RE-CBC; David & Cobeanu, 2016), such an evolution necessitates normed, valid, and reliable assessment measures as well as comprehensive formulation. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is:

- To highlight the importance of the use of assessment and case formulation within RE-CBC;
- To provide a brief history of the development, empirical support and implementation of assessment and formulation tools within the field of RE-CBC;
- To introduce and describe recently developed assessment measures within RE-CBC;
- To present models used in RE-CBC for case formulation and intervention;

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- To address specific diversity considerations and culturally relevant modifications of assessment tools within the context of RE-CBC;
- To offer recommendations for the effective use of assessment and case formulation in RE-CBC.

Historical Origins and Theoretical Basis of Assessment Within RECBC

Within the context of RE-CBC, there are several relevant theories that have impacted its evolution, namely those of Donald Meichenbaum, Arnold Lazarus, Aaron Beck, and, most especially, Albert Ellis. Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck, who challenged the dominant ideology of radical behaviorism, are credited with the development of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (Ellis, 1956) and Cognitive Therapy (Beck, 1964, 1976), respectively. According to them, maladaptive emotional and behavioral responses result from core irrational beliefs, dysfunctional inferences, and distorted automatic thoughts. Automatic thoughts are connected to intermediate beliefs that originate from core beliefs. Most people possess healthy, adaptive core beliefs; however, individuals with or vulnerable for psychological disturbances typically maintain negative core beliefs that are often triggered in times of distress.

Meichenbaum (1977) made several important contributions to the field of cognitive behavioral therapy, with particular importance for RE-CBC assessment, namely with his techniques of self-instructional training and stress inoculation training. His ultimate goal was to teach people to direct themselves to cope more effectively with difficult situations. In addition to Meichenbaum's contributions, Lazarus (1981) developed what he referred to as Multimodal Therapy (MMT), an approach which is comprehensive, brief, and eclectic in nature. While originally designed as an approach to psychotherapy in a clinical setting, his approach has particular applicability to the coaching field, for assessment, case formulation and intervention. He uses the term "technical eclecticism" to describe the systematic and deliberate manner in which he strategically utilizes a vast array of client-appropriate therapeutic techniques. It is important to note that Lazarus advocates for the application of techniques, not theories, to clients. Therefore, his approach is much more action-oriented and less theoretically-based (Lazarus, 1997). Given the aforementioned characteristics, his approach is particularly conducive to working with individuals and teams within the context of cognitive-behavioral coaching.

To assist in the assessment phase, Lazarus' BASIC-ID (1981) includes behavior, affect, sensations, imagery, cognitions, interpersonal, and drugs/biology. Lazarus (1997) contested that people are biological organisms who: (a) behave, (b) emote, (c) sense, (d) imagine, (e) think, and (f) interact, and that (g) drugs/biology interplay with these six actions. Such an approach is holistic in nature and addresses multiple aspects of the individual/team. In addition to the use of the BASIC ID, Lazarus advocated for the use of a Multimodal Life History Inventory (Lazarus, 1997), as

well as a Structural Profile Inventory (Lazarus, 1997) as a means of assessment. In 1999, Curtis and Davis suggested adding an 'S' to the original MMT BASIC ID, thus yielding BASIC IDS, in order to account for aspects related to an individual's spirituality.

Lazarus (1981) conceptualized the helping relationship as educational and collaborative in nature, characteristics that correspond to the coaching relationship. For instance, Lazarus described himself as a "psychological trainer" and used the specific example of Burgess-Meredith from Rocky (Lazarus, 1997). This analogy is especially relevant in describing the role of a coach or consultant and can be used as a guiding principle in conceptualizing one's role within a coaching context.

From RECBT to RECBC

Of all the cognitive-behavioral theorists, the most impactful in relation to the coaching field is Albert Ellis, as RE-CBC has its origins in REBT (Ellis, 1956, 1991). REBT contests that one's emotional and behavioral consequences (C) are not directly resultant from an adversity or activating event (A), but rather largely due to one's beliefs (B) about the given situation. Furthermore, such beliefs can either be rational or irrational (Ellis, 1956, 1991). Rational thinking promotes acceptance of oneself and others, fosters adaptive emotional and behavioral responses, is rooted in true reality, and assists in goal attainment. Conversely, irrational thinking imposes demands on oneself and others with shoulds, musts, and oughts, which potentially compromises goal attainment. In the active, working phase of REBT, an individual's irrational beliefs are disputed (D), with the goal of developing a more effective (E) philosophy comprised of rational beliefs. Ellis (1956, 1991) purported that everyone possesses both irrational and rational beliefs, as well as choices about how to feel, think, and behave. Thus, one's beliefs, emotions, and behaviors are interrelated and mutually impactful.

In sum, the field of RECBC has been largely impacted by theorists, researchers and practitioners (Beck, 1964; Ellis, 1956, 1991; Lazarus, 1997; Meichenbaum, 1977) who emphasized the importance of empiricism, and consequently, thorough assessment. Although RECBC (David & Cobeanu, 2016) has its origins in REBT (Ellis, 1956, 1991), RECBC's focus is primarily on personal goal attainment and performance enhancement in life rather than psychopathology treatment and functional improvement through therapy (see Table 1 for a comparative view on REBT and RE-CBC characteristics).

As researchers, practitioners, and coaches, it is critical to inform our case formulation and intervention planning through the use of normed, reliable, and valid assessment tools. Beck, Lazarus, Meichenbaum, and, notably, Ellis, are prime examples of those who valued objective clinical data informed by assessment results. Their influence thus shapes the evolution of RECBC today.

Table 1 Characteristics of REBT and RE-CBC

Component	REBT	RE-CBC
Nature of relationship	Collaborative	Collaborative
Roles	Therapist/client	Coach/coachee
Focus	Treatment of pathology	Improvement of functioning
Primary objective	Symptom alleviation	Performance enhancement
Desired outcome	Affective/behavioral change	Behavioral/affective change
Population	Clinical (mainly)	General
Duration	Longer-term	Shorter-term
Time Orientation	Present	Present/Future
Setting	Clinic/private practice	Workplace/private practice

Assessment in RE-CBC

Within the context of both REBT and RE-CBC, assessment and conceptualization are crucial elements to the successful implementation of therapy and coaching interventions, respectively. According to Szymanska (2009), "Assessment and case conceptualization provide the necessary building blocks and the overall guide to the development and application of the coaching, specifically if the coaching approach adopted lies within the spectrum of the cognitive behavioral framework" (p. 6).

Assessment is considered important in RE-CBC not only in the initial phase of the coaching but also during the coaching process and at its termination, depending on its function (Smewing & McDowall, 2010). In the initial phase of the coaching, a comprehensive assessment is meant to offer awareness and understanding regarding the coachee's capabilities, functioning level, behaviors, strengths, and resources. A comprehensive assessment provides an empirical basis for the case conceptualization and subsequent intervention using specific frameworks. During the coaching process, assessment offers understanding on the progress and potential "stuck points." At the end of the coaching, assessment can provide a quantitative means for evaluating goal attainment. However, any assessment tools need to be used in RE-CBC within the context of a solid collaborative relationship and feedback delivered in an appropriate manner to the client in order to facilitate goal attainment.

In addition, there are a couple of specific considerations regarding the use of assessment in RE-CBC which are related to particularities of the field:

First, there are specific circumstances to be considered when using a comprehensive assessment and assessment instruments in coaching. The main question here is if their use brings important benefits for understanding the current realities of the client and guiding the goal attainment process, or if their use is not crucial to these processes. The decision to employ specific measures in assessment must be guided by the concrete need for and context of the coaching. For example, in the case of life coaching, when the coachee has a very concrete objective and seems to be aware of its current behaviors, the coach might rely on an unstructured interview (Ivey, Ivey, & Zalaquett, 2010) and rather simple measures (e.g., 10-point Lickert scales) for assessing the baseline and subsequent progress. Thus, the use of assessment

instruments brings a series of advantages for the coaching process when their use is inappropriate (for a detailed discussion see Smewing & McDowall, 2010), such as adding important objective information, providing structure, involving others in the assessment, and facilitating discussion and progress. However, assessment scales can also bring disadvantages, such as overloading the coachee's busy schedule, distracting the focus from objectives, providing irrelevant or inaccurate data, and/or being insufficient for the coachee's issue.

Second, there are specific types of measures that are considered more useful in RE-CBC. Moreover, there are specific types of questionnaires which are preferred depending on the type of coaching or the type of variable being measured. For example, in the executive and workplace coaching, multi-rater assessment scales are most often used. In the life coaching assessment, experience sampling methods and life audit tools are preferred. The focus of measure varies between life versus workplace coaching, with the focus being rather on personal variables in life coaching (e.g., values, attitudes, personality, well-being), while in workplace coaching the focus is on task/actions assessment (e.g., performance, behaviors, competence, abilities). However, the problem is that many instruments used in this field lack adequate validation and thus the information provided can be unreliable. Also, there is always the concern regarding the qualifications of the professional administering psychological measures and adequately interpreting the results obtained.

RE-CBC Assessment Tools

As part of the evaluation, diagnostic and conceptualization process, cognitive-behavioral theorists have traditionally used dedicated instruments to inform this process (i.e., depression scales, cognitive processes questionnaires, structured interviews). Moreover, the cognitive-behavioral approach (e.g., REBT) offers empirically tested grounds that can serve as inspiration for both assessment and improvement driven measures (Ellis, 1994). Two such assessment measures consistent with RECBT and RECBC approaches are the General Attitudes and Beliefs Scale—Short Form (GABS-SF; Linder, Kirkby, Wertheim, & Birch, 1999) and the Profile of Emotional Distress (PED; Opris & Macavei, 2007), which have been already used in REBT research in applied settings and can be used in emotional problem-focused RE-CBC. There are also general coaching reflective tools that can be successfully integrated when conducting assessment in RE-CBC, such as the Life wheel or Life-Work Balance Audit and Timeline Satisfaction Indicator for providing awareness and guiding further assessment (Smewing & McDowall, 2010).

Assessment in the coaching field is, however, relying heavily on unstructured interviews. Interviews are considered an essential assessment tool in RE-CBC, especially in the initial phases of the assessment. Interviewing methods can be applied both with the direct client and the key stakeholders involved. Structured and semi-structured interviews are preferred in the cognitive-behavioral field in order to effectively use the session for assessing the main areas important in the coaching

process. Lane and Corrie (2009) proposed a structured focus of the coaching interview on defining the *purpose* of coaching and *perspective*, from which a *process* of coaching can be then derived. The <u>purpose</u> section of the interview refers to the coach asking questions regarding the purpose that the coaching can serve, like performance, developmental, growth, or behavioural change. Four elements are assessed in defining the purpose of the coaching: understanding of the purpose, expectations on the purpose, role of the stakeholders involved, and coaching context (e.g., organizational). The perspective section of the interview refers to the perspectives that underpin the defined purpose, like client's values, beliefs, models for formulation, evidence from using multiple assessments, science, ethics, etc.

Recent Development of Assessment Tools Within RE-CBC

With the field of RECBT expanding to RECBC, coaching-specific assessment tools are necessary to improve the field's viability and sustainability. Although the availability of normed, reliable measures for RE-CBC is limited, there are a few measures which have shown considerable potential. Such measures are:

– For life coaching: The Mood Wheel (David, 2013), The Rationality and Happiness Survey (Bernard, Chap. "Technology and Coaching"), the Resilience Self-Survey (Bernard, Chap. "Rationality in Coaching").
– For workplace coaching: The Manager Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale (M-RIBS; David, 2013), The Employee Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale (Gavita & Duta, 2013), the Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Measure (FG-PEC; Gavita et al., 2012), and the Managerial Coaching Assessment System (MCAS; David & Matu, 2013).

The Rationality and Happiness Survey (Bernard, Chap. "Rationality in Coaching") aims at assessing the presence of happiness and use of rational principles in the coachee's life. The instrument has three parts, two parts referring to assessment (A and B), and part C referring to development actions to be implemented in coaching. Part A asks the coachee to select one's focus in terms of presence of positive emotions, absence of negative emotions, or long-term happiness, corresponding to the presence of general life satisfaction. In part B, it describes 11 rational principles of living (e.g., self-direction, short- and long-term hedonism, commitment to creative, absorbing activities and pursuits*)* and requires the coachee to rate how often one puts these principles into practice in one's own life (e.g., often, seldom, sometimes).

The Resilience Self-Survey (Bernard, Chap. "Technology and Coaching") is aimed at assessing the extent in which the coachee has developed the strength of resilience. The survey comprises ten statements and the coachee is asked to indicate how often, from 1 = almost never to 4 = almost always, in demanding and challenging situations and when working with difficult people he/she behave in the described ways at work. Examples of items are: "I can be very intolerant and judgmental of someone

who does the wrong thing, including not doing things the way they should be done," or "I find myself thinking, 'I can't stand this situation or person's behavior.'". Scores are summed up and the total score obtained indicates five potential levels of resilience development: under-developed, moderately developed, developed, well-developed, or gold standard.

The Emotional Thermometer and the Catastrophe Scale are tools used in REBT that are especially suited for RE-CBC due to their graphic development by Bernard (see chapter Stress management coaching). The coachee can indicate, for example, the degree of anger, from mild annoyance (temperature rating of 1 or 2) to extreme rage (temperature rating of 9 or 10) in a specific context and identify its consequences and goals for change. In the same manner, using the catastrophe scale, the client can become aware of the proportions of current his situation and identify errors in one's thinking, such as awfulizing.

The Mood Wheel (David, 2013) in an online tool (web and mobile- IOS; see Appendices) for measuring emotions developed based on the dimensional circumplex model of emotions, but also integrating qualitative distinctions of the binary model of emotions, by considering functional and dysfunctional items separately. The tool offers the possibility to register momentary mood based on the experience sampling method and uses the circular arrangement of discrete emotion based on three dimensions: valence, control and functionality. The Mood Wheel thus comprises 16 negative emotion and 16 positive emotion items, on a valence × control × functionality space and can be used free in its mobile version. Each emotion, whether it be negative or positive, has a functional and dysfunctional version to be assessed (e.g., functional reaching performance related goals, associated cognitions and subjective experiences). The coachee is instructed, "*You can find below a list of words describing feelings that people can experience. Please read each word carefully and then indicate to what extent you are feeling each of those feelings right now*" and is subsequently asked to rate each emotion on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = very little, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, and 5 = extremely. A total distress score and a total positive feelings score can be obtained, but also scores on subscales on functional negative/positive emotions. Preliminary analyses have shown adequate psychometric properties for the Mood Wheel (David, 2013).

The Manager Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale (M-RIBS; David, 2013**)** and **The Employee Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale (E-RIBS**; Gavita & Duta, 2013**)** are based on REBT theory and research (e.g., the role of rational and irrational processes in human functioning) and consider recent advances of the field on the view of irrational beliefs and rational beliefs as non-polar opposites. Thus, both scales have an equal number of rational and irrational statements designed to reflect evaluative processes in three areas relevant for managers and employees: (1) Appreciation and performance (Part 1 of the Scale); (2) Control (Part 2 of the Scale); and (3) Comfort (Part 3 of the Scale; see Appendixes 1 and 2). Each of the items can be rated in a 4-point Likert format, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Based on the rational and irrational phrasing, four principal processes are represented in each area: Demandingness vs. Preference (DEM/PRE), Low

Frustration Tolerance vs. Frustration Tolerance (LFT/FT), Awfulizing vs. Badness (AWF/BAD), and Global Evaluation vs. Unconditional Acceptance (GE/UA) for self and others (two items). The total score on the scale is obtained by summing the items, with rational items scored in a reversed way. The M-RIBS and E-RIBS measures have adequate psychometrics and has been shown to have predictive validity (David, 2013; Gavita & Duta, 2013).

Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Assessment. (FG-PECA; Gavita et al., 2012). Gavita et al. (2012), aware of the need for a valid, reliable assessment tool for REBC, developed the multi-rater survey called Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Assessment (FG-PECA) to examine the multiple relationship(s) between thoughts, feelings, actions, the social/cultural context, situations and circumstances, and the interpersonal context. The PECA is part of the Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching model, based on Lazarus' BASIC-ID model, personality and organizational theories, which includes also intervention strategies for coaching. FG-PECA is a 50-item multi-rater survey, addressing five domains: (a) behaviors, (b) emotions, (c) thoughts, (d) situational factors, and (e) socio-cultural context, and including five respondents: (a) self, (b) subordinate, (c) superior, (d) colleague, and (e) client (Gavita et al., 2012). Each domain is assessed on a 6-point Likert Scale, which can be used in a development model (0 = Not a strength, to 5 = Strengths used frequently) or in a deficit model (0 = Not an issue to 5 = Severe Problems Most of the Time). Each domain has ten statements with five areas. For example, the Environmental/Interpersonal = A domain, includes the areas of collegiality, agreeableness, resources, rewards, and teamwork. Each domain can be summed up in a total score, with higher numbers indicating a greater number of strengths or problematic issues. By arranging the scores on each domain in a hierarchy, the results can be presented to the coachee in a Prescriptive Profile. Prescription is derived from the rank ordering of scores on each domain (first letter indicates area of most concern and so on). Based on examining the scores on the FG-PECA, the coach can determine the *perceived* and *expressed* strengths or areas of concern, depending on the assessors. This tool can further assist in structuring a coaching program, depending on the coachee's goal, with recommendations for specific tools, depending on the identified areas of concern. Based on the initial analyses conducted, the FG-PEC appears to be a comprehensive measure, assessing multiple domains, and seems to be psychometrically sound, internally consistent, and concurrently valid. However, it is important to note a major limitation of their study, i.e., a confirmatory analysis had not been conducted (Gavita et al., 2012). Therefore, more research is needed to ascertain both its psychometric properties and the accuracy of the constructs, factors, and domains assessed.

Managerial Coaching Assessment System. (MCAS; David & Matu, 2013) is a multi-rater assessment, based on a 15-item Likert scale questionnaire that encompasses three perspectives, i.e., that of manager (self-report), employee (other-report), and observer (external report). The MCAS considers both behavioral and skills models of managerial coaching. Both self and other rating versions use a 5-point Likert scale form 1 (to a little extent or not at all) to 5 (very much). Examples of MCAS self-report version items are: "I ask employees questions in order to

encourage them in exploring different solutions for solving a problem or a task," "I offer my employees resources, information or suggestions in order to overcome the problems that they are confronting," and "I empower my employees in regard to their results and decisions." The observational version of the MCAS has 11 items and formulates them in the form of progressive behavioral anchors, from the absence of a managerial coaching behavior (level 1) to subsequent increases in its frequency and quality (up to level 3). David and Matu (2013) have found all versions of the MCAS to have adequate psychometric properties.

A few of the aforementioned assessment measures for organizational coaching (Mood Wheel, M-RIBS, E-RIBS, FG-PEC and MCAS) assess valuable information in workplace settings, addressing task, relational, emotional, and behavioral components of managerial competencies, in addition to values-based and cultural diversity dimensions (David & Matu, 2013; Gavita et al., 2012). They can be used together in a comprehensive assessment, for providing additional relevant information to managers in workplace settings and are included in the online platform Prescriptive Index Profile (www.prescriptiveindex.ro).

Current Status of Assessment within RE-CBT. However, as with any new assessment tools, further investigation is warranted in order to ascertain both their psychometric properties and practical utility. Of particular importance are ease of use and client satisfaction within the life coaching and corporate field. In addition to conducting more norm-based and standardization research, both quantitative and qualitative means (e.g., surveys, self-report measures) should be implemented in order to assess the coachee's perspectives on the assessment's potential effectiveness and applicability in the life coaching and business world. Moreover, although the measures are grounded in sound psychological theory (CBT, REBT, MMT), their overall usefulness in personal coaching and organizational coaching remains largely unexplored.

Nevertheless, with the Prescriptive Index platform, managers and employers can potentially obtain valuable information about socioemotional competencies that go beyond what is traditionally assessed in workplace assessment tools. Such measures will assist in generating a "prescription" for how to best address managerial and personnel issues. In sum, the Prescriptive Index platform is a comprehensive, generally psychometrically valid, and necessary tool to assess not only behavioral and characterlogical, but also emotional, competencies within managers. Organizations and administrative settings can benefit greatly from using this assessment platform for diagnosis and orienting RE-CBC processes. However, additional research is warranted to ascertain its applicability, particularly cross-culturally.

Case Formulation in RE-CBC

Similar to its psychotherapy counterpart, within the context of RE-CBC, assessment informs both case conceptualization and subsequent intervention. Case conceptualization or formulation refers to offering an explanatory account of the client's issues that can form the basis of a shared understanding in order to effectively plan the

intervention. While conceptualization plays an essential role in REBT, there is a debate in the coaching literature about the need for case formulation. This controversy is due to a number of factors, including the fact that there is no agreement on its definition and no research to clearly document its role in psychotherapy. Lane and Corrie (2009) discussed the need to establish when case conceptualization is needed in coaching. They emphasized that it can be less important in specific types of coaching or circumstances, such as:

– When the coachee has a clear goal and action plan and focusing on understanding the causal factors of the problem is not necessary;
– When horizontal versus vertical change is involved in the coaching process—extending knowledge and skills (e.g., skills coaching) versus changing perspectives and restructuring views/beliefs (e.g., problem-focused coaching, developmental coaching);
– When there are more stakeholders involved and different conceptualizations would be needed for each party;
– When there is a lack of integration of contextual factors in conceptualization models (e.g., social, cultural, organizational, political) and an excessive focus on the intrapsychic factors.

Formulation in RE-CBC is considered however an essential part of making explicit components relating to the coachee's view of the self, others and world and their influence on goals and current reactions/performance based on empirically tested frameworks (e.g., the ABC model; Ellis, 1994). The use of the ABC(DEFG) model (Dryden, 2018) in *problem focused RE-CBC* and *developmental RE-CBC* is vital due to the basic assumptions of the RE-CBC theory that need to be illustrated for clients regarding the main determinants of their problems and thus comprise the basis for the change process. Also, the coaching relationship can benefit from making explicit the theory, framework used, and process needed to reach the goals.

The most important criteria for the use the ABC model in the RE-CBC assessment and formulation are related to its evidence-based status (David & Cobeanu, 2016), comprehensiveness (it can explain in a comprehensive manner the change mechanisms relating to coachee's issues/goals), practical utility, and ease of implementation.

REBC Models for Assessment, Case Formulation and Intervention

According to REBT assumptions, the key to change the way we behave and feel is changing the way we think. Such as in the CBT field, the CBC domain has emphasized the usefulness of employing a generic model in coaching. Thus the ABC(DEF) model (Ellis, 1991), further specified for the RE-CBC field as the situational ABC(DEFG) (Dryden, 2011), is considered the generic model of RE-CBC in terms of guiding assessment, formulation and intervention (David et al., 2014).
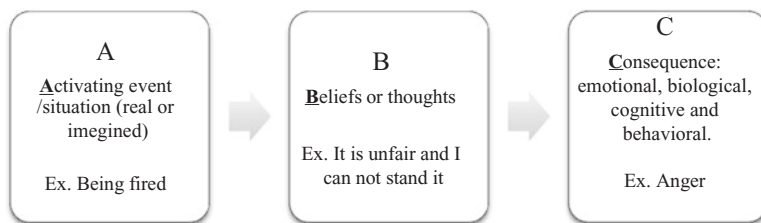
Fig. 1 ABC Cognitive Model (Ellis, 1994)

The ABC Model

The ABC model (Ellis, 1994) asserts that our reactions (e.g., emotions, behaviors) are not directly determined by life events (e.g. being fired), but are rather the results of our evaluative beliefs about these events (Fig. 1).

The ABC model can be used for case or problem formulation include the following steps:

A (Activating events)

The coaches uses the A component of the model to understand the situation and very important the context (social, economic, organizational, cultural, political etc.) of coachee's presenting issue.

C (Consequences Following the Events)

The coach uses the C component of the model to detail the characteristics of the behavioral, emotional, cognitive and physiological reaction. Thus, the consequences of the situation can be described as follows: When you were told that you are fired, you felt (a) an unhealthy negative emotion, which was anger, (b) displayed aggressive behaviors (e.g. shouted), and felt (c) physiological symptoms (e.g., rapid heart-rate, sweating).

B (Beliefs and Mindset)

B is the central component in the ABC model, fulfilling the role of facilitating coachee understanding that the way of thinking needs to be changed in order to attain one's goals and change the maladaptive reactions displayed in C. The first step is to identify the irrational beliefs, generating performance interfering thinking,

and there are four categories of irrational beliefs: (1) *Demandingness,* referring to absolutistic demands that things should be in a certain way (e.g., "My employee must be effective!"); (2) *Awfulizing,* referring to the assessment of the situation as the worst things possible (e.g., "I was disrespected and *that's horrible!");* (3) *Frustration Intolerance,* referring to the thinking that one cannot stand something (e.g., "I cannot tolerate when my employee is disrespectful!"); and (4) *Global evaluation—*referring to the general labels about ourselves (e.g., " I am a terrible manager!"), others (e.g. "My employee is disrespectful!") or life (e.g., "Life is a bitch!").

During assessment, the coachee can use the ABC model in order to guide the assessment process and investigate the components presented in the model. During the conceptualization phase, the coach again makes use of the model in order to offer an explanation of the mechanisms involved in the problem and the change process, depending on the coachee's goals and problems assessed in each of the components involved. During the intervention, the ABC(DEFG) extended model, guides the change process in the case of intervening at C (e.g., Behavior or Emotion Problem focused Coaching). In the case of goals related to the B component of the model—developing a rational, growth mindset—specific models can be applied such as the GRAPE model of change. In the case of goals or practical problems at A, the coach can use a problem solving or solution-focused model for change.

There are currently hundreds of models generated in the coaching field for supporting the coaching process (e.g., GROW, RE-GROW, PRACTICE, LASER, CIGAR, ACHIEVE, POSITIVE, GRAPE, etc.), focusing on various features of the process and using specific CBC methods, solution-focused (e.g., GROW), problem-solving (e.g., PRACTICE), development oriented (e.g., GRAPE). In the table below, we present an algorithm for selecting the adequate model to be used for change based on the assessment and the derived objective/issue of the coachee on any domain of the ABC model (Table 2).

Two alternative models for the ABC model have been proposed in the coaching field that can be used in assessment, case formulation and intervention. The SPACE model is a model that can be used mainly in life coaching and the FG-Prescriptive Executive Coaching model with its multi-rater assessment system described above for the executive coaching.

The SPACE model (Edgerton & Palmer, 2005) is the alternative for the ABC model developed specifically for the coaching field, as a biopsychosocial framework for assessment, conceptualization and change. In this model, a more interactionist stance is taken for the components involved and their context is emphasized. Thus, the acronym comes from: social context, physiology, action, cognition, and emotion. Two-way arrows are used between the PACE components in order to suggest that they mutually influence each other, and the C component is represented based on a circle surrounding them. In the same manner, as presented for the ABC mode, depending on the targeted component of the SPACE configuration, there are CBC strategies and techniques that can be used.

The GRAPE model is an integrated goal-focused and developmental coaching model developed by Bernard (see Chap. Performance coaching). The acronym stands for the necessary steps for the assessment and change, as presented below.

Table 2 Guide for selecting a specific model of approaching coachee goals/problems based on the contextual ABC model of assessment and conceptualization

Components/Tools	A		B		C	
	Activating events and context		Beliefs		Consequences: Behaviors, emotions, physiology, cognitions	
Assessment focus	Activating life events—positive/negative Environment: Context, roles, culture, opportunities, threats, changes		Schemas, Beliefs, Mindset, Perspectives Values Personal characteristics: personality, strengths		Performance Emotions Behaviors Physiology Cognitions Meaning and motivation	
Coaching focus	Goal	Problem	Goal	Problem	Goal	Problem
G—Examples goals/problems per area	"I want more friends", "I would like to go out more often", "I want to be more engaged in pleasant activities"	"I do not have friends", "I spend too much time on FB", "I do not like what I do for living"	"I want more meaning in my life", "I want to find work-life balance", "I want to build a healthier life perspective"	"I have lost my life meaning", "My work-life areas are in conflict", "My life perspective is not helping me"	"I want to feel happier", "I want to have higher performance in my work", "I want to relate better with my team"	"I feel stressed at work", "My performance at work has declined", "I have problems relating with my team"
Main coaching strategy*	Solution focused/ Development focused	Practical problem solving	Development focused	Cognitive restructuring	Development focused	Cognitive restructuring/coping
Model selection (example)	GROW/GRAPE	PRACTICE	GRAPE	ABCDEFG	GRAPE	ABCDEFG

GOALS	Identifying professional work goals for coaching sessions
REFLECTION	Reflecting on different areas of their current approach to their work
ACTION PLANNING	Developing an action plan to activate beliefs to strengthen commitments, use behavioral strengths, and remove work performance blockers
EVALUATION	Evaluating and revising the action plan

An important emphasis of RE-CBC is on developing a problem-solving mindset and thus fostering the development of such strategies (D'Zurilla, 1986). D'Zurilla (1986) stated that life problems occur for everyone, and inadequate problem-solving skills can contribute to the development of distress. Problem-solving is a systematic process by which a person: (a) generates a variety of potentially effective solutions to a problem, (b) judiciously chooses the best of these solutions, and (c) implements and evaluates the chosen solution. There are seven primary stages: (a) adopting a problem-solving orientation; (b) defining the problem; (c) setting goals; (d) generating alternative solutions; (e) choosing the best solution; (f) implementing the best solution; (g) evaluating the effectiveness of the chosen solution. This problem-solving focus informed the approach of Palmer's PRACTICE model of coaching (2008). PRACTICE incorporates: "(a) problem identification; (b) realistic, relevant goals, (c) alternative solutions generated; (d) consideration of consequences; (e) target most feasible solutions; (f) implementation of chosen solutions; and (e) evaluation" (Palmer, 2008, p. 5). Its applicability is relevant in multiple disciplines, e.g., counseling, business, career and life coaching (Palmer, 2007). Not only is Palmer's model problem-solving, but it is also merged with solution-focused components and includes addressing cognitive obstacles for change, such as performance interfering thinking.

The most commonly utilized solution-focused coaching model (de Shazer, 1985) is that of GROW, supporting the solution-focused conceptualization advances for the RECBC field. GROW model is an acronym for: Goal, Reality, Options, and Will (GROW; Whitmore, 1996). The goal (G) refers to an individual's desired outcome. When generating goals, it is important to explore the individual's current reality (R) and specifically the strengths upon which the goal can be achieved. Options (O) encourages the individual to generate a list of potential strategies to be applied. Finally, the will (W) addresses the plan to act on goals, commit to a plan, implement changes, measure the success and refine changes. The model uses the miracle question specific to the solution-focused approach in therapy for visualizing goals—" Let's suppose that you go home and in the middle of the night, a miracle happens and the problem that brought you to talk to me about is all solved. But because this happens when you are sleeping, you have no idea that there was a miracle and the problems is solved. So when you are coming out of your sound sleep, what would be the first small sign that will make you realize that a miracle happened and the problem is all gone? How would you discover this?" The RE-GROW model (Grant, 2011) is adding to the initial model the elements of Revision and Evaluation.

Diversity Sensitivity, Cultural Modifications, and Assessment

As referenced at the onset of the chapter, various types of assessment are frequently implemented within the field of coaching (e.g., interviewing, tests). However, with the field's greater emphasis placed on multicultural competence and diversity sensitivity, many aspects of an individual's identity should be taken into consideration when administering assessments on coachees from particular ethnic/racial groups, as well as special populations (Suzuki & Wilton, 2016). Ethical best practices maintain that coaches make culturally, developmentally appropriate modifications in their assessments whenever possible. For example, the FG-PECA system integrates an area assessing the Diversity-cultural component, specifically addressing how the culture of the organization fits with the individual's personal culture and values.

Although assessment tools can provide valuable information about a client's presenting issue/realities, conducting evaluations without considering a client's unique diversity dimensions can potentially compromise the validity of the results obtained. Therefore, it is crucial for practitioners and coaches to research culturally sensitive and normed tests when assessing clients from various backgrounds. If such diversity dimensions are not carefully taken into consideration, one can make a false, invalid, and/or biased judgement regarding a client or coachee's overall functioning, which can have significant ethical, legal, and clinical repercussions.

What I Have Learned: Do's and Don't's for Assessment and Case Formulation in REBC

In order to illustrate some of the most salient lessons gleaned from using assessment and case formulation within RECBC, see the following recommendations below:

Do's	Don't's
Adopt a collaborative approach when conducting assessment, case formulation and coaching.	Assume the role of absolute expert in your work with clients, teams, and organizations.
Conduct a thorough assessment to inform your case conceptualization and intervention plan.	Disregard the assessment phase.
Use appropriate, normed, standardized assessments when available that allow coaching recommendations.	Use invalid and unreliable assessment tools and then draw absolute conclusions and predictions.
Use the adequate model relative to assessment of need in order to provide a comprehensive conceptualization of coachee's goals and provide adequate education on the philosophy and techniques of RE-CBC.	Abruptly begin with the planning of the actions or use models that are not comprehensive, nor support the change process and are not easy to use.

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, assessment and formulation plays a crucial role within the context of RE-CBC. Its evolution began with empirical data obtained by Ellis (1956, 1991) using the ABC assessment model, and continues with recently developed assessment measures within the RE-CBC field. Despite the noted evolution, in order for assessments to continue to advance and remain relevant, cultural considerations and adaptations must be made. One trend remains definitive, and that is, that standardized assessment tools are crucial to maintain the field of coaching's credibility. The construction and implementation of normed, validated, and reliable assessment tools are critical for the field of RE-CBC to flourish.

As previously mentioned, the coaching field has been influenced by various cognitive-behavioral theorists (Beck, 1964; Ellis 1956, 1991; Lazarus, 1997; Meichenbaum, 1977). According to David and Cobeanu (2016), a coaching relationship is one in which a coach (delivering the service) and the coachee (receiving the service) collaboratively work toward goal attainment in order to enhance overall functioning in daily life. For both RE-CBT and RE-CBC, the optimal goal is behavioral change through the modification of client's mindset and practice of a rational life approach. Also, whenever clinical impairments are suspected in the psychological functioning of the coachee or the characteristics of the emotional problem go beyond the scope of coaching, the client needs to be referred for a clinical assessment and/or psychotherapy.

The RE-CBC case conceptualization process, based on the ABC model involves understanding the client's behavior, together with its subjective and physiological correlates, in relation to their rational/irrational beliefs and thinking patterns and its situations. In a process referred to as collaborative empiricism, the coach thus works with the coachee to determine variables essential for the case formulation, such as the problem and objectives, as well as the coachee's view of oneself, others, the world, his or her problems and future. Such a structured approach to client's goals and problems, based on specific models, provides a context for planning and implementing the coaching process.

Appendix 1

Managers-RIBS

Today's Date: **/ /**   **Name:** _____   **Position: Company:**_____ _____

Profession_____   **Years   in   Company** _____   **Seniority** ____   **Age:**___   **Sex: M/F (circle one)**

When faced with adverse situations, some managers tend to think that situation absolutely must be the way they want (in terms of absolute must). In the same situation, other people think in preferential terms and accept the situation, even if they want very much that those situations do not happen. In light of these possibilities,

please estimate how much the statements below represent the thoughts that you have in such situations.

Using the following scale, indicate in the space provided how true each of these statements is for you.

1. *Strongly Agree*
2. *Somewhat Agree*
3. *Somewhat Disagree*
4. *Strongly Disagree*

1. Performance/Appreciation RIBS

Please think about a situation at work when your performance was not as high as expected/usually or your work was not appreciated. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much the items below represent the thoughts that you have in such situations.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I absolutely must get a high performance at work and be adequately appreciated/rewarded for my work and I cannot conceive otherwise.	1	2	3	4
2. I really want to get a high performance at work and be adequately appreciated/rewarded, but I realize and accept that things do not have to always be the way I want them to be.	1	2	3	4
3. It would be awful if I do not get a high performance at work or I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded.	1	2	3	4
4. When I do not get a high performance at work or I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded, I think that I am incompetent or worthless.	1	2	3	4
5. It is unbearable and I cannot stand when I do not get high performance at work or I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded.	1	2	3	4
6. I can stand when I do not get a high performance at work or I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded, although it is difficult for me to tolerate it.	1	2	3	4
7. When I do not get a high performance at work or I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded, I think this shows that I am working with incompetent and worthless people.	1	2	3	4
8. It is unpleasant and unfortunate not to get high performance rating or not be adequately appreciated/rewarded, but it is not terrible.	1	2	3	4
9. When I do not get a high performance at work or and I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded, I accept myself as being worthwhile despite my performance.	1	2	3	4
10. When I do not get a high performance at my job or I am not adequately appreciated/rewarded, I understand that his does not impact the worth of my co-workers.	1	2	3	4

2. Control RIBS

Please think about a situation at work over which you got difficulties in controlling it or people in your team acted less competently. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have in such situations.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I must be always in control for delegated tasks and work with competent people.	1	2	3	4
12. I really do not want to get out of control at work, but I realize and accept that things do not have to always be the way I want them to be.	1	2	3	4
13. It is awful if I am not in control for delegated tasks or work with less competent people.	1	2	3	4
14. If I am not in control for delegated tasks or work with less competent people, I think that I am worthless and incompetent.	1	2	3	4
15. It is unbearable and I cannot stand not to have control over situations at work.	1	2	3	4
16. I can stand when I do not get control over the situations at work, although it is difficult for me to tolerate it.	1	2	3	4
17. If I am not in control for delegated tasks or work with less competent people, this shows that my subordinates are worthless.	1	2	3	4
18. It is unpleasant and unfortunate not to be in control for delegated tasks or work with less competent people, but it is not terrible.	1	2	3	4
19. When I am not in control for delegated tasks or work with less competent people, I accept myself as being worthwhile despite this.	1	2	3	4
20. When I am not in control for delegated tasks or work with less competent people, I can accept my co-workers as being worthwhile.	1	2	3	4

3. Control RIBS

Please think about a situation at work when you felt distressed or under extreme pressure at work. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have in such situations.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. I absolutely must work in a pleasant environment not feel distressed or under pressure at work.	1	2	3	4

Please think about a situation at work when you felt distressed or under extreme pressure at work. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have in such situations.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. I really do want to work in a pleasant environment not get distressed or under pressure at work but I realize that things do not have to always be the way I want them to be.	1	2	3	4
23. It is awful if work in unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work.	1	2	3	4
24. When I work in an unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work, I think this shows that I am worthless.	1	2	3	4
25. It is unbearable to work in an unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work.	1	2	3	4
26. I can stand when work in an unpleasant environment, feel distressed or under pressure at work although it is difficult for me to tolerate it.	1	2	3	4
27. When I work in an unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work, this shows that people in my team are bad and worthless	1	2	3	4
28. It is unpleasant and unfortunate to work in an unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work but it is not terrible.	1	2	3	4
29. When I work in an unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work, I can accept myself as being worthwhile despite my emotional discomfort.	1	2	3	4
30. When I work in an unpleasant environment feel distressed or under pressure at work, I can accept my co-workers or superiors as being worthwhile despite my emotional discomfort.	1	2	3	4

Appendix 2

Employee-RIBS

Today's Date: / /   Name: _____   Position:_____   Age:__ _   Sex: M/F   (circle   one)   Company:_____   Profession _____   Years in Company _____

When faced with adverse situations, some employees tend to think that situation absolutely must be the way they want (in terms of absolute must). In the same situation, other people think in preferential terms and accept the situation, even if they want very much that those situations do not happen. In light of these possibilities, please estimate how much the statements below represent the thoughts that you have in such situations.

Using the following scale, indicate in the space provided how true each of these statements is for you.

1. ***Strongly Agree***
2. ***Somewhat Agree***
3. ***Somewhat Disagree***
4. ***Strongly Disagree***

Part 1—Appreciation/Reward RIBS

Please think about last time when your work was not correctly appreciated or adequately recognized or rewarded. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have had.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I absolutely must be adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work.	1	2	3	4
2. I want very much to be adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work, but understand I do not necessarily have to be.	1	2	3	4
3. It is awful if I am not adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work.	1	2	3	4
4. When I am not adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work, this shows how incompetent and worthless I am.	1	2	3	4
5. It is unbearable and I cannot stand not to be adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work.	1	2	3	4
6. I can stand when I am not adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work, although it is difficult for me to tolerate this.	1	2	3	4
7. When others are not adequately appreciating and rewarding me for my work, I understand their worth remains the same.	1	2	3	4

Please think about last time when your work was not correctly appreciated or adequately recognized or rewarded. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have had.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. It is unpleasant and unfortunate not to be adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work, but it is not awful.	1	2	3	4
9. When I am not adequately appreciated and rewarded for my work, this shows how incompetent and worthless others are.	1	2	3	4
10. When others are not adequately appreciating and rewarding for my work, I can accept myself as human being.	1	2	3	4

Part 2—Achievement RIBS

Please think about a last time at work when you obtained low performance at work. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have had.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I absolutely must have high professional achievements and work in team with competent people.	1	2	3	4
12. I want very much to have high professional achievements and work in team with competent people, but I realize things do not have to always be as I wish.	1	2	3	4
13. It is awful if I do not have high professional achievements and work in team with less competent people.	1	2	3	4
14. When I do not have high professional achievements and work in team with less competent people, this shows how incompetent and worthless I am.	1	2	3	4
15. It is unbearable and I cannot stand to not to have high professional achievements and work in team with incompetent people.	1	2	3	4
16. I can stand when I do not have high professional achievements or if I work in team with less competent people, although it is difficult for me to tolerate this.	1	2	3	4
17. When I do not have high performances and work in team with competent people, this does not lower other people's worth.	1	2	3	4

Please think about a last time at work when you obtained low performance at work. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have had.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. It is unpleasant and unfortunate not to have high professional achievements and work in team with competent people, but it is not awful.	1	2	3	4
19. When I do not have professional achievements and work in team with competent people, this shows how incompetent and worthless people are.	1	2	3	4
20. When I do not get high professional achievements and work in team with incompetent people, I can accept myself as human being.	1	2	3	4

Part 3—Comfort RIBS

Please think about last time at work about which you felt uncomfortable, distressed, or you had to do tasks for which you were overqualified. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have had.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. I absolutely must always feel comfortable and not have to do tasks for which I am overqualified at work.	1	2	3	4
22. I want very much to always feel comfortable and do tasks matching my competences at work, but I do I realize that things do not have to always be the way I want them to be.	1	2	3	4
23. It is awful if I do not feel comfortable, or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified at work.	1	2	3	4
24. When I do not feel comfortable, or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified at work, I think this shows what an incompetent and worthless human being I am.	1	2	3	4
25. It is unbearable and I cannot stand not to feel comfortable or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified at work.	1	2	3	4
26. I can stand when I do not feel comfortable, or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified at work, although it is difficult for me to tolerate this.	1	2	3	4

Please think about last time at work about which you felt uncomfortable, distressed, or you had to do tasks for which you were overqualified. Try and recall the thoughts that you have had in such situations and rate how much do the items below represent the thoughts that you have had.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27. When I do not feel comfortable, or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified work, I think that the worth of people requiring this is not lowered.	1	2	3	4
28. It is unpleasant and unfortunate if I feel uncomfortable, or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified at work, but it is not awful.	1	2	3	4
29. When I do not feel comfortable, or have to do tasks for which I am overqualified work, this shows how incompetent and worthless I am.	1	2	3	4
30. When I do not feel comfortable, or have to do tasks out of my competence at work, I can accept myself as human being.	1	2	3	4

Mood Wheel

You can find below a list of words describing feelings that people can experience. Please read each word carefully and then indicate to what extent you are feeling each of those feelings right now.

1=very little,
2=a little,
3=moderately,
4=quite a bit, and
5=extremely

a. Web-based display
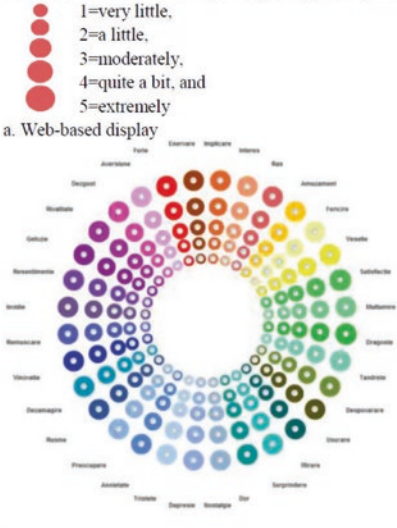
c. Mobile/tablet display (IOS)

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A Step-Based Framework for Practice

Windy Dryden

Introduction

Coaching was originated to help people who are functioning satisfactorily in life to develop themselves in one or more life areas (Wildflower, 2013). I refer to this as *development-focused coaching*. However, coaches are also asked to help people deal with a range of practical and emotional problems because some people find it more acceptable to be 'in coaching' than 'in therapy or counseling'. I refer to this as problem-focused coaching. Even if coaches decide to be 'purists' and only see people for development-focused coaching, these people will experience obstacles (both practical and emotional) to the pursuit of their development-focused objectives[1] and will expect their coaches to help them address these obstacles. Therefore, coaches need to develop a range of skills to deal with a range of situations. I will outline this range of skills in this chapter, indicating which skills need to be employed in which situation.

This chapter is based on the above assumption and will outline the steps that coaches using Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching (RECBC) should[2] employ as a guide when working with coachees in development-focused RECBC and problem-focused RECBC. Within problem-focused RECBC, I will cover coaching for practical problems and coaching for emotional problems (including

[1] In this chapter, I will use the term 'objectives' to refer to what coachees want to achieve from development-focused RECBC and the term 'goals' to refer to what coachees want to achieve from problem-focused RECBC.

[2] While the word 'should' in RECBC theory may indicate the presence of a rigid irrational belief, in this chapter it will mainly be used in its recommendatory form, unless otherwise indicated. Thus, when I say that RECB coaches 'should' follow the steps outlined in this chapter, I mean that I recommend that they do so, not that they absolutely have to do so. Coaching steps 'should' be used flexibly, not rigidly.

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their emotional problems about their practical problems). I will also show how RECB coaches can address the inevitable obstacles to coaching progress that are likely to occur in all types of RECBC, I will outline the most common steps for each type of coaching and discuss common strategies for the implementation of each step. It is important to mention at the outset that this schema is intended to be a guide for the flexible practice of RECBC. It is not intended that coaches should rigidly adhere to the framework presented.

Laying the Foundations: Helping Coachees to Get the Most from RECBC

In this section, I will discuss how RECB coaches help coachees get the most can get the most from the process of RECBC.

Step 1. Respond to an Initial Enquiry: Conduct a Brief Real-Time Conversation

When a person first contacts an RECB coach that person may be in the role of 'enquirer' (i.e. making enquiries about coaching) or in the role of 'applicant' (i.e. seeking help from the coach having decided to seek coaching help from that person). However, they should not yet be seen to occupy the role of 'coachee' until they and the coach have contracted to work with one another. Whatever is the case, the person requires a response to their initial enquiry.

Whether the coach has responded themself to the person's initial enquiry, I suggest that they carry out a brief, real-time (telephone or Skype, for example) conversation with the person, unless there is a good reason not to do so. In my experience, 10 min should suffice for this conversation, the purpose of which is for the coach to give information to the person in the enquirer role and to ascertain what help the person in the applicant role is seeking. If it seems that there is compatibility between what the applicant seeks and what the coach can offer the latter should invite the former to a face-to-face[3] assessment-based session, the purpose of which is to agree as to the type of coaching that is best suited to the person and to agree a coaching contract.[4]

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[3] I am aware that some coaches only work via Skype or such platform in which case the assessment session would be via that platform.

[4] A coaching contract covers a range of coaching and practical issues that will not be discussed here. See Dryden (2017).

Table 1 Pre-assessment coaching questionnaire

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. The information that you provide will help you get the most from coaching and help the coach tailor coaching to your individual situation. All information is confidential.
1. What do you hope to achieve from coaching?
2. What strengths do you have as a person can you use during coaching that would help you get the most out of this process?
3. What resources in your environment do you have access to that could help you during the coaching process?
4. Which people in your life can you call upon to support and encourage you during coaching?
5. What does your coach need to know about your learning style to help ensure that you get the most out of coaching?
6. What style of coaching should your coach adopt to help you get the most out of coaching?
7. What are some of your core life values that your coach should know about?
8. What do you find meaningful in your life?
9. How much time are your prepared to devote to coaching-related activities per day?
10. Is there anything that you would like your coach to know or think your coach needs to know before coaching begins?

Step 2. Ask the Applicant to Prepare for the Face-to-Face Assessment Session

One of the points that coaches can make at the outset is that they expect coaches to be active between coaching sessions. Thus, the RECB coach can ask the applicant to prepare for the face-to-face assessment session.

The use of a pre-assessment coaching questionnaire can be useful. Table 1 provides an example of a form the coach might suggest that the applicant completes before the session as one way of preparing for the session. Note that all the information requested is designed to provide the coach with information that will help the person get the most out of coaching, if they become a coachee:

Step 3. Carry Out a Face-to Face Assessment Session to Determine Which Type of RECB Coaching Is Suitable

As noted above a major purpose of the face-to-face assessment session is to help both the applicant and the RECB coach determine whether coaching is the right form of help for the person and, if so, which type of RECBC is best suited to the person.

The following criteria can be used to determine which type of RECB coaching is most suitable:

For development-focused coaching. Here, the applicant is doing satisfactorily in life and wishes to develop themself in one or more areas of their life. During the recent past, the person has neither experienced an emotional problem nor a practical problem that required professional help.

For practical problem-focused coaching. Here, the applicant is confused, tangled up with an issue and needs clarity and order which they hope to get by talking things through with someone, but they are not emotionally disturbed about the issue even though they may be dissatisfied about it. In RECBC, we distinguish between emotional disturbance (or unhealthy negative emotions such as anxiety and unhealthy anger) and emotional dissatisfaction (or healthy negative emotions such as concern and healthy anger or annoyance)—see Dryden and Branch (2008). If they do have an emotional problem about their practical problem, the former in RECBC is generally tackled before the latter as the presence of the emotional problem will impede and distract the person from focusing on solving the practical problem.

For emotional problem-focused coaching. Here, the applicant has an emotional problem or problems where the person has emotionally disturbed reactions to one or more adversities (see above). The question arises whether the person should see an RECB coach or an RECB therapist. Cavanagh (2005) suggests that coaching is suitable for emotional problems when:

1. The emotional problem is of recent origin or occurs intermittently.
2. The responses of the person to the main adversity are distressing to the person, but lie within a mild to moderate range of distress.
3. The person's emotional problem is limited to a certain situation or aspect of the person's life.
4. The person is not defensive with respect to the problem
5. The person is open to address and change the problem

To these, I would add that the person wants to see a coach and would not consult a therapist or counselor, for example because of the stigma of doing so.

Once the coach and applicant have decided which type of coaching is suitable for the person, then the coach should literally give an overview of the RECB approach to coaching so that they can both determine whether this type of coaching is suitable for the person and is what the person is looking for. While each coach will tailor this overview for each applicant, the following is an indication about what should be covered in the overview:

Development-focused RECBC. Here, the coach should say that the focus will be on enhancing the person's development and that this process can be underpinned by RECBC's rational principles of living that have been outlined in a chapter in this volume by Michael Bernard. Examples of such rational principles should be given to the coachee so they know what the coach means. It is important that the coach explains that while it would be good if the person makes unimpeded progress towards their development-based objectives, obstacles to that progress may well arise and, if so, the coach will help the person address these obstacles by examining

the thinking, emotion and behaviour implicated in the obstacles and changing those aspects that will result in the resumption of objective-focused coaching.

Emotional problem-focused RECBC. Here, the coach should say that addressing the person's emotional problems will be done by setting goals and then helping them to identify and change the irrational beliefs that underpin their problems. Goals are achieved by belief change which occurs when the person acts in ways that are consistent with their alternative rational beliefs while facing problem-related adversities. Again, the coach should explain that while it would be good if the person makes unimpeded progress towards their problem-based goals, obstacles to that progress may well arise and, if so, the coach will help the person address these obstacles by using similar methods that are employed in helping them address their emotional problems. Once this is done resumption of problem-focused coaching can occur.

Practical problem-focused RECBC. Here, the coach should say that addressing the person's practical problem will be done by helping them to learn and apply a practical problem-solving framework designed to help them identify and evaluate a range of possible solutions and to apply the one most likely to be successful. In addition, the coach should say that if the person has an emotional problem about their practical problem then this former problem needs to be tackled before the former and if so, the coach's explanation should be as in the previous section. Similar points about obstacles to progress in practical problem-focused RECBC should be made as were made in the other two types of RECBC detailed above.

Once the person and the coach have jointly decided that RECBC is a suitable approach, have selected the type of RECBC to be used, have discussed issues arising from the person's responses to the pre-assessment questionnaire presented in Table 1 and have settled a number of practical issues, then a coaching contact should be agreed and signed, if this is the coach's practice. At this point, the applicant becomes a Coachee:

Step 4. Decide with the Coachee How You Are Both Going to Evaluate Coaching Effectiveness

RECBC is an evidence-based approach to coaching and therefore the coach is concerned with evaluating their work with all coachees. At this point, I suggest that the RECB coach ask the coachee how best they think that they both can evaluate their work. If the person defers to the coach on this question (as frequently happens), the coach should suggest that the two of them evaluate coaching outcome and progress with respect to (a) whichever problem the coachee seeks help for in problem-focused RECBC and the goal related to the problem and (b) whichever objective is chosen in development-focused RECBC. Once this has been agreed the coach may suggest how this may be done. I will revisit this latter issue later in this chapter in 'EFE: Step 3'.

Step 5. Help the Coachee to Identify and Use Their Strengths in RECBC

Coachees bring to RECBC a range of strengths that can help them get the most out of all three types of RECBC to be discussed in this book. Thus, it is important for the coach to help the coachee identify these strengths and specify how these might be used in coaching,

Strengths are the internal attributes or personality traits and characteristics that can help the coachee get the most out of RECBC. They can be assessed by the coach asking several questions. For example:

- What would you say are your strengths as a person that you can bring to the coaching process?"
- "What would others who know you well say were your strengths as a person that you can bring to the coaching process?"
- "If you were being interviewed for a job and you were asked what strengths you had as a person, how would you respond?"

Once identified and noted, the coach can then encourage the coachee to use these strengths at salient points in the coaching process.

Step 6. Help Your Coachee to Identify and Use Their Resources in RECBC

If strengths are "the internal attributes or personality traits and characteristics that can help the coachee in RECBC" (see above), resources are the practical tools or people present in the coachee's life that are available to assist in coaching. The example I often use when helping a coachee to distinguish between a strength and a resource is this. If a person wants to hire someone to help them to move house, they will look for someone who is dependable (strength) and who has a reliable van (resource). One without the other will be less effective than both together.

Here are some sample questions the coach can ask their coachee about their resources:

- What resources do you have access to that could help you during coaching? If you don't have access to these resources, is there anybody who can help you get access to them?
- Which people do you have access to who may help you during coaching? Who are they and what can each of them bring to the situation that may be helpful to you in coaching?
- What information do you need that will help you during coaching? Where can you get this information?
- What resources in the community might be helpful to you during coaching?

Once again, when these resources are identified and noted, the coach can then encourage the coachee to use them at salient points in the coaching process.

A Step-Based Framework for the Practice of Development-Focused RECBC (DF-RECBC)

The major purpose of development-focused RECBC is to help the coachee to get the most out of themselves in whichever life area that they nominate. The person should not be experiencing an emotional problem when embarking on DF-RECBC and if they are, EPF-RECBC should be offered and completed before DF-RECBC gets underway. However, they may be experiencing emotional issues that, to a degree, interferes with growth, but this can sometimes be a stimulus tor this type of coaching and certainly does not disqualify them from it. The important point is that they should be able to concentrate on and commit to development-focused coaching.

The main steps of development-focused RECBC to be described below are:

1. Introduce the Concept of Rational Principles of Living as the Foundation
2. Help the Coachee to Set Objectives
3. Help the Coachee to Design an Action Plan
4. Help the Coachee to Implement the Action Plan

Coaching strategies that can be used for each step taken will be enumerated.

Step 1. Introduce the Concept of Rational Principles of Living as the Foundation

The main feature of development-focused RECBC that sets it apart from problem-focused RECBC is its emphasis on growth and development. What underpins its practice is the concept of rational principles of living.[5] These principles are "the essential ingredients of a philosophy of personal happiness that Ellis[6] provides for people to help them to live enjoyable, enriched, satisfying and pleasurable lives" (Bernard, 2011: 2). Bernard (this volume) presents a survey that he devised entitled the '*Rationality and Happiness Survey*' where he outlines and describes 11 principles of rational living. Such a survey can be used to help the coachee review how

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[5] Bernard (2018) refers to these as 'rational principles of living'.

[6] Albert Ellis (1913–2007) was the founder of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy. Although Ellis did not specifically write on coaching, his ideas on how humans can live psychologically healthy and happy lives form the backbone of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching as described in this chapter and in this volume.

present such principles are in their life, how important such principles are and how they might underpin the selection of development-based objectives.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to review the presence of rational principles in their life. One of the ways in which a survey of rational principles of living can be used is to encourage the coachee to review how present such principles are in their life. This can serve as a platform for a conversation between coach and conversation concerning how the coachee views their development, the role of such principles in their development and the place of these principles in coaching. My own practice is to ask a coachee if they are interested reviewing a set of 'healthy' principles of living concerning how present they are in their life and how they might underpin the coaching work that we are about to embark on with one another. When they 'yes' I ask them to review a survey of such principles (as that discussed by Bernard in Chap. x) and this provides a forum for discussion. How this discussion unfolds depends on the coachee's view of these principles, which may need to be clarified, and the questions that they may have about their application. This is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to choose how to use these principles. These rational principles of living can be used in two main ways.

1. First, they can be used as broad objectives that the coachee selects because they think that it is important for their development that they are more *self-accepting*, for example. In which case, the coach helps the coachee to identify more specific markers of such broad objectives (e.g. "What specifically would tell you that you were more accepting of yourself"; "What objectives would you like to nominate that would indicate that you were more self-accepting"?). When the principles are used in this way they can be regarded as *'drivers'* in that they drive the process by influencing the selection of coaching objectives.
2. Second, rational principles can be used as *'mediators'* in DF-RECBC. Here the coachee first selects an objective that is important to them and then chooses a principle that will aid the pursuit of the objective. While, the coachee reminds themself of the principle while they are pursuing the objective. For example, consider a person wants to develop their leadership skills and has selected 'risk-taking' as a mediating principle. When tempted to play safe in a situation that calls upon them to use their developing leadership skills that the person reminds themself that they need to take a risk and does so. This is an example of how the objective drives the selection of the principle which is then employed for its mediating, motivational properties.

The coach can explain to the coachee the two ways of using rational principles of living and then the two of them have a more specific conversation concerning the best way in which these principles can inform that person's coaching.

Step 2. Help the Coachee to Set Objectives[7]

While RECBC emphasizes specificity, the concept of development does tend to be quite broad and experiential. "I will know, when I feel it" is the kind of language that a coachee may use when discussing how they will know when they have achieved their development-based objectives. Thus, skilled RECB coaches are able to marry the specific and evidential with the general and experiential when helping coachees to set development-based objectives. In what follows, I outline some important strategies that will aid the objective-setting process.[8]

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to understand the attributes of a development-based objective. When discussing a development-based objective with a coachee, the RECBC coach keeps in mind and helps the coachee to see that that a "good" objective has the following features:

• It has a direction
• It may be ongoing (thus it may not have an end-point)
• When it does have an end-point, this often needs to be maintained. For example, if a coachee wants to enhance their competent communication skills at work, this indicates a direction and, if an end-point can be specified, it will have to be maintained. The same is true, for example, with goals that involve improvements in physical fitness or eating. Indeed, if one stops working in either of these latter areas when targets have been reached then a return to "square one" will eventually occur
• A development-based objective is broad with specific referents

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to choose an objective that has intrinsic rather than extrinsic importance for them. It is important for the coachee to select an objective that they want to achieve rather than what a stakeholder[9] wants them to achieve. However, if the coach and stakeholder both want the same thing for the coachee then this is particularly helpful for the RECBC process.

Strategy 3. Help the coachee to choose an objective that rests on a principle of healthy psychological living prized by the coachee: If the coachee has several development-based coaching objectives in mind then the concept of rational principles of living discussed earlier may be useful in helping the coachee to select a target objective (i.e. the objective that the coachee wishes to pursue first) that is based on a particularly prized rational principle

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[7] Let me remind you that in this chapter, I have decided to use term 'objectives' to refer to what coachees want to achieve from development-focused RECBC and the term 'goals' to refer to what coachees want to achieve from problem-focused RECBC.

[8] In doing so, I am not suggesting that a coach will implement all strategies for all coachees. Rather, I suggest that the coach employs a particular strategy that is salient for a particular coachee:

[9] A stakeholder is anyone in addition to the coach and the coachee who has an interest in the coaching that occurs in the coaching relationship.

Strategy 4. Help the coachee to choose an objective that is underpinned by values that are important to the coachee: A value is the coachee's judgment of what is important or meaningful in their life or gives purpose to that life. I use terms like "meaning", "importance" or purpose, if coachees don't resonate with the term "value". Many development-based objectives are pragmatic (i.e. they lead to useful benefits for the individual e.g. a salary rise or career advancement) and there is nothing wrong with that. However, a coachee is less likely to persist in the pursuit of pragmatic objectives that are not also underpinned by values than they would if this value-based foundation is present. If a coachee requests help in determining their values, I suggest that they complete an online test at http://www.value-test.com/.[10]

Strategy 5. Help the coachee to choose an objective that preferably involves tasks that have intrinsic merit for them: The more that the coachee enjoys the tasks that they need to do to achieve their development-based objective, the better, as they are more likely to engage with such tasks than when they are not enjoyable. However, if these tasks do not have intrinsic merit for the coachee, the latter can still do them while keeping in mind that it is good for them to do these unpleasant tasks because it will help them achieve what they want. I call this the "cod liver oil" principle.[11]

Strategy 6. Help the coachee to choose an objective that they are prepared to integrate into their life. The coachee may select an intrinsic, meaningful objective that expresses a valued rational principle of living that is enjoyable to pursue, but if the person cannot integrate this objective into their life, then there is no point in helping them to pursue it. This is why it is very important for the coach to help the coachee look at the place of the objective within the context of their life as a whole. If the objective is highly valued by the coachee but cannot, at present, be integrated into the person's life, the coach should invite the person to think whether they want to restructure their life to accommodate the objective. If so, then the restructuring should take place first to accommodate the objective. If not, then the coach should invite the coachee to select an objective that can be integrated into their life.

Strategy 7. Help the coachee to choose an objective for which they are prepared to make sacrifices to achieve. If the coachee is prepared to restructure their life to accommodate their valued development-based objective, then the coach needs to help the coachee consider what changes they are prepared to make to do this. In all probability, this means the coachee being prepared to make sacrifices to achieve this. The more the coachee is prepared to make selected sacrifices, the more they will be willing to pursue their desired objective. It is important that the coach explores with the coachee the implications for making the selected sacrifices on

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[10] In my view, it is important for the coach to take such a test themself to determine its face validity before suggesting that their coachee completes it. I have done this test myself and concluded that it did accurately portray my values in rank order.

[11] When I was growing up, there was no cod liver oil in capsule form, only in liquid form which is very unpleasant. While we did not dispute its health benefits, we dreaded the call to "open your mouth and don't make a fuss" as we swallowed the foul-tasting stuff. If we were lucky we were given a chocolate to take the taste away.

other people in the person's life. It is important that other people are told of the sacrifice and what it might mean for them so that they can give their consent to the subsequent change for them. Indeed, if these other people can support the coachee both in making the sacrifice and in their pursuit of the objective, then this can be particularly helpful for the Coachee:

Once the coach and coachee have agreed on a development-based objective, the next stage in development-focused RECBC is to help them to devise an action plan and to implement it. In brief, designing a plan involves the coach helping the coachee to determine *what* they are going to do to achieve their development-based objective and implementing the plan involves helping them to determine *how* they are going to put their action plan into practice.

Step 3. Help the Coachee to Design an Action Plan

When helping the coachee to devise an action plan with respect to reaching their development-based objective it is important for the coach to use the following strategies:

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to devise a clear method of measuring their development-based objective. As I said at the beginning of this section, while a development-based objective may be broad it is important that it has specific referents (e.g. the enactment of a specific leadership skill in a specific situation when the person broadly wants to improve their leadership skills). These help the coachee not only to know when they have achieved the objective, if relevant, but also to gauge their progress towards the objective. Once the coachee has achieved their objective then, again if relevant, it is important to ask them how they will know precisely if they are maintaining it. These tasks require that the coach and coachee work together to devise a means of tracking the coachee's progress towards the objective and their maintenance of the objective once achieved. While it is best if this measure provides specific information, some coachees prefer a more general, experiential-based measure and the coachee should respect the coachee's wishes in this respect.

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to list the actions that they need to take to achieve the objective. The next step is to help the coachee to specify what actions they need to take to achieve the objective. In doing so, it is important to help them select actions that they already have the skills to perform. If they lack a skill that they need, the coach decides with them how they are going to learn it and from whom. On this point, it is important for the coach to realize that it is not their job to teach skills that they don't have in their own skills repertoire. However, it is their job to help the coachee to find the right resource in this respect. If the coach can teach a relevant skill to their coachee, they should do so.

Strategy 3. Help the coachee to construct a realistic time schedule to achieve their objective. This schedule will be determined partly based on the length of the coaching contract and how many objectives the coachee wishes to set and work towards during the coaching process. Once the coachee has determined the time

schedule, they should be helped to allocate tasks to time slots so that both coach and coachee know what the latter plans to do by when. This will need to be monitored and modified based on the coachee's actual experience of implementing the action plan.

Strategy 4. Help the coachee to use their strengths and other helping resources. When helping the coachee devise an action plan, they should be encouraged to use their strengths and other resources that they identified earlier (see Laying the Foundations: Step 3. Strategies 2 and 3).

Strategy 5. Ensure that the coachee can integrate the action plan into their life. In the same way that the coach helped the coachee ensure that they could integrate their development-based objective into their life, the coach should do the same with respect to their constructed action plan. Thus, when the coachee integrates this plan into their life it means that they commit themself to act at particular times that are convenient to them and in contexts that are accessible. If this is not the case, the coach should help them to make modifications so that their action plan fits into their life.

Strategy 6. Suggest a launch date to the coachee who should decide whether to inform others. The coach might suggest to the coachee that they may wish to set a launch date for implementing their action plan and, if this resonates with the person, discuss what this might involve and whether they want to "go public" with this. If this does not appeal to the coachee, have them begin as they wish.

Strategy 7. Remind the coachee to use their selected rational principle(s) of living in designing the action plan. Rational principles of living can be used by the coachee throughout development-based RECBC and in helping the person design the plan, the coach can suggest that the coachee keep their selected rational principles of living to the front of their mind when doing. This, a coachee can think of the principle of risk-taking when designing an action plan and perhaps be more adventurous in the design of that plan to reflect their wish to use risk-taking as a mediating variable in coaching.

Step 4. Help the Coachee to Implement the Action Plan

When the coachee has launched their action plan, the coach has several tasks to perform to help them to stay on course towards their development-based objective.

Strategy 1. Encourage the coachee to use a selection of motivating variables. While the coachee is implementing their action plan, it is helpful for them to use one or more motivating variables to sustain this implementation. Thus, the coachee can remind themselves periodically of the importance of the objective in their life (e.g. "I am doing this because I want to improve my presentation skills"). Or they can select a healthy principle of living to keep in mind while pursuing the objective This can be done in two ways. First, it can be used as an outcome variable (e.g. "Doing this will help me be more creative in life") or it can be used to deal with potential obstacles (e.g. Even if I fail today, I'm not a failure. I'm fallible and I can learn from failure").

Strategy 2. Monitor the coachee's implementation of the action plan. The time-action schedule the coachee has developed (see above) is not one that is set in stone and will need to be changed in light of the coachee's experiences. Consequently, it is important that the coach monitors their progress on this. Such monitoring involves both coach and coachee being clear about what the latter is going to do, as mentioned above, and reviewing what they did, exploring the meaning of any discrepancies between plans and achievements. Any changes to the coachee's action plan should emerge out of their experiences of implementing it and any difficulties should be addressed.

Strategy 3. Help the coachee to capitalize on success. When it is clear that the coachee is doing well with respect to their action plan, it is important for the coach to help them to capitalize on their success. One way of doing this is to find out what is that they have been doing that has brought about their progress and to suggest that they continue to do what is working for them (Iveson, George, & Ratner, 2012). Another way is to encourage them to think of ways that they can generalize what they have been learning from implementing their development-based objective to other relevant areas of their life where they would like to develop themself.

Strategy 4. Help the coachee to maintain their gains once they have met their objective. Once the coachee has achieved their objective, it is probable that they will have to take action to maintain the gains that they have met. Thus, it is important that the coach works with the coachee on the following issues:

- Help them to identify and implement steps they will need to take to maintain their gains
- Help them to identify and deal with any obstacles that might interfere with such maintenance strategies
- Help them to develop tolerance for discomfort and boredom that they might experience during the maintenance process
- Help them identify and deal with any vulnerability factors that, if encountered, might lead them to experience lapses in the use of their maintenance strategies which, in turn may result in the loss of gains already achieved.

Strategy 5. Help the coachee to pursue other objectives and generalize learning. Once the coachee has shown evidence of maintaining their target development-based objective, they are ready to pursue another objective (if relevant) and the coach can help them go through the same process with the new objective informed by the work that they have done on the first objective. As they make progress on the second objective, the coach can encourage the coachee (a) to look for patterns amongst the objectives that they have nominated at the outset and (b) to use these patterns as they increasingly take on the role of their own coach.

The more the coach can help the coachee to identify and use helpful patterns of thinking and acting from the work they have done with them on their objectives, the more the coach can help them to formalize these as self-development principles and generalize them across different life domains. These principles would include both some of the healthy principles outlined in Bernard's survey (see this volume), but put in the coachee's own words and other principles that fall outside this list.

A Step-Based Framework for the Practice of Emotional Problem-Focused RECBC (EPF-RECBC)[12]

In this section, I will deal with the steps that the RECB coach takes when (a) their coachee is seeking help for an emotional problem (EP) or problems and when (b) the coachee, in any type of RECBC, experiences emotionally-based obstacles[13] to coaching progress.

Step 1. Select a Target Emotional Problem

The RECB coach prefers to work with one emotional problem at a time, particularly at the beginning of coaching, and if the coachee has more than one problem, they both need to decide which problem they are going to focus on first. This is known as the target emotional problem (TEP). Examples of common problems people bring to coaching are anxiety, unhealthy anger, guilt, shame and hurt.

Strategy 1. Ask for the emotional problem directly. RECBC is an active-directive approach to coaching and this means asking the coachee directly for which problem or problems they are seeking help. "What problem can I help you with?" is a typical question that an RECB coach would ask their Coachee:

Strategy 2. Work with the coachee to select the target emotional problem. If the coachee only has one emotional problem for which they are seeking coaching, then that automatically becomes the immediate targeted problem. However, if they have more than one emotional problem, then the coach needs to help them to select the one to work on. This might be according to the coachee's choice, the easiest problem to tackle, the most serious or the problem that, if dealt with, would give the coachee hope that the other problems could be tackled. Unless, the coach has a rationale for the selection, in which case this should be shared with the coachee, the coach should go along with the coachee here. However, once selected, coach and coachee should ideally stick with the targeted emotional problem unless there is a good reason to change focus.

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[12] I am beginning with a step-based framework for the practice of emotional problem focused RECBC because these steps are also relevant when dealing with emotionally-based obstacles to coachee progress in all types of RECBC.

[13] Bernard (this volume) refers to such obstacles as 'psychological blockers to successful coaching outcome' and deals with some of the most common of these in his chapter.

Situation			
A= Adversity			
iB= Irrational Beliefs[19] : - **Demandingness** | V - **Awfulising** - **Discomfort Intolerance** - **Depreciation of Self/Other/Life**	D = Disputing ------------- ----------- →	rB = Rational Beliefs[19] : - **Non-Rigid Preference** | V - **Anti-Awfulising** - **Discomfort Tolerance** - **Unconditional Acceptance of Self/Other/Life** | V	F = Facilitating Change | | | | | | |
C= Disturbed Responses (Consequences of Irrational Beliefs) Emotional/Behavioral/Cognitive	------------- ----------- →	E = Effects of Disputing G= Healthy Responses (Consequences of Rational Beliefs) Emotional/Behavioral/Cognitive	| | | | | <--------------

Fig. 1 Situational ABCDEFG Framework. (In RECBC theory demandingness is regarded as the primary irrational belief with the other three irrational beliefs as listed derived from it. In RECBC theory a non-dogmatic preference is regarded as the primary rational belief with the other three irrational beliefs as listed derived from it)

Step 2. Assess the Target Emotional Problem

Once the TEP has been selected it needs to be assessed. In RECBC the coach uses the 'Situational ABC-G' part of the 'Situational ABCFEDFG' framework. The full framework is presented in Fig. 1. Reference will be made to different parts of this framework throughout this chapter.

Use a specific example of the targeted emotional problem. Perhaps the best way of assessing the targeted emotional problem in RECBC is for the coach and coachee to work with a specific example of this problem. Specificity encourages the eliciting of information that is likely to be emotionally salient and allow a more valid assessment of the TEP. The specific example might be recent, typical, vivid or anticipated. The coach should work with the coachee to select an example that best aids the assessment process.

Step 3. Assessment of TEP: Help the Coachee to Describe the 'Situation'

The first step in the assessment process is for the coach to help the coachee to describe the situation in which the example of the EP occurred: where did it place, who was present and what factually was said and done by those present. Help the coachee distinguish between a situation (what happened) and an inference (their interpretation about what happened). The latter will be assessed shortly (see step 5 below).

Step 4. Assessment of TEP: Identify 'C'

The coachee is seeking help for an emotional problem largely because they are experiencing an unhealthy negative emotion[14] and it is important that the coach askes the person to identify this emotion. This is likely to be one of the following: anxiety, depression, guilt, shame, problematic anger, hurt, problematic jealousy, problematic envy.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee select their main UHE. It may be that the person mentions more than one UHE emotion when the coach asks them for their main emotion in the chosen situation. As each emotion may be about a different facet of the situation, it is important that the coach helps the coachee to select one emotion to target for change at a time and preferably the emotion that best reflects the problem for which they are seeking help.

Strategy 2. Clarify a vague UHE. It may be that the coachee says that they feel "bad" or "upset" in response to a question about 'C'. If this happens, it is important that the coach helps the coachee to clarify what they mean as it is more difficult to work with a poorly understood emotion in RECBC than a clearly understood one. One way of doing this is to show the coachee the list of UHEs provided above and ask which best describes their "bad" or "upset" feeling.

Strategy 3. Respond when the coachee confuses an emotion with an inference. Sometimes a coachee will offer an inference as an emotion when asked how they felt in the described situation ("e.g. "I felt 'used'""). When this happens explain the difference between the two and then ask how they felt about the inference (e.g. "How did you feel about being used?").

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[14] In RECBC theory unhealthy negative emotions (UHEs) are clearly differentiated from healthy negative emotions (HNEs). The former are problematic or disturbed responses to adversities at 'A' that give rise to coachees seeking help. The latter are realistic and constructive responses to the same adversities. As can be seen what sets these two types of emotions apart is their healthiness, not their negative feeling tone. Thus, according to RECBC theory, it is healthy to feel bad (but not disturbed) about an adversity. Some RECB coaches use the terms 'disturbed emotions' and 'non-disturbed emotions' to refer to UNEs and HNEs respectively, but in this chapter, I will use the latter terminology.

Strategy 4. Identify the behavioral 'C'. When you have clearly identified the coachee's UNE, you can then help them to identify the actual behaviours or action tendencies that accompanied the UHE in the problem example (e.g. "When you felt 'x', what did you do….and what did you feel like doing, but decided not to do"). These behavioural factors are likely to be unconstructive for the person and tend to maintain the emotional problem.

Strategy 5. Identify the cognitive 'C', if necessary. When the coachee experiences a UNE, they also have a tendency to think in certain ways. These tend to be highly distorted, skewed to the negative and ruminative in nature because they are the cognitive consequences of holding irrational beliefs ate adversities. When assessing these cognitive C's, the coach asks such questions as, "Once you felt 'x' what thoughts accompanied this feeling?" and "Were you easily able to let go of these thoughts or were you ruminating on them?"

Step 5. Assessment of TEP: Identify 'A'

Once the coach has assessed the coachee's emotive, behavioural and cognitive 'C's' in the problem example, they can now take the emotive part and use it to identify the person's 'A' which is the aspect of the situation about which the coachee is most disturbed or finds most problematic. There are many ways of assessing 'A' (see Dryden & Branch, 2008). I will present one which I particularly employ in coaching.

Strategy 1. An example of assessing 'A'. Table 2 outlines how to use a technique called 'Windy's Magic Question' (WMQ) to identify 'A'.

Strategy 2. Encourage the coachee to assume temporarily that 'A' is true. RECBC theory holds that the best way to help a coachee with their TEP is to encourage them to face the adversity which they find problematic and thence to develop rational beliefs about this adversity. To do this, the coach suggests that they assume temporarily that 'A' is true rather than to question whether it was the most probable interpretation what happened There will be a later opportunity for the coachee to question 'A'.

Table 2 Windy's Magic Question (WMQ)

Purpose: To help the coachee to identify the 'A' in the Situational ABC-G framework as quickly as possible (i.e. what the coachee most disturbed about) once 'C' has been assessed and the situation in which 'C' has occurred has been identified and briefly described.
Point 1. Have the coachee focus on their disturbed 'C' *(in this instance "anxiety")*
Point 2: Have the coachee focus on the situation in which 'C' occurred *(e.g. "Sitting in the board meeting listening to my boss ask questions")*
Point 3: Ask the coachee: "Which ingredient could we give you to eliminate or significantly reduce 'C'"? *(in our example, anxiety). (In this case, the coachee said: "My boss asking me a question that I can answer"). Take care that the coachee does not change the situation (that the coachee does not say: "Not being at the board meeting")*
Point 4: The opposite is probably "A" *(e.g. "My boss asks me a question I can't answer"),* but check. *Ask: "So when you were sitting in the board meeting, were you most anxious about your boss asking you a question you can't answer?"* If not, use the question in Point 3 again until the coachee confirms what they were most *anxious* about in the described situation

Step 6. Assessment of TEP: Elicit 'G'

Coaching works best when the coachee sets a goal and the coach helps them to achieve it (Gessnitzer & Kauffeld, 2015) and at this point of the process the coachee needs to discover what this goal is.

Strategy 1. Ask for goals in relation to 'A'. However, care needs to be taken here and the coach needs to help the coachee understand that in order to deal effectively with their problem, they need to develop more constructive responses at 'G' to <u>each</u> of the problematic emotional, behavioral and cognitive responses (i.e. 'Cs') to the adversity at 'A'. These constructive responses become the coachee's goal. Thus, the coach should ask a question such as. *"If your friend did reject you, what would be a healthy way of responding to this emotionally, behaviorally and thinking-wise?" "What could you feel instead of hurt', what could you do instead of sulk and what could you think instead of concluding that you will lose all your friends?"*

Strategy 2. Elicit an HNE in response to a UNE. In response to being asked for a constructive emotional goal with respect to 'A'. the coachee may give a positive or a neutral emotional goal (e.g. *"I don't want the rejection to bother me"*). The coach needs to help the coachee see that given the fact that it is important for her not to be rejected, for example, rejection is an adversity or a negative event and it is not realistic or healthy to strive to feel good or neutral about something bad. I often help my coachees understand that their choice is to feel bad with disturbance (i.e. UNE) or bad without disturbance (i.e. HNE).[15]

Step 7. Assessment of TEP: Make the General 'B-C' Connection

The 'ABC' part of the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework is perhaps the heart of the RECBC model. While this part emphasizes that it the beliefs people hold about adversities that largely determine how they respond to it, at this point of the process, the RECB coach is content to help their coachee see that their responses are largely determined by how they think about adversities and not by the adversities themselves.

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[15] See Dryden (2017) for a fuller discussion of the differences between unhealthy negative emotions (UNEs) and healthy negative emotions (HNEs) and how to use this distinction in emotional problem-focused coaching.

Table 3 Windy's Review Assessment Procedure (WRAP)

Purpose: Once 'C' (e.g. *"anxiety"*) and 'A' (e.g. *"my boss asks me a question I can't answer"*) have been assessed, this technique can be used to identify both the coachee's irrational belief and their alterative rational belief and to help the coachee to understand the connection between their iB and 'C' and their rB and their goals at 'G'. This technique can be used with the coachee's demandingness vs. non-rigid preference (as shown below) and with any of the derivative irrational and rational beliefs from this pairing (see Fig. 1).

Step 1: Say: *"Let's review what we know and what we don't know so far."*

Step 2: Say: *"We know three things. First, we know that you felt anxious ('C'). Second, we know that you felt anxious about your boss asking you a question you can't answer ('A'). Third, and this is an educated guess on my part, we know that it is important to you that your boss does not ask you a question you can't answer. Am I correct?"*

Assuming that the coachee confirms the coach's hunch, note that what the coach has have done is to identify the part of the belief that is common to both the coachee's demandingness and alternative non-rigid preference, as we will see.

Step 3: Say: *"Now let's review what we don't know. This is where I need your help. We don't know which of two beliefs your anxiety was based on. So, when you felt anxious about your boss asking you a question you can't answer, was your anxiety based on Belief 1: "It is important to me that my boss does not ask me a question I can't answer and therefore he must not do so" ('Demandingness') or Belief 2: "It is important to me that my boss does not ask me a question I can't answer, but that does not mean that he must not do* so ('Non-rigid preference')?"

Step 4: If necessary, help the coachee to understand that their 'C' *(anxiety)* was based on demandingness if they are unsure.

Step 5: Once the coachee is clear that their *anxiety* was based on demandingness, make and emphasize the irrational belief-disturbed 'C' connection. Then ask: "*Now, let's suppose instead that you had a strong conviction in belief 2, how would you feel about your boss asking you a question that you can't answer if you strongly believed that while it was important to you that your boss not ask you a question you can't answer, it does not follow that he must not do so?"*

Step 6: If necessary, remind the coachee of the emotional goal (HNE) that you negotiated with them (*i.e. concern*), if not immediately volunteered, and make and emphasize the non-rigid preference-G connection.

Step 7: Have the coachee clearly understand the differences between the iB-C and rB-G connections

Step 8: Reinforce the HNE that the coachee has set as their emotional goal (*i.e. concern*) and encourage them to see that developing conviction in their rational belief is the best way of achieving this goal

Step 8. Assessment of TEP: Identify 'iB' and 'rB' and Connect to 'C' and 'G'

Some RECB coaches prefer to incorporate step 7 into step 8. Here, the coach helps the person to identify the irrational beliefs ('iBs') that underpin their problematic responses ('C') to the adversity at 'A' and also the rational beliefs ('rBs') that underpin their constructive responses ('G') to the same adversity.

Strategy 1. An example of identifying iB/rB and connecting iB/C and rB/G. Table 3 outlines how to use a technique called 'Windy's Review Assessment Procedure' (WRAP) to identify simultaneously a coachee's irrational belief and alternative rational belief and connecting these to 'C' and 'G' respectively.

Strategy 2. Work with the primary irrational and rational belief and one of the derivatives from these beliefs. In Table 3, I demonstrated the WRAP method of identifying and connecting demandingness and the non-rigid preferences with their consequences. In RECBC theory, demandingness is seen as the primary irrational belief with awfulizing, discomfort intolerance and depreciation seen as irrational belief derivatives of this primary belief (see Fig. 1). Similarly, a non-dogmatic preference is seen as the primary rational belief with anti-awfulizing, discomfort tolerance and acceptance beliefs seen as rational belief derivatives of this primary belief (see Fig. 1). With respect to assessment, I suggest that the coach help the coachee to identify the one main derivative of these two primary beliefs and connect these with their consequences.

Step 9. Prepare for Disputing (or Challenging)

The coachee now understands the relationship between their irrational beliefs and their consequences at 'C' and between their rational beliefs and their goals at 'G'. Before helping the coachee to dispute or challenge their beliefs, the coach needs to prepare the coachee for disputing otherwise the coachee may not understand why the coach is asking them disputing questions. Saying something like the following should suffice: "I am going to ask you some questions so you can think about both sets of beliefs that we have been discussing and can commit to one set and know why you are committing to it. Is this OK with you?"

Step 10. Disputing (or Challenging)

As shown above, disputing or challenging involves the coach asking the coachee questions of both sets of beliefs: irrational and rational. In doing so, the following points should be borne in mind.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to see the purpose of disputing. Disputing or challenging has a purpose and it is to help the coachee see that their irrational beliefs are irrational (i.e. false, illogical and largely have unhealthy consequences) and their rational beliefs are rational (i.e. true, logical and largely have healthy consequences). Ellis (1963) has called this intellectual insight and while it is insufficient on its own to facilitate therapeutic change it is very important as it helps the person see why they should let go of their irrational beliefs and develop conviction in their rational beliefs. In the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework this represents 'E' or the effects of challenging.

Strategy 2. Use order in disputing. While there is no set order in which irrational and rational beliefs are to be challenged, one of the most efficient ways of disputing is to take the coachee's irrational belief and alternative belief and question them

both at the same time (see below) (e.g. "which of these two beliefs is true and which is false and why?")

Strategy 3. Use three standpoints in disputing. DiGiuseppe (1991) cogently argued that there are three standpoints from where irrational and rational beliefs can be examined[16]: (i) empirical ("which of these two beliefs is true and which is false and why?"); (ii) logical ("which of these two beliefs is logical and which is illogical and why?") and (iii) pragmatic ("which of these two beliefs is helpful and which is unhelpful to you and why?"). While a coachee may find a particular standpoint convincing, the coach only discovers this by using all three in challenging.

Strategy 4. Use a variety of styles of disputing. DiGiuseppe (1991) also outlined a variety of styles that the RECB coach can use in challenging beliefs with the Coachee: It is important that the coach becomes adept at using these styles at different junctures and with different coachees, but to do so authentically (Lazarus, 1993). Such styles include:

- *Socratic* where the coach asks the coachee a series of guided questions designed to help the coachee to discover the answers by themself;
- *Didactic* where the coach teaches a salient point which will clarify matters for the Coachee: Here, it is important that the coach ensures that the coachee has understood the point made by asking them to put the point into their own words;
- *Metaphorical* where the coach uses a story, parable, aphorism or saying to make a point. Again, checking for coachee understanding of the point is important;
- *Self-disclosing* where the coach makes a point by sharing a relevant experience from their own life. Coping self-disclosure (where a coach says that they used to experience a similar problem to the coachee but addressed it by using similar insights that they wish the coachee to consider) is more persuasive than mastery self-disclosure (where the coach states that have used these insights to prevent the development of the problem). It is important for the coach to ask for coachee permission to use self-disclosure as not all coachees find coach self-disclosure useful and/or appropriate. Eliciting coachee feedback after the disclosure is also important even when such permission has been granted.
- *Humorous* where the coach uses humor to encourage the coachee to see the funny side of an irrational belief with the intent of helping them to change it. Here, the coach needs to guard against using humor that could be experienced as 'ad hominem' by the Coachee: In this respect, seeking coachee feedback is crucial.

Strategy 5. Use persuasive arguments. While there are guidelines to follow while challenging beliefs with the coachee, it is important for the coach to recognise that what one coachee finds persuasive, another won't and the coach needs to use their creative intuition in making challenging interventions based on their knowledge of the coachee in question and their experience of working with the person. Having

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[16] I will illustrate these standpoints by using the method where irrational and rational beliefs are questioned at the same time.

said that, in my experience, there are a few challenging arguments that are routinely persuasive. One is what I call 'Teach your children well[17]'. Here, I take the coachee's irrational and rational belief pairing and ask them which belief they would teach their children, which not and the reason for their choice. I then ask them what would stop them from doing the same for themself and the resultant discussion often reveals the person's doubts, reservations and objections to letting go of irrational beliefs and developing rational beliefs.

Step 11. Deal with the Coachee's Doubts, Reservations and Objections

As I mentioned above a coachee may have doubts, reservations or objections (DROs) to letting go of their irrational beliefs and developing their alternative rational beliefs. The coachee may disclose these DROs or they may hold them implicitly and not disclose them. Given this, it is useful for the RECB coach to ask their coachee routinely if they have such DROs and, if so, to see that they are usually based on a misconception.

Step 12. Prepare the Coachee to Deepen Conviction in Their rBs

As I said earlier, the purpose of challenging is to help the coachee understand intellectually that their irrational beliefs are irrational and their alternative rational beliefs are rational and why this is ('E' in the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework). Once this has been done, the coach needs to help the coachee develop emotional insight into these ideas which means, in effect, that their conviction in their rational beliefs is deepened to the point that these beliefs impact constructively the emotional, behavioral and cognitive responses to the adversity at 'A'. This represents 'F' in the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework which stands for 'facilitating change'. For this to be done, the coachee needs to rehearse these rational beliefs while acting in ways that are consistent with them while facing examples of the adversity. Before the coach helps the coachee to do this, they need to help the person understand and commit to this change process and this should be done at this point of the process.

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[17] From the song, 'Teach Your Children' by Crosby, Stills and Nash.

Step 13. Negotiate Homework Tasks

The main way that a coachee can develop greater conviction in their rational beliefs during RECBC is by carrying out agreed homework tasks between sessions.

Strategy 1. Negotiate tasks, don't assign them unilaterally. I prefer the term 'task' to the term 'assignment' when discussing what a coachee is going to do for homework because the term 'assignment' means something is assigned to the coachee to do while the term 'task' does not have the connotation. Thus, the RECB coach negotiates a task with the coachee and does not assign to the person. The more the coachee is involved in the construction of the task, the more likely it is that they will do it (Kazantzis, Whittington, & Dattilio, 2010).

Strategy 2. Take time to negotiate a task. Homework tasks are usually negotiated at the end of the coaching session and enough time needs to be devoted to the nego-tiation process if the selected task is likely to be done and add value to the process

Strategy 3. Ensure that the task is related to the work done in the coaching ses-sion. A good homework task follows logically from what is discussed in a coaching session rather than be unrelated or peripherally related to the session focus.

Strategy 4. Help the coachee to see the purpose of the agreed task. The purpose of an effective homework task is to provide the coachee with the opportunity to face a relevant adversity while rehearsing the person's rational beliefs and without the use of safety-seeking procedures (both behavioral and cognitive) designed to help the person avoid the adversity or keep themself safe if they cannot avoid it. The main problem with these procedures, which are often subtle in nature, is that they prevent the coachee from fully facing the adversity and processing it in healthy ways. Consequently, it is important for the coach to help the coachee identify their routinely used safety-seeking procedures and to encourage them to drop their use while carrying out homework tasks.

Strategy 5. Ensure that the coachee has the skills or capability of doing the task. If the coachee does not have the skills to carry out a homework task, and they can be taught these skills by the coach quite easily, then the coach should do this and then negotiate the task. However, if the skill is more complex and will take a while to be taught and acquired or the coachee lacks the capability to carry out the task then another task should be considered.

Strategy 6. Encourage the coachee to face the adversity whenever possible and to use the 'challenging, but not overwhelming' principle while doing so (Dryden, 1985). This states that the coachee should face an adversity when is chal-lenging to do so, but not if is overwhelming for the coachee to do so. If the task is too easy then it has little therapeutic value, but if it is too tough then the person will not do it and may become discouraged with coaching.

Strategy 7. Attend to the specifics when negotiating a task. An effective home-work task is one where the person carries out a specific task on a specific number of

occasions in specific situations, at specific times**.** Consequently, the coach should encourage the coachee to use the concept of specificity while negating homework tasks.

Strategy 8. Suggest that the coachee makes a written note of the negotiated homework task. Rather than commit the negotiated task to memory, the coachee is more likely to remember it if they make a written note of it in a place to which they have ready access (e.g. a frequently consulted diary, in a notebook or on a smartphone).

Strategy 9. Problem-solve any obstacles to task completion. With homework negotiation, it is better to be forewarned than forearmed. Consequently, the coach should ask the coachee to identify potential obstacles to task completion and to find ways of dealing with these to prevent from becoming actual obstacles.

Strategy 10. Suggest that the coachee uses imagery rehearsal in the session and between sessions. Before carrying out the task 'in the field', as it were, the coach can suggest that the coachee picture the3mself facing the adversity, acting constructively and holding in mind the rational beliefs that they wish to develop. This can be done first in the coaching session and later outside the session, but before the coachee carries out the task, in reality.

Step 14. Review Homework Tasks

Unless there is a good reason not to, it is important that the RECB coach reviews the coachee's homework task at the beginning of the following session. Not reviewing this task communicates implicitly to the coachee that homework tasks are not important. When reviewing homework tasks with a coachee, it is important for the RECBC coach to use several important strategies.

Strategy 1. Discover what the person actually did for homework. Ensure that the coachee did the task as agreed and explore and, if necessary, respond to any modifications that they made to the task.

Strategy 2. Evaluate success by the coachee's efforts and behavior on the task rather than its outcome. Thus, if a coachee agreed to assert themself with one person a day, then, if they did this, it was a success no matter how the other people responded to them.

Strategy 3. Respond to the coachee's failure to carry out the task. It is important that the coach assesses and responds to the coachee's failure to initiate or complete the task with understanding and not censure. This will encourage the coachee to be honest about the reasons for task non-completion

Strategy 4. Respond to the coachee's routine failure to carry out homework tasks. When a coachee routinely fails to do homework tasks, it is useful to use RECBC's the Situational ABCDEFG framework to help them deal with any emotional-based obstacles to task completion

Strategy 5. Capitalize on the coachee's success. It is important that the coach help the coachee to articulate what they learned from doing the task and capitalize on their success by helping them to generalize that learning.

Step 15. Encourage the Coachee to Re-examine 'A'

You will recall earlier that the coach encouraged the coachee to assume temporarily that 'A' was true even it was clearly distorted. This was to help both to work at the attitude level rather than the inference level. However, after the coachee has made some progress in developing their rational beliefs, they are ready, if necessary to stand back and question 'A'.

Strategy 1. Use the most commonly used way of re-examining 'A'. The most common approach to re-examining 'A' employed by RECB coaches involves the coach encouraging the coachee to go back to the Situational ABCDEFG assessment, focus on the 'Situation' and then have them ask themself whether the inference that they made at 'A' was the most realistic way of viewing the situation given all the evidence to hand. This involves considering the inference made at 'A', considering alternative inferences, evaluating all the possibilities and choosing the most realistic inference.

Strategy 2. Help the coachee use other ways of re-examining 'A'. These involve the coachee asking themself:

- How likely is it that 'A' happened (or might happen)?
- Would an objective jury agree that 'A' happened or might happen? If not, what would the jury's verdict be?
- Did I view (am I viewing) the situation realistically? If not, how could I have viewed (can I view) it more realistically?
- If I asked someone whom I could trust to give me an objective opinion about the truth or falsity of my inference about the situation at hand, what would the person say to me and why? How would this person encourage me to view the situation instead?
- If a friend had told me that they had faced (were facing or were about to face the same situation as I faced and had made the same inference, what would I say to him/her about the validity of their inference and why? How would I encourage the person to view the situation instead.

Step 16. Help the Coachee to Generalize Their Learning

The coach can help the coachee to generalize their learning in EPF-RECBC in several ways.

Strategy 1. Encourage generalization across adversity-related situations. A common generalization strategy is for the coach to ask the coachee to nominate other specific situations where they may encounter the adversity and then encourage

Table 4 The PRACTICE
Problem-Solving Framework
(adapted from Palmer, 2008)

P	**P**roblem identification
R	**R**ealistic, relevant goal development
A	**A**lternative potential solutions generated
C	**C**onsideration of potential solutions
T	**T**arget most feasible potential solution
I	**I**mplementation of chosen potential solution
C	**C**onsolidation of the chosen potential solution
E	**E**valuation

the coachee to face up to those situations while practicing their developing rational beliefs?

Strategy 2. Encourage generalization across emotions. Alternatively, the coach can ask the coachee to practice their rational beliefs in situations where they would normally feel the unhealthy negative emotion in their target problem.

Strategy 3. Encourage belief-focused generalization. Perhaps the most advanced strategy in generalization enhancement involves the coach encouraging the coachee to take the general form of a specific rational belief and seek out situations where they can then practice it.

Step 17. Identify, Understand and Deal with Obstacles[18]

An obstacle in EPF-RECBC is something that blocks the coachee's path towards their goal with respect to their emotional problem. In this section, I will focus mainly on obstacles to which the coachee responds in an unhealthy way, emotionally, behaviourally and cognitively. The aim here is to help the coachee deal with the obstacle so that they can return to the business of pursuing their coaching goal. Please note that what I have to say about identifying, understanding and dealing with actual obstacles can also be applied to helping the coachee anticipate, understand and deal with potential obstacles.

Strategy 1. Identify the type of obstacle the coachee is facing and respond accordingly. There are four types of obstacle that the coachee might encounter:

- An external adversity occurs that is related to the RECBC process (e.g. someone criticises the coachee as they put into practice their coaching plan)

- Here, the coach can help the coachee address the obstacle using either the 'PRACTICE' problem-solving framework (discussed in the section on practical problem-focused RECBC below and summarised in Table 4) if the coachee's

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[18] What I have to say in this section also applies to dealing with obstacles in the other two types of coaching that are the focus of this chapter. While I will focus on EPF-RECBC here, please extrapolate to PPF-RECBC and DF-RECBC.

obstacle is indicative of a practical problem or the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework if it is indicative of an emotional problem.

- An external adversity occurs that is not related to the RECBC process (e.g. one of coachee's relatives is very ill)
- If the coachee has an emotional problem about this, then the coach can help by using the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework. If the obstacle leads to a practical problem, then the 'PRACTICE' framework can be employed. However, it may be that while the coachee has neither a practical or an emotional problem about this adversity, its presence may mean that the coachee has neither the time nor the focus to continue in coaching for the time being and a break from coaching may be indicated. Here the coach invites the coachee to resume the process when the person has both the time and the mental space to devote to pursuing their coaching objectives.
- An internal adversity occurs that is related to the RECBC process (e.g. the coachee begins to avoid doing tasks that they need to carry out to achieve their goal, and there is no external reason for this avoidance)
- This is usually indicative of an emotional problem which can be dealt with by the coach using the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework. However, if transpires that this is due to a practical problem, then the 'PRACTICE' framework can be employed.
- The coachee encounters an environmental change which threatens the continuation of the RECBC process (e.g. the coachee has taken on a lot more work to cover for a sick colleague).

- Here, the coach can help the coachee by using the PRACTICE framework to determine whether they can find a way of dealing with the environmental change. If not, this may mean that the coachee postpones coaching until they have the time to devote to it.

Strategy 2. How to deal with an emotional problem about an emotional problem. One common obstacle that is worthy of mention here is when the person has an emotional problem about their original emotional and the presence of this 'meta-emotional' problem[19] means that the person cannot focus sufficiently on their 'primary' emotional problem. When this occurs the RECB coach helps the coachee in the following way:

- Agree with the coachee to focus on the meta-emotional problem
- Assess a specific example of the meta-emotional problem
- Focus on the problematic emotional, behavioural and cognitive responses at 'C'. Shame is a common meta-emotional problem, for example.
- Identify the 'A'. Discover what the coachee found particularly disturbing about the primary emotional problem. This could be the feelings or sensations the

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[19] The term 'meta-emotional problem' means having an emotional problem about an emotional problem.

person experienced or the meaning of the problem for the coachee (e.g. "Having this problem is evidence that I have a weakness")

- Identify the coachee's goal. Encourage them to strive towards healthy ways of responding to the original emotional problem
- Identify the irrational beliefs the person held towards their original emotional problem and their alternative rational beliefs
- Help the coachee dispute both sets of beliefs
- Encourage the coachee to rehearse and act in ways that are consistent with their developing rational beliefs towards their original emotional problem until they are ready to return to dealing with it free from the obstructing effects of the meta-emotional problem

Step 18. Invite the Coachee to Consider Development-Focused Coaching Once They Have Achieved Their Emotional Problem-Focused Goal

Once the coachee has concluded EPF-RECBC to their satisfaction, then the coach can ask the coachee if they wish to nominate a development-based coaching goal or end the process at this point. When the coachee is 'under the influence' of their emotional problem(s), they are not able to focus on the issue of how they might like to develop themself as a person in one or more life areas. However, freed from such 'influence' they can better focus on this question and, at this point, they should be given the opportunity of doing so by their RECB coach. If the coachee agrees then the coaching contract is modified to reflect this major shift of emphasis.

A Step-Based Framework for the Practice of Practical Problem-Focused RECBC

In this section, I will deal with the steps that the RECB coach is called upon to make when their coachee is seeking help for a practical problem or problems. When a coachee has a practical problem, they tend to be confused or tangled up with an issue (or issues) and need some clarity and order which they hope to get by talking things through with the coach. While they may be dissatisfied about the issue, they are not emotionally disturbed about it, although they should be verified by the coach (see later). In these circumstances, the basic tasks of the RECB coach are to help the coachee order their thoughts, define the problem in a way that is solvable, then set goals with respect to this problem and utilise the best methods to solve the problem. There are many practical problem-solving frameworks in the psychological literature. In this chapter, I will make use of the one devised by Palmer (2008)—'PRACTICE'—because it was developed specifically for use in coaching (see Table 4 for an overview).

Step 1. Help the Coachee to Identify the Problem ('<u>P</u>roblem Identification' in the PRACTICE Framework)

When a coachee seeks coaching for a practical problem they are either clear about the nature of the problem or not. Coaching proceeds differently in these two cases.

Strategy 1. When the coachee's problem is clear. When the coachee says that they are clear about the problem, then the coach asks them to state the problem as specifically as they can, helping them to be concrete if they give vague responses. Asking for a specific example of the problem, if relevant, is useful here. As noted in emotional problem focused RECBC, such an example occurs in a specific situation, at a specific time, with specific people present, with your coachee either behaving in a certain way or wanting to act in a certain way, but inhibiting themself from doing so.

The coach's questions to the coachee at this point can be about the situation (e.g. "What was problematic for you about the situation that you were in?") or about their response to the situation (e.g. "What was problematic about the way you responded (or did not respond) in the situation)"?

The purpose of the coach's questions is for coach and coachee to understand the problem and to come up with an agreed problem statement (e.g. "My problem is that I find it hard to organize my work day").

Strategy 2. When the coachee is confused about the problem. When the coachee is confused about the problem, the coach's goal is to help them to gain clarity before identifying the problem as above. The coach does this initially by encouraging the coachee to talk initially about what they are confused about and listening for ways to ask questions designed to help the coachee be more specific in their responses (e.g. "Can you be more specific about that"; "Can you help me understand what is problematic for you about that?" "How do you think someone who did not have a problem would deal with that?"). Once the coach has helped the coachee gain clarity, then they can ask for more specific examples of the problem and proceed in the way already outlined above.

Strategy 3. Check for the existence of an emotional problem about the practical problem and proceed accordingly. Even though the coach has embarked on Practical problem-focused RECBC because the coachee has stated that the nature of the problem is practical rather than emotional in nature, it is useful to verify that this is the case. The best time to do this is when the coach and coachee have clearly identified the problem.

Here the coach can ask such questions as, "How do you feel about your difficulty in organizing your work day?" Answers that show that the coachee is experiencing a healthy negative emotion about the problem (such as concern, disappointment and healthy anger) indicate they the person has a realistic and healthy response to the practical problem and the coaching can continue along practical problem focused RECBC lines. However, replies that show that the coachee is experiencing an unhealthy negative emotion (e.g. anxiety, shame and unhealthy anger) indicate that the person has an unhealthy response to the practical problem.

In this latter case, the coach needs to offer the coachee a plausible rationale why they should ideally tackle the emotional problem about the practical problem before addressing the practical problem itself. The coachee helps the coachee to appreciate that they have more chance in solving their practical problem when they have dealt with this emotional problem than when they haven't. If the coachee still wishes to address their practical problem first, then the coach is advised to go along with this and switch to the emotional problem if its existence does prove to be an obstacle.

Step 2. Help the Coachee to Set Goals ('Realistic, Relevant Goal Development' in the PRACTICE Framework)

Once the coach has helped the coachee to identify their target problem, it is important to help them to set a goal. The RECB coach uses the well-known acronym 'SMART' to help their coachee to set goals which stands for: specific; measurable; achievable; relevant; time-bound.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to set a goal which is specific. Such a goal specifies the criteria whereby the coachee will regard the problem solved.

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to develop a goal that is measurable. Here, the coach encourages the coachee to devise a way of measuring their progress towards their goal and also when it has been achieved.

Strategy 3. Ensure that the goal is achievable. By an achievable goal, I mean two things here. First, a goal that is achievable is one that is within the power of the coachee to achieve. Second, an achievable is one that is realistic given the resources that the coachee has at their disposal.

Strategy 4. Ensure that the goal is relevant to the coachee: A relevant goal is one that, if achieved, will make a real difference to the coachee given where they currently are in their life with respect to the problem.

Step 2. Strategy 5. Help the coachee to set a realistic time-line within which they will achieve their goal. It is important that the coach determines with the coachee how much time they have to achieve their goal since the amount of time at the coachee's disposal will have a significant influence on the goal that they choose. It is also important for the coach to help the coachee to agree with themself with themself how much time they plan to spend on goal-related tasks. Thus, a coachee who is going to devote a large chunk of time to regular goal-directed activity can afford to be more ambitious in goal-setting than the coachee who is only going to devote a small chunk of time to infrequent goal-directed activity.

The coachee is now ready to use the rest of the 'PRACTICE' model having been helped to identify their practical problem and set goals. In doing so, the coach can help the coachee to identify previous successful attempts at solving similar practical problems and to examine their relevance to dealing with the target problem.

Step 3. Help the Coachee to Develop Possible Solutions to the Problem ('Alternative Potential Solutions Generated' in the PRACTICE Framework)

Before helping the coachee to generate potential solutions to the problem, it is important that the coach finds out how the person has attempted to tackle the problem.

Strategy 1. Assess previous problem-solving attempts. It is very likely that what the coachee has already tried to solve the problem has not proven effective, after all they have come for coaching help to solve the problem. However, it is important that the coach knows what these previous attempts are so that they don't end up by encouraging the coachee to do something that they have already tried that has proven not to work. Also, there may be certain elements of what the coachee has tried that were useful and it is important that the coach knows about these so that they can build on these elements rather than starting from scratch.

Strategy 2. Initiate brainstorming. Once previous attempts to solve the problem have been identified and 'mined' for their productive elements (which can be filed away for later use), the coach encourages to brainstorm possible solutions to the problem. Brainstorming is a useful strategy designed to encourage the coachee to be creative in their thinking, free from the concern that they have come up with something silly or stupid, for example. Indeed, the coach might join in this process by modelling the free and unconstrained thinking that they are trying to encourage in the Coachee: It often happens that the brainstorming yields an effective potential solution to the coachee's problem that they would not have thought of otherwise.

Step 4. Help the Coachee to Evaluate These Potential Solutions ('Consideration of Potential Solutions' in the PRACTICE Framework)

Once the coachee has completed the process of generating potential solutions, it is time for them to consider and evaluate each one.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to consider the likely consequences of each solution. At this point, the main emphasis in PPF-RECBC is on the likely consequences of implementing each possible solution (Palmer, 2008). This is an important consideration because, after all, the coachee has come for help with solving their problem(s). When considering the consequences of potential solutions, the coach not only need to help the coachee think of the effectiveness of each possible solution with respect to its problem-solving potential, they also need to help them think of other consequences as well (e.g. the impact of the potential solution on others involved in that area of the coachee's life; and the longer-term effects of solving the problem using the approach selected to do so).

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to think of their values when considering potential solutions. In addition to the likely consequences of each potential solution, the coach needs to help the coachee consider the relationship between a potential solution and the coachee's *values*. Thus, from a pragmatic perspective your coachee may have generated a potential solution with the best chance of solving their problem, but implementing it might compromise one or more of their values and therefore they might hold back from selecting this potential solution as one to try out.

Strategy 3. Help the coachee to consider whether they have the skills and/or capability of implementing the potential solutions. Another issue concerns whether or not the coachee has the necessary capability, in the first place, or the necessary skills, in the second place, to carry out a potential solution which they consider to have the best chance of solving their problem if implemented. If the coachee does not have the capability to implement a potential solution then the matter is clear, the coachee won't be able to implement it. However, if they don't have the skills (but they do have the capability) to do so, then the coach will need to discuss with them whether it is worth it to them to learn the requisite skills in order to implement the chosen potential solution. The greater the number of plausible and potentially effective solutions that are available to the coachee, the less likely it is that they will choose to learn the aforementioned skills. However, if the chosen potential solution is the only feasible solution then they probably will choose to learn the skills to implement it. If the coach can teach the coachee such skills themselves, then they should do so, but, if not, then they should help the coachee source the necessary training elsewhere.

Step 5. Help the Coachee to Select the Best Solution ('Target the Most Feasible Potential Solution' in the PRACTICE Framework)

At the end of the consideration process described above, the coachee should, ideally, be in a position to select one or sometimes more potential solutions that they hope will actually solve their problem. If more than one solution is chosen, the coachee should then rank them in the order that they will use them. The first on the list is known as the 'target solution'. If this turns out not to be effective, then the coach should encourage the coachee to select the next one on the list and so on.

Step 6. Help the Coachee to Put the Target Solution into Practice ('Implementation of the Chosen Potential Solution' in the PRACTICE Framework)

Once the coachee has selected a target potential solution, they need help with implementing it. Several issues need to be considered when the coach and coachee discuss the implementation of their target potential solution.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to break the target solution into manageable sub-tasks. Sometimes the target solution may be later dismissed by a coachee because it seems too complex. To ensure that this does not happen, it is useful for the coach to help the coachee to break it down into manageable sub-tasks. This will also help when the coachee comes to implementing the solution.

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to decide when to implement the target solution's sub-tasks, where and, if relevant, with whom. I earlier argued that it was important to help the coachee to be specific when carrying out homework tasks designed to solve their emotional problem. This is also the case when the coachee's problem is practical in nature and the coachee should be asked to specify when they will carry-out the solution's sub-tasks, in which situations and with which other people, if the help of these people is integral to the solution.

Strategy 3. Help the coachee to identify potential obstacles to the implementation of the target solution and deal with these before they become actual obstacles. See Step 16 in emotional problem focused RECBC framework above.

Step 7. Help the Coachee to Embed the Chosen Solution ('Consolidation of the Chosen Potential Solution' in the PRACTICE Framework)

It is quite rare for a coachee to solve their problem the first time they implement their chosen potential solution.

Strategy 1. Help the coachee to give the target solution a fair chance to work. Given the above point, the coach should ask the coachee to answer the following question: "How am I going to ensure that I have given the target solution the best chance to see if it yields the results I want?" If the coachee implements their answer to this question, then this will ensure that they have utilised the actual potency of their target solution to effect the change that they seek and thus to assess its effectiveness.

Strategy 2. Help the coachee to discuss their experiences of implementing the target solution and make modifications to it, if necessary. During this process, the coach should discuss with the coachee their experiences of implementation of

their target solution. This will help the coachee to make any modifications to the potential solution that they are carrying out and how they are executing it. It also gives both coach and coachee another opportunity to identify and discuss dealing with any actual obstacles the coachee encounters during this phase of PPF-RECBC (again see 'EPF-RECBC: Step 16').

Step 8. Help the Coachee to Evaluate the Target Solution ('<u>E</u>valuation in the PRACTICE Framework')

When the coachee has implemented the target solution over the selected consolidation period, the coach needs to help them to evaluate its effects. Has it solved the problem? If not, does it look like it has the potential to solve the problem given more implementation time? If so, then the coach should encourage the coachee to carry on with the chosen problem-solving tasks. If not, the coach should encourage them to select the next potential solution from their list and use the same steps as above. The coach and coachee should process in this way until the problem has been solved. If it is still not solved, it may be that the coachee has an emotional problem about the practical problem that has not been identified despite initial efforts to do so and a more detailed assessment of the possible existence of such a problem needs to be done. If such a problem is found, then PPF-RECBC becomes EPF-RECBC and the steps that I outlined when discussing EPF-RECBC should be followed and its strategies implemented.

PPF-RECBC: Step 9. Invite the Coachee to Consider Development-Focused RECBC Once They Have Achieved Their Practical Problem-Focused Goal

See Step 18 in emotional problem focused RECBC framework above for a discussion of this issue.

Ending Coaching Follow-Up and Evaluation (EFE)

Once a coachee has made progress in achieving and maintaining some or most of their development-based objectives and problem-based goals and shown evidence that they can generalize their learning to other life areas and can, in some important ways, carry on the coaching process for themselves, then it may be time to discuss how the coachee and coach are going to end the process.

It is important that the coach and coachee discuss a mutually agreed way of ending the process. Of course, the ending may have already been specified at the outset in the coaching contract the coach made with their coachee, but if this is not the case, then the issue should be formally placed on the coaching agenda by one or both parties, preferably well before the formal end of the process. Often the RECB coach and coachee agree to meet less often as the latter makes progress towards their objectives and wishes to become more autonomous in the process. Thus, there is no one correct way to end RECB coaching. Rather, the ending needs to be a "good one" and that is most likely to occur when it has been fully discussed and agreed between the coach and Coachee:

At the final session, it is important for the coach to give the coachee an opportunity to summarize what has gone in the process and what they learned from it. The coach's role here is basically a listening, clarifying one and perhaps to prompt the coachee to focus on any areas not covered by their summary and learning statement. The coach should place particular emphasis on helping the coachee to specify the healthy principles of living that they have learned and/or strengthened that they can take forward into their lives. It is also important for the coach to give the coachee an opportunity to raise any matters of unfinished business and help the coachee to gain closure. The coach should also seek feedback from the coach concerning what was valuable about the process and not helpful if these issues have not been covered by the coachee's summary and learning statement.

Finally, the coach should discuss with the coachee the issues of follow-up and evaluation.

REB coaches conduct a follow-session for the following reasons:

1. Follow-up provides an opportunity for the coachee to give feedback on what they have done in the time between the last time they saw their coach and the follow-up session.
2. Knowing that there is a feedback session scheduled offers the coachee a sense of care and connection with their coach.
3. A follow-up session provides the coachee with an opportunity to request more coaching help if needed, whether this is development-focused or problem-focused.
4. Follow-up enables the coach and any organisation in which the coach works to carry out outcome evaluation (i.e. how your coachee has done). If the coach does this, then they will have to give some thought to how they are going to measure outcome and what forms, if any, they are going to use.
5. Follow-up provides service evaluation data (what the coachee thought of the help provided) and such data will help the coach and any organisation in which they work to improve the service offered.

While there is no set interval after the formal end of RECBC for the follow-up session to take place, the coach and coachee should agree on a definite time and ensure that this date is in their respective diaries. My own practice is to conduct the follow-up session 3 months after coaching has ended. However, the timing of this session will vary according to the coach, the service in which they work, if relevant, and the Coachee:

Table 5 Follow-up evaluation protocol (This can also be used, with modifications, earlier in the process to assess the coachee's progress)

1. We agreed the following objective/goal for coaching:
2. How successful have you been in achieving your objective or goal? Would you say that the status quo as it was then [*restate as described by the coachee*] is about the same or has changed? If changed, list it on a five-point scale as follows:
(1)---------------------(2)---------------------(3)---------------------(4)-----------------(5)   Very   Nothing has   Very   unsuccessful.   changed   successful   Things are worse
3. What do you think made the change (for better or worse) possible. If conditions are the same, ask 'What makes it stay the same?'
4. If people around you have given you the feedback that you have changed, how do they think you have changed?
5. Which of the healthy principles of living that you discussed with your coach was most helpful in your coaching? Please elaborate.
6. Besides the specific issue of … [*state the relevant area*], have there been other areas that have changed (for better or worse). If so what?
7. Now please let me ask you a few questions about the coaching that you received. What do you recall from the sessions that you had?
8. What do you recall that was particularly helpful or unhelpful?
9. How satisfied are you with the coaching that you received? Use a five-point scale as follows:
(1)---------------------(2)------------------(3)-----------------(4)---------------------(5)   Dissatisfied   Moderately   Extremely   satisfied   satisfied
10. Did you find the coaching package to be sufficient? If not, would you wish to resume coaching? Would you wish to change coach?
11. What recommendations for improvement in the service that you received do you have?
12. Is there anything else I have not specifically asked you that you would like me to know?

While the format of the follow-up session is usually the same as the format of coaching (face-to-face or Skype or similar platform), there is usually more flexibility in how the follow-up session is conducted. This is simply because the coachee, in particular, may not know where they going to be on the date of the follow-up if it is scheduled a long-time in the future (e.g. 3 months).

Different coaches will have different ways of evaluating their work and there is no one way of evaluating outcome in RECBC. It is important that the RECB coach develops a way of evaluating their work that is consistent with their professional affiliation, satisfies their employer (if they are employed) and relevant to their coachees

My own approach to evaluating outcome is to construct an individualised measure with my coachee to provide pre- and post-coaching data with respect to their development-based objectives or problem-based goals and which also allows us to monitor the coachee's progress towards achieving these objectives or goals. Table 5 gives an example of one evaluation protocol that I have used which was developed for use over the telephone. It can be slightly modified for use as a questionnaire to be completed by the Coachee:

In addition, the coach might ask the coachee to complete again the 'Rationality and Happiness Survey listed in Bernard's chapter on Rationality in Coaching' in this volume and see if any changes are apparent in the 'frequency of use' ratings provided by the Coachee: This would provide subjective evaluation outcome data on the role of that principles play in RECBC.

Having presented one approach to evaluating outcome, I refer the interested reader to Gray (2004) and Carter (2006) for an extended discussion of the issues concerning coaching evaluation and in the same spirit, I invite feedback on this chapter. Please send to: windy@windydryden.com.

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Brief Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching

Windy Dryden

Introduction

In this chapter, I will consider the practice of brief Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching (RECBC) by design. By brief RECBC, I mean between 1 and 6 sessions. While RECBC may turn out to be brief *by default*, which may occur for a number of reasons, I will concentrate in this chapter on brief RECBC *by design*, where coach and coachee have made an agreement to meet for a contracted number of sessions between 1 and 6. I will discuss the indications and contraindications for brief RECBC, outline some important coach and coachee characteristics that facilitate the effectiveness of such brief work and outline the process of RECBC pointing out how coaches help their coachees get the most out of the contracted sessions. I will focus largely on brief development-focused RECBC (DF-RECBC), although what I will say will be relevant to other forms of RECBC. In development-focused RECBC, problem-focused coaching can also be carried out for a brief period if the coachee encounters an obstacle that can be dealt with quickly. While I will not discuss brief problem-focused coaching here, I refer the interested reader to the steps that can be followed in this form of brief coaching in my chapter entitled 'Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching: A Step-based Framework for Practice' in this volume.

Why Brief RECBC… and Why Not?

In this section, I will discuss some of the major indications and contraindications for brief RECBC.

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Indications for RECBC

Given that coaching is designed to promote a person's growth and development and given that this process usually takes time, why would people want to enter into a brief coaching contract? The following are reasons why people may seek brief coaching or accept it if it is offered to them.

Personality Factors

Some coaching applicants[1] have what might be termed an 'autonomous-independent' personality which manifests in them wishing to take what they can from coaching and apply it on their own as quickly as possible. There is nothing wrong with this and the coaching contract should reflect the person's wishes. When they become a coachee and get what they want from the process, they may return to coaching at a later date to deal with an obstacle, but if this happens, it will again only be for a very short period of time (Dryden, 2017a).

Objectives[2] That Are Achievable Within the Terms of Brief RECBC

Sometimes a person seeks coaching to achieve a specific development-based objective that is achievable within a brief coaching paradigm. Such an objective is either conservative in nature, in which case it may be achieved within the agreed time frame, or it is more ambitions and the coachee is looking towards the coach to help them to kick start the process so that they can continue to work towards the achievement of the objective on their own once formal coaching has finished. In both cases, the coach should offer the coachee a brief coaching contract. Common objectives addressed in brief RECBC include:

Organizational Constraints

Brief coaching may be *practically* offered to a person when the organization for which the person works sets a limit with respect to how many sessions it will allow the person to have. In this case, between one and six sessions. This 'cap' may be imposed either when the person is seeing an external coach (i.e. the coach works externally to the organization) or an internal coach (i.e. the coach works for the

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[1] Applying Garvin and Seabury's (1997) schema here I distinguish between someone who is applying for coaching (known as an 'applicant') and someone who has agreed a coaching contract with a coach (known as a 'coachee').

[2] In this chapter I refer to what the person wants to achieve from development-focused RECBC as coaching 'objectives' and what they want to achieve from problem-focused RECBC as coaching 'goals'.

organization in another role, but has been trained to work as a coach for colleague coachees). When a cap has been imposed on the number of sessions provided by an external coach this is usually for financial reasons, while a cap on the number of sessions provided by an internal coach is usually for resource reasons. In this latter case, the organization has only trained a small number of internal coaches and there is a large number of people within the organization wishing to be coached.

Coaching 'Trials'

In the same way as a person takes a car for a test run before deciding whether or not to purchase it, some people prefer to have a trial of coaching before committing themselves to a longer-term coaching contract. Here, they may be unsure whether coaching, as a form of helping, is right for them or they may be unsure whether REB coaching is the most suitable form of coaching for them. It is best if the coach encourages the person to be clear in advance about what they need to experience in order to be make a decision about the appropriateness for them of coaching, in general or of RECBC, in particular.

Brief Coaching for Coaching Trainees

When people receive coaching training, they are usually trained in a particular coaching model and normally they need to be coached in this model as part of their own personal and professional development. However, they also receive exposure to other models, but this exposure tends to be theoretical rather than practical/experiential. Some coaching trainees prefer to have that experiential exposure to other coaching models and REB coaches are happy to offer such people a brief contract so that they can get to know what it is like to be coached in RECBC.

Coaching Demonstration Sessions

When I give lectures in RECBC, I like to demonstrate my work within this model of coaching to the audience. In doing so, I ask for volunteers who wish to be coached on a development-based issue or with a focus is on an obstacle that they are experiencing in their own work towards the achievement of one of their coaching objectives. The session can last up to 40 min and I later provide the volunteer both a recording of the session and a transcript[3] (Dryden, 2016).

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[3] This approach to single session RECBC is based on Albert Ellis's pioneering 'Friday Night Workshop' in which he interviewed two volunteers on a problem of everyday living (Ellis & Joffe, 2002).

Other Pragmatic Considerations

There are several pragmatic reasons why brief RECBC may be sought by people who are self-payers (as opposed to being sponsored by their organization or other third party). These reasons include:

- **Cost.** Coaching can be expensive and people may have a limited budget if they are paying for coaching themselves.
- **Geography.** If regularly travelling to see a coach for ongoing coaching is not possible because of where the person lives and Skype sessions are not acceptable to the person, then brief RECBC may be offered to the person if they undertake to attend for up to six face-to-face sessions.
- **Coachees from 'out-of-town'.** Occasionally, I have had requests from people who are visiting London from overseas who wish to see me for coaching for a limited period (between 1 and 6 sessions) when they are 'in town'. Brief RECBC may be indicated for such people.

Contra-indications for Brief RECBC

Of course, brief RECBC is not for everyone and it is important for RECB coaches to be mindful of its contra-indications when discussing a coaching contract with applicants.

Longer-Term Coaching Is Sought or Indicated

Brief RECBC is neither indicated for people who want longer-term or ongoing coaching nor for those who nominate a number of coaching objectives across a number of life domains which calls for a longer-term contract. Longer-term coaching is also indicated when the coachee anticipates a number of obstacles along the path to their coaching objectives.

The Coachee Has an Emotional Problem or Problems Not Amenable to Brief RECBC

If the person is seeking brief development-focused coaching but it transpires, at initial assessment that the person has one or more emotional problems that cannot be dealt with briefly then this person is not a good candidate for brief RECBC or another other brief approach to coaching.

The Coachee Anticipates Too Many Obstacles for Brief Coaching

When coachee sets a development-based objective in RECBC, then they should also be asked to say whether or not they anticipate a potential obstacle to achieving this objective. However, if the coachee anticipates a number of obstacles that cannot be dealt with within the limits of brief RECBC, then this constitutes a contraindication for brief coaching work. Normally, this is a decision made jointly by coach and coachee and the two are likely. In these circumstances the coaching dyad should agree a contract based on longer term or ongoing RECBC.

The Coachee Has Difficulty Focusing on One Development-Based Objective

As we shall see, one of the hallmarks of brief development-focused RECBC (DF-RECBC) is that the coach and coachee agree to concentrate on one development-based objective. Therefore, if the person cannot focus on that one target objective,[4] either because they are unsure about what they want to get from DF-RECBC or that they have several objectives and they find it difficult to select and focus on one, then brief RECBC may not be indicated, particularly if the coach's initial efforts to encourage the coachee to focus are unsuccessful.

The Coachee Has Difficulty Being Specific

Even if the coachee can identify and focus on one target objective, they still may not be a good candidate for brief RECBC if they cannot be specific in working towards their target objective. As I will show later in this chapter (and as I discuss in Chap. 11), a development-based objective is often general in nature, but it needs to have specific referents to help the coachee to know what to do in progressing towards this objective. Thus, if a coachee says that they want to be more confident in social settings as their development-based objective, they need to specify how they will know when this is happening. If they cannot do this at the outset, then coaching is likely to take longer than the 1–6 sessions covered by brief RECBC. Thus, while the person may be suitable for RECBC (if it turns out that they can be helped eventually to be more specific), they are not a good candidate for its brief form.

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[4] In this chapter, I refer to the development-based objective that the coach and coachee agree to focus on as the 'target objective'.

The Person Does Not Resonate with RECBC

One important contraindication for brief RECBC is when a person seeking coaching does not resonate with RECBC (whether brief or ongoing). As I point out in Chap. 11, at the outset, the coach explains in outline the nature of RECBC so that the person can take this into account when deciding whether or not to make a contractual arrangement with the coach. If, having heard the coach's outline of RECBC, the person indicates that they would prefer a different approach to coaching, then the RECB coach should aim to effect a suitable referral.

Facilitative Coach and Coachee Characteristics

Having considered the indications and contraindications for brief RECBC, I will now discuss which coach and coachee characteristics facilitate the process and outcome of this brief approach to coaching.

Facilitative Coach Characteristics

Not all RECB coaches can work effectively within the 1–6 session paradigm of brief RECBC. In this section I will outline some of the major characteristics that coaches need to demonstrate in brief RECBC to facilitate its effectiveness.

The Coach Can Quickly Form and Maintain a Good Working Alliance

It is very important that the coach is able to develop an effective working alliance with the coachee as quickly as possible and to maintain this throughout the coaching process. This involves making a good interpersonal connection at the outset, agreeing with the coachee what can be achieved and what can't be achieved and having a mutually agreed view of what each person will contribute to the coaching process (see Dryden, 2017b, for more information on the coaching alliance).

The Coach Can Manage the Session Well

An effective brief RECB coach tends to have excellent coaching session management skills. They are able to structure the session well, keep the coachee focused on their target objective and when the coachee does stray from the focus, the coach is adept at bringing them back to the agreed focus. In doing so, they are able to interrupt the coachee with tact and sensitivity.

The Coach Has Excellent Communication Skills

An effective brief RECB coach can communicate in ways in which the coach can easily understand. This includes explaining points of RECB theory clearly and providing a plausible rationale for between-session tasks. This also involves the coach listening intently to what the coachee is saying and responding in particular to subtleties of the coachee's communications. In addition, an important communication skill involves REB coach asking the coachee for feedback at various junctions in the process so that they can fine-tune the coaching process the basis of that feedback.

The Coach Can Get the Most Out of the Coachee

Perhaps the most important facilitative coach characteristic in brief RECBC is the ability to get the most out of the coachee in the brief time that they have together. This involves the coach inspiring the coachee to select an objective that (a) is based on a key rational principle of living with which the coachee can resonate, (b) stretches the coachee and calls upon the person to strive towards their peak; (c) is meaningful for the person and (d) has the support of key people in the coachee's life.

An effective brief RECBC coach builds on the strengths that a coachee brings to the process and on the environmental resources to which they have access and which can enhance what they get from brief coaching. The coach recognises that not only do they have an important role to play in promoting the coachee's growth, but so also does the coachee and the coach is adept at harnessing this latter contribution so that the coachee gets the most out of the process and the most out of themselves in their targeted area of development.

The Coach Can Think Quickly on Their Feet

It is helpful if the RECBC coach can think quickly on their feet and intervene speedily and efficiently without rushing their coachee. While being mindful of time, it is also helpful if they are equally mindful of how the coachee processes information and are able to moderate their rate of working to ensure that the coachee is fully involved in the learning process.

The Coach Demonstrates Creativity

An effective brief REB coach can communicate to the coachee in a creative manner. This may involve putting things in a certain way that is likely to have a positive impact on the coachee. In particular, the coach shows facility in using suitable metaphors, stories, parables that 'speak to' the individual coachee with whom they are working. Another sign of coach creativity in brief RECBC is where the coach can

suggest memorable phrases for the coachee to use between sessions that carries an important meaning for the latter.

The Coach Can Move Along the Specific-General Continuum in Both Directions

While brief RECBC does call upon both the coach and coachee to focus on a particular life domain of the latter and to specify one development-based objective it is helpful if the coach can move with relative ease from the specific to the general and back again. Thus, if a coachee's coaching objective is to improve a specific leadership skills, the more that they see how this may be relevant to improving other skills, the better. And if that coachee is guided by a general maxim, the more they can apply it to the specific focus of brief RECBC, the better. The main task of the brief RECB coach is to initiate the coaching process in the pursuit of the coachee's nominated development-based objective and to deal quickly with any relevant obstacles while doing so, it is helpful if the coach can take advantage of opportunities both to help the coachee to generalise learning and also to use general principles and also to find ways to apply these principles in specific situations.

The Coach Can Help the Coachee to Identify Doubts, Reservations and Objections and Can Deal with These Quickly and Effectively

In any form of helping, the helpee is likely to have doubts, reservations and objections about some aspect of the helping process and this is sometimes the case in brief RECBC. The effective brief RECB coach is one who is able to sense that the coachee may have a DRO, help the person to articulate it non-defensively and respond to it with respect and clarity.

The Coach Can Help the Coachee to Identify and Deal with Obstacles to Coaching Progress and Can Do This Quickly[5]

In RECBC, both brief and longer-term, it is likely that the coachee will experience one or more obstacles to their progress towards achieving their objective. It is a characteristic of an effective brief RECB coach that the person is able to home in on the obstacle, understand and help the coachee to understand the factors that account for it and intervene quickly so that the coachee can address it and get back on track as soon as possible.

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[5] Remember that if several obstacles to progress are anticipated, the person is not a good candidate for brief RECBC.

The Coach Can Help the Person Carry on the Coaching Process After Brief RECBC Has Formally Ended

Although the coach and coachee only have a limited time together in brief RECBC, the effective coach in this approach is one who can structure the work so that the coachee can continue this work once formal coaching has ended. This is more likely to be achieved when the coaching dyad organises sufficient time between sessions to enable the coachee to implement their gains by themself. If there is time the coach will teach the coachee salient skills to help them coach themself in the future.

Facilitative Coachee Characteristics

In this section I will outline some of the major characteristics that coachees need to demonstrate in brief RECBC to facilitate its effectiveness.

The Coachee Understands Their Role and Is Prepared to Be Active in the Process

It is a good sign if the coachee understands that their task is to take an active role in brief RECBC and, most importantly, is prepared to engage fully in this process. Such a person is likely to say that they are "engaged in coaching" rather than they are "being coached". If the coachee has any ambivalence about their role that cannot be quickly dispelled then this is not a good sign and the coach may have to renegotiate a longer-term contract with the person.

The Coachee Can Focus and Be Specific During the Process

In the same way that brief RECBC calls upon the coach to show good focusing and specificity skills, a coach will get more out of this process if they can focus and specify (1) a development-based objective; (2) plans of action to implement the objective and (3) any obstacles to the process. The more coachees are able to do this, with help from their coach of course, the more they will get out of brief RECBC.

The Coachee Can Base the Target Objective on a Selected Rational Principle of Living

One unique contribution of RECBC is that it encourages coachees to base their development-based objectives on rational principles of living (see also Bernard, Froh, DiGiuseppe, Joyce, & Dryden, 2010). In brief RECBC, it is useful if the coachee can base their target objective on one such principle even though more principles could

be used to achieve the objective. The time-limited and focused nature of brief RECBC means, however, that the more the coachee can link their chosen objective to a specific rational principle. The more likely it is that they will be able to keep this principle in mind so that it serves both to motivate the person as they work towards the objective and to provide a solid base for the maintenance of the objective.

The Coachee Can Integrate the Target Objective into Their Life

While being able to nominate at least one development-based objective is an important feature of brief RECBC, it is important that the coachee select an objective that they can integrate into their life. Doing so will facilitate both the achievement of the objective and its maintenance.

The Coachee Can Move Along the Specific-General Continuum

I mentioned earlier that it is important for the brief RECB coach to be able to move from the specific to the general and back and to help the coachee to do this. No matter how good a coach is in doing this, if the coachee can only focus on the specific or on the general, then the latter will not get as much from the process than if they can move along the specific–general continuum easily, in both directions, with appropriate help from the coach, of course.

The Coachee Can Relate to Metaphors, Aphorisms, Stories, Imagery and Humour

Coaching works best when it has an emotional impact on the coachee. One of the ways in which the brief RECBC coach can do this is by using tailor made metaphors, stories and imagery and when appropriate to use humour while making interventions. None of this will be helpful unless the coachee can relate to this mode of communication and thus it is important for the coach to discover this early in the process. When both coach and coachee share a resonance for such communication it is helpful to the brief RECBC process.

The Coachee Is Willing to Put into Practice What They Learn Outside Coaching Sessions

As with other forms of helping based on cognitive-behavioural principles, the effectiveness of brief RECBC is based, in large part, on the extent to which the coachee applies what they learn from coaching sessions. This is particularly relevant when it comes to applying such learning outside coaching sessions, but may also be relevant within sessions where the coachee may be encourages to rehearse a new skill etc.

The Coachee Can Make Use of Their Existing Strengths and a Range of Extra-Coaching Resources

It is easy to forget that coaching sessions occur within the context of a coachee's life and in that life the coachee has many existing strengths and many environmental resources that coachees can use to further their target development-based objective. Thus, it is a helpful characteristic for a coachee to identify and take advantage of their strengths and extra-coaching resources to further their progress towards their target objective.

The Coachee Accepts the Possibility That Obstacles to Coaching Progress May Occur and Can Be Helped to Deal with These Quickly

No matter how skilled the coach is in brief RECBC at working with a coachee's obstacles to coaching progress, the latter needs to accept the possibility that such obstacles may occur without disturbing themself about this fact and then be able to work quickly with the coach to address such obstacles successfully using the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework that I outline in Chap. 11.

The Process Brief RECBC

In this section of the chapter I will focus on the process of *brief* RECBC with the emphasis on the word 'brief'.[6]

Assess for the Suitability of Brief RECBC[7]

When someone 'applies' for coaching (Garvin & Seabury, 1997), one of the first tasks that the brief RECB coach has is to judge whether or not the person is suitable for brief RECBC or ongoing RECBC. It is recommended that the coach puts this issue on the coaching agenda as the opening item and proceed with this 'suitability' assessment with the coachee's permission. In doing so, it is suggested that the coach uses the indications and contraindications that I presented and discussed earlier in the chapter.

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[6] In chapter "A Step-Based Framework for Practice", I outline a step-by-step guide to the practice of ongoing or longer-term RECBC.

[7] In this chapter, I will assume that the person is suitable for RECBC.

Lay the Foundations for Brief RECBC

Once the coach and coachee have agreed to proceed with brief RECBC, the next task that the coach has is to lay the foundations to give the coaching the best chance to succeed.

Help the Coachee to Understand the Scope of Brief RECBC

This involves helping the coachee being clear about what they can realistically achieve from brief RECBC and what they need to do to achieve it. In short, the coach helps the coachee to see that they will be helped to select one development-based objective, devise an action plan to achieve this objective, launch the plan and continue it after formal coaching has ended, identify and deal with potential and actual obstacles and generalise what they learn from this work to other areas of their life if possible and feasible.

Help the Coachee to Identify Pre-existing Strengths and Environmental Resources That They Can Draw Upon to Facilitate the Process and Outcome of Brief RECBC

Because it is brevity, brief RECBC is perhaps more dependent than ongoing RECBC on what internal strengths a coachee brings to the process and on what environmental resources they can call during coaching. Consequently, identifying these strengths and resources is an early task of the brief RECB coach. Once this has been done both coach and coachee look for opportunities to utilise these strengths and resources at salient points of the process.

Agree on a Schedule for Brief RECBC

While brief RECBC is limited to between one and six sessions, the coach and coachee are free to use these sessions in whatever way they choose. Occasionally, the coachee wants to set up a weekly coaching contract and to utilise all their agreed sessions in this way, but more often they choose a more flexible schedule. In my experience, session scheduling in brief RECBC is most often 'front-loaded' which means that the work is initially done weekly, but then, quite soon, the remaining sessions are arranged at increasing intervals. Sometimes, a coachee even chooses to keep one or two sessions in reserve, returning to coaching to use these remaining sessions if they hit future obstacles that they cannot overcome on their own.

Help the Coachee to Select **One** *Development-Based Objective (What About One Problem to Be Solved?)*

Perhaps the most obvious difference between brief RECBC and longer-term RECBC concerns what the coachee can put on the coaching agenda. Because of its brevity, in my view the coach needs to help the coachee to set *one* development-based objective and to equip them with the knowledge and tools to generalise what they learn from pursuing this objective to the pursuit of other objectives, once formal coaching has finished. When helping the coachee to set a development-based objective, I suggest that the brief RECB coach does the following.

Ensure That the Objective Is Relevant to Brief RECBC

Both coach and coachee need to be mindful of the session constraints of brief RECBC and thus, the coach needs to help the coachee set an objective that is either achievable within the timeframe that they have agreed or one that the coachee can continue to pursue on their own once formal coaching has finished.

Encourage the Coachee to Mindful of 'Life-Integration' Issues

The coachee should be encouraged to set an objective which itself can be integrated into their life and one where the actions that the coachee needs to take when pursuing the objective can also be thus integrated. Thus, the coachee should have sufficient time to devote to the pursuit and maintenance of the objective. The support of significant others as they do so and there should be no practical obstacles to them working towards their objective and to maintaining it once it has been achieved.

Encourage the Coachee to Base the Objective on One Rational Principle of Living

One of the hallmarks of development-based RECBC is that it is founded on one or more rational principles of living articulated by Albert Ellis (Bernard, 2011). In my view, in brief RECBC, with its focus on helping the coachee to set and achieve one key development-based objective, it is best to help the person to choose one rational principle which can underpin and drive this work, otherwise it may be a case of too many rational principles spoiling the coaching. The important consideration here is that the coach helps the coachee to make a specific connection between the selected principle and the objective so that, for the coachee, the former clearly informs the latter.

Encourage the Coachee to Choose an Objective That Is Meaningful as Well as Having Pragmatic Value

A coachee may nominate a development-based objective that is pragmatic (e.g. one designed to lead to job promotion and to an increased salary) and there is nothing wrong with them doing so. However, the coach may encourage them also to find meaning in the objective, explaining that a coachee is more likely to maintain objective-directed work if the objective has meaning for the person as well as pragmatic value than if it only has pragmatic value. A sense of meaning, therefore, has motivational power and as such facilitates the process of brief RECBC.

Help the Coachee Set Specific Referents for Generally Stated Objectives

A development-based objective is often set in general terms (e.g. "I want to be more resilient at work"). In this case, the coach needs to help the coachee set specific referents for this general objective. In brief RECBC, the coach would ask the coachee to set and pursue a single, but key specific referent, one that if achieved would give the coachee the sense that they were achieving their general objective.

Help the Coachee to Devise an Action Plan to Achieve the Chosen Objective

Once has a suitable objective has been chosen by the coachee, the next stage is for the coachee to devise an action plan which, when implemented, will help the coachee achieve the objective. An action plan should ideally outline whet the coachee will do, where they will do it and in which context. When focusing on developing an action plan, the coach needs to help the coachee to:

Choose Behaviours That They Have the Time to Perform

However effective an action plan may be, if the person does not have the time to implement it, then it should be rejected by the coaching dyad in favour of a plan that the coachee does have the time to implement. If it transpires that the coachee does not have the time to implement *any* action plan, then they are not a good candidate for brief RECBC or even longer-term RECBC. It sometimes occurs that when a person claims to have the time to devote to brief RECBC in this respect, when it comes to it they don't.

Choose Behaviours That the Person Can Integrate into Their Life. The person may have the time to devote to a plan, but the person cannot integrate it into their life either because of practical reasons (e.g. an available context in which to

implement an action plan does not exist) or of social reasons (e.g. implementing the action plan clashes with the person's existing social obligations). It follows that the coachee should devise an action plan which they have the opportunity to implement, to which they can devote sufficient time and for which they have the support of significant others.

Choose Behaviours That They Have the Skills to Perform

Again, however effective an action plan may be, if the coachee does not have the skills to perform the requisite behaviours, then, unless these skills can be taught and acquired quickly, a different action plan where the person already has the necessary skills, should be devised.

Choose Behaviours That They Enjoy Performing

A coachee is more likely carry out behaviours if these behaviours are intrinsically enjoyable. Consequently, ideally the coach should encourage to select behaviours that they enjoy performing. However, this is not always possible and the coachee needs to act in ways that they don't enjoy in order to increase the chances of achieving their objective. Given this, the coach should encourage the coachee to tolerate the discomfort of acting in non-enjoyable ways and to remind themself the purpose of such action.

Help the Coachee to Launch the Plan and Continue It After Formal Coaching Has Ended

Because of the nature of brief RECBC, it may be that the coachee will not have achieved their development-based objective once formal coaching has finished, although as I mentioned above some coachees prefer to space out their coaching sessions over a long period of time to enable them to achieve their objective within the agreed session paradigm. However, the coach does need to keep in mind that they not only need to help the coachee to launch their action plan, but to keep implementing with increasing independence. To do this the coach needs to:

Help the Coachee to Negotiate Between-Session Tasks

As in all forms of RECBC, negotiating between-session tasks is the best way for the coach to help the coachee implement their action plan. Helping the coachee to anticipate and deal with potential obstacles to autonomous action plan implementation (see below) should be a feature of the coach's work at this juncture.

Review Between-Session Tasks

Reviewing what the coachee actually did on the negotiated tasks is the best way for the coach to monitor the coachee's progress in implementing their devised action plan. This review gives both parties an opportunity to fine tune the action plan and deal with unforeseen obstacles to coachee progress (see below).

Promote Coachee Independence

Once the coachee has understood the main ingredients of negotiating and reviewing between session assignments, the coach needs to encourage them to take the lead in this process with a view to them doing this for themself in the latter stage of brief RECBC and once the process has come to an end. The coach needs to help the coachee identify and deal with any obstacles to assuming this responsibility.

Help the Coachee to Identify and Deal with Potential and Actual Obstacles to Progress

I have mentioned throughout this chapter that even in brief RECBC, obstacles to coaching progress may occur and as such coach and coachee need to be ready, willing and able to address any such obstacles. RECBC is particularly good in providing frameworks to do this and what follows applies to dealing with anticipated obstacles (i.e. obstacles that the coachee anticipates, but have not yet happened) and actual obstacles (i.e. obstacles that have occurred). In brief RECBC, the emphasis should be on 'prevention rather than cure'.

Identify the Obstacle and Use the Appropriate Strategy

Here, there are three major obstacles that coach and coachee should keep in mind. These are: (1) practical obstacles; (2) emotional obstacles; and (3) doubts, reservations and objections to some aspect of the brief RECBC process.

Identify and deal with practical obstacles. Practical obstacles to coaching progress often occur through bad planning on the part of the coachee or confusion. However, the coachee is not responding to the obstacle with emotional disturbance and thus a condensed version of a practical-problem solving framework such as that developed by Palmer (2008) called PRACTICE can be used. I refer the reader to Dryden (2017c) for more information on this framework.

Identify and deal with emotional obstacles. Emotional obstacles to coaching progress occur when the coachee is responding to an encountered adversity with a disturbed set of emotional, behavioural and cognitive responses. To help the coachee

deal effectively with these obstacles, the coach will use a condensed version of the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework (see Dryden, 2017c). In addition, Matweychuk and Dryden (2017) is a good source for those new to RECBC in this respect.

Identify and deal with doubts, reservations and objections (DROs). As discussed in Dryden (2018), coachees may have a range of doubts, reservations and objections (DROs) to several issues that relate to RECBC, particularly its concepts and key practices. If the coachee does not disclose a DRO and the coach suspects that one exists then the coach needs to raise the issue with the coachee, while indicating that it is a common occurrence in RECBC. Once identified, the DRO normally indicates that the coachee has a misconception about the particular concept or practice which the coach helps them to correct. An example of a commonly held DRO in RECBC is where the coachee thinks that they need to hold on to a 'demandingness' irrational belief because it serves to motivate them. Here, the coach would point out that the 'preference' component of both the demandingness irrational belief and the rational alternative belief (i.e. the non-rigid preference) motivates the person. Then the coach would show the coachee that the rigid, demanding part of the irrational belief leads to a disturbed response to adversity, while the non-rigid part of the alternative rational belief leads to a constructive response to the same adversity. Consequently, the coachee can be shown that they can develop the rational belief, as it both motivates the person and allows them to respond healthily to adversity, while letting the irrational belief go as while it has similar motivational properties, it also renders the person vulnerable to emotional disturbance.

Transferring to a Longer-Term RECBC Contract

If an obstacle persists after brief intervention as outlined above and cannot be bypassed or if there are too many obstacles to deal with within a brief RECBC contract, then the coach would suggest that they and the coachee re-negotiate the nature of their coaching contract and transfer to longer-term RECBC.

Help the Coachee to Generalise Learning

Towards the end of brief RECBC, the coach needs to help the coachee to generalise their learning. This involves the coach helping the coachee to articulate what they have learned from coaching and to discuss different contexts where they may be able to put this learning into practice.

If possible, the coach helps the coachee to internalise the process of RECBC so that they can coach themself in the future, but this may be beyond most coachees given that such a focus usually takes more time than both coach and coachee have at their disposal in brief RECBC.

Ending the Process and Evaluation

When the coach has had an opportunity to discuss the generalisation of learning with the coachee, then the process of brief RECBC is approaching its end. While there is no set way to end the process, the ending needs to be agreed and planned. Having said that, in a minority of cases the coachee does not use all their agreed sessions, preferring to keep one or two in reserve in case of trouble. In this case, for pragmatic and evaluation purposes, it is best to think that brief RECBC has finished, if no coaching session has occurred for 3 months.

Evaluation and Follow-Up

At the final session, the coach initiates with the coachee an evaluation of the coaching process and outcome and then agrees a follow-up session usually 3 months after the final session where final evaluation occurs (see Chap. 11 for a fuller discussion of evaluation).

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Technology and Coaching

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Introduction

The increasing interest in the use of technology in coaching is rooted in the large-scale availability of technical capabilities, rapid technological advancement, and the multiple advantages associated with the new technological developments. For example, in 2016 almost half of the global population had access to internet, with "millennial" internet users spending around 3 h a day surfing the internet on mobile devices (Statista, 2016). Similarly, the smartphone technology is developing rapidly, the smartphone market being projected to almost double from 2014 to 2019 (Statista, 2016).

The development of remote technologies creates a wide range of opportunities, as their use appears to filter through every aspect of life. For example, of direct relevance for coaching, the number of mobile workers is forecasted to account for about 72.32% of the U.S. workforce (Bassett, 2016) and 42% of the global workforce (Luk, 2015). Thus, a large number of people are accustomed to working and socializing through remote technologies and thus especially the clients of organizational coaching are heavily relying on technology for accomplishing their daily tasks. Therefore, it is likely for potential coaching clients to be open to access remote coaching services in lieu of face-to-face coaching. They might even expect the availability of such services, given that a wide range of other assisting services

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are increasingly available remotely (see Arnberg, Linton, Hultcrantz, Heintz, & Jonsson, 2014; Ebert et al., 2015 for reviews).

The use of technology is not limited to a specific approach in coaching. However, cognitive-behavioral approach has been considered especially suited for being delivered based on technology in the therapeutic (cognitive behavioral therapy; CBT) field and its characteristics might be extended to the cognitive behavioral coaching (CBC) field. Rational emotive behavioral coaching (REBC), as a specific CBC approach, is suited for being offered through technological means due to its structured, directive and active approach and the fact that its theory and interventions for promoting well-being and adjustment were already tested. For example, it is now demonstrated that face to face cognitive-behavioral interventions can be as effective as online or computer-based interventions (Przeworski & Newman, 2006). Moreover, a recent meta-analysis (Jones et al., 2015) has showed similar effectiveness for online vs. face-to-face coaching or blended formats.

This chapter will answer the following questions: What types of technologies can be used in coaching and particularly in REBC? Why and how should we incorporate different types of cutting edge technologies in REBC? What types of technological tools have been incorporated to date in REBC and what is their evidence-base?

Remote Coaching Technologies: Online, Phone and Mobile Technologies Used for Coaching

What Is Remote REBC?

Remote coaching is a new development of coaching that is rapidly gaining popularity. It is also referred to as "e-coaching", "online coaching", "web coaching", "tele-coaching", "distance coaching" or "digital coaching". Despite the increasing interest in remote coaching, there is no widely accepted definition for this type of service. Remote coaching could be defined in a similar manner with other remote helping/psychological interventions (i.e., "e-therapy"/"e-counseling", "psychology tele-practice"; American Psychological Association, 2013), as the delivery of coaching via telecommunication technologies such as telephone, mobile devices, text, internet, interactive videoconferencing, email, or chat. There have been a few attempts to specifically define remote coaching. For example, Clutterbuck (2010) defined it as "a developmental partnership in which the learning and reflection process is conducted online". Similarly, Ribbers and Waringa (2015) see remote coaching as "a non-hierarchical developmental partnership between two parties separated by a geopolitical distance, in which the learning and reflection process is conducted via both analogue and virtual means".

Based on the aforementioned definitions, remote coaching could be conceptualized as the delivery of coaching services through the means of telecommunication technologies, including (but not limited to) email/chat technology, video/audio conferencing, internet, mobile technology or any combination of these features.

Thus, remote rational emotive/cognitive-behavioral coaching (REBC) is not a new approach to coaching. Rather, it is a new delivery method, just as technology-based cognitive behavioral therapy (e.g., online CBT) does not represent the pillar of a new school of CBT, but an innovative approach developed within the CBT framework (David, Matu, & David, 2013). Therefore, virtually any REBC intervention could be adapted for remote delivery.

There are a few major types of remote coaching in which specific technologies are used that we will briefly discuss: SMS coaching (offline text messages), phone coaching (telecoaching), chat coaching (online text messages), video coaching (via webcam), Skype coaching (chat and webcam). In addition, mobile/app coaching (mobile apps with different technological features) represent an innovation in the field of coaching that is worth mentioning.

How Is Remote REBC Done?

There is no generally available pattern concerning the implementation of remote REBC. Thus, remote coaching can range from sessions that closely approximate the face-to-face coach-coachee interaction using different technological features (e.g., Skype videoconference) to programs where the human coach is completely absent (e.g., gamified coaching interventions). The similarities/differences between face-to-face and remote coaching are largely defined by the type of technologies through which the intervention is delivered, the degree of interaction with a coach, as well as by the synchronous/asynchronous nature of the intervention.

Remote interventions that are delivered synchronously using video and audio features (e.g., Skype, Hangout or other platforms with videoconference features) resemble face-to-face coaching the most, having all the characteristics of face-to-face coaching (except the direct/non-mediated contact). Synchronous coaching using text and/or audio features (e.g., real time chat and/or teleconference) still shares important similarities with traditional coaching, but constrains both the coach and the coachee to rely on non-visual information (i.e., less visual and/or nonverbal feedback). Although this could theoretically impact on the perceived authenticity of the interaction and the working alliance, it is unclear whether these are important factors for the efficacy/effectiveness of remote interventions.

Asynchronous interventions with video and audio (with or without text) features (i.e., recordings) are somewhat more distal from face-to-face coaching, given that there is no real-time interaction between the coach and the coachee. App-based asynchronous coaching (e.g., gamified coaching sessions) is probably the most novel and atypical approach to coaching delivery, and it generally involves no interaction with a coach. A few examples of app-based REBC programs will be described in the next section.

It should be noted that in practice the four schematic categories described above are not discrete options. Many coaches may choose to use both synchronous and asynchronous communications employing different technological features, depending on the specific goals, clients' preferences and time/cost restraints. For example,

a coach may decide to deliver the intervention mainly through videoconference and provide additional video/audio recordings for individual between-sessions assignments. In addition, he/she could also coach the trainee through brief text messages in critical moments.

Why Use Remote REBC?

As it has been argued (Amichai-Hamburger, Klomek, Friedman, Zuckerman, & Shani-Sherman, 2014), remote coaching has the advantage of enabling personal guidance without the time and space constraints associated with traditional coaching. Second, through remote coaching, coaches might gain access to clients that would not normally be targeted. Thus, coaching services become more available, offering people access to a wider range of coaches. Third, remote coaching has the potential of being more cost-effective (e.g., no travelling costs), as internet-based interventions generally tend to be associated with favorable probability of an increased cost-effectiveness (see Donker et al., 2015). Moreover, technology enables the coach to see the coachee and thus monitor a number of relevant indicators that would be more difficult to objectively quantify otherwise (e.g., attentional focus, facial expressions, physiological outcomes). Similarly, remote delivery facilitates the recording of coaching sessions, thus allowing both the coach and the coachee to access and use relevant shared information at any time.

Other Types of Technological Tools for REBC: Simulated Environments and Robotic Agents

Serious games, robotic devices and virtual technologies are important tools for REBC because they can create the environments that support the experiential learning of specific skills and offer opportunities for practice and timely feedback. Because of this, the use of these new technologies has the potential to increase the effectiveness of coaching interventions in terms of outcomes and associated costs. Also, they may contribute to clarifying the mechanisms of change involved in different coaching programs by providing a well-controlled research setting (e.g., virtual reality).

Robotic Devices

A technological tool that has been used in supporting learning and skills transfer to life situations in children are robots or *robotic devices* (David, Matu, & David, 2014). Robots are artificial systems that display intelligent, often human-like

reactions, and which can work completely autonomous, semi-autonomous, and/or can be remotely controlled. Based on their characteristics and how they have been incorporated for delivering psychological interventions (e.g., robotherapy), robo-coaching can be seen as a framework of human-robotic interactions aimed at promoting learning and generalization of skills in ecological environments, mediated by technological tools. In this process, robotic devices can be used for delivering the coaching intervention (e.g., robo-coach; when the robot replaces the coach completely or it is used when the coach is unavailable), as mediators of the coaching process (e.g., robo-mediator; when the robot is used to accelerate the effects of coaching and without its involvement the effects would be low), in assisting with the coaching intervention (e.g., robo-assistant; when the robot is used to enhance the effects of coaching, but its presence is not mandatory in order to achieve targeted goals). While the use of robotic agents in psychotherapy and teaching has been very accelerated during the last decade, their use for coaching is in its infancy.

Serious Games

Serious games are entertaining videogames with non-entertainment goals (Ceranoglu, 2010) that capitalize on the attractiveness of the gaming component to promote learning. There are many applications of serious games, including in the educational and therapeutic fields. Serious games are currently a very attractive mean for providing training and coaching in the organizational field but they are also used for developing skills in other populations (e.g., emotional skills in children). There are a few gamified computer-based interventions that aim to coach decision making and/or emotion regulation skills (see Astor, Adam, Jerčić, Schaaff, & Weinhardt, 2013; Sánchez & Olivares, 2011; Tamir, Mitchell, & Gross, 2008). These coaching programs use the game as a learning environment for developing the targeted skills in order to achieve instrumental benefits. Serious games can be implemented using more realistic graphical interfaces and interaction methods, such as virtual reality applications, in order to increase the level of immersion and offer more ecological learning experiences.

Virtual Reality Based Coaching

Virtual reality (VR) is a multi-sensory computer-generated environment that uses a series of technological devices in order to respond to human movements while the person interacts with realistic two or three-dimensional scenarios (see Steuer, 1992). Since no widely accepted definition of VR-based coaching is available, we define VR based coaching as the delivery of coaching services with the use of VR

technologies. There are two major types of available VR environments (see David et al., 2013). First, the head mounted display (HMD) consists of a pair of goggles that are incorporated in a helmet and display the VR scenarios right in front of the person's eyes. Second, the CAVE system is an immersive VR device that displays 3D images on a room-sized cube with four to six walls/screens. The projected stereo images are generated by a graphic workstation. Both types of VR (i.e., HMD and CAVE) incorporate tracking devices, allowing synchrony between participants' movements and the VR perspective (i.e., real time graphic).

VR technology can be used to immerse the coachee in a virtual scenario that closely approximate the real-life context where the trained skills are needed. Thus, VR provides an excellent alternative to coaching in real life settings, allowing the coachee to practice and revisit the acquired knowledge and/or cognitive and behavioral skills in an ecological and safe environment. For example, VR coaching can be used to immerse the client in relevant social scenarios in order to train particular skills (e.g., public speaking skills; team management skills) or strategies (e.g., emotion-regulation, problem-solving) in job-related situations/environments (e.g., interview, meetings). Below, we will briefly describe a possible application of VR-based coaching.

One application of using VR in REBC is related to public speaking coaching which can have the following structure. The coach works with the client to identify and tackle the unuseful thoughts that could lead to lower performance. To coach emotion-management, different relaxation techniques could also be employed before or during the VR practice of skills. After reducing the interfering thinking, the coach and his client can start working on building/improving specific social communication skills in the VR environment. The coach needs to vary different characteristics of the social scenario in order to provide the client with a wide range of learning opportunities of different levels of complexity. The coach will then give feedback to the client both after and during his/her performance (e.g., concerning verbal and non-verbal indicators), thus facilitating the learning process.

The use of VR technology in coaching sessions has a number of advantages. First, it provides access to a large range of learning experiences that would be otherwise impractical or expensive in real life settings. Second, VR coaching has the advantage of providing a controllable learning environment. While in real life settings it would be difficult for the coach to ensure a context with the exact characteristics that trigger the problematic/non-useful behavior and/or emotional response, this could be easily done in VR. For example, in a VR public speaking context the coach could ensure that the avatars provide a certain type of feedback (e.g., reactions of boredom) in key moments (e.g., at the beginning of the coachee's speech). Similarly, an employee that experiences fear of flying only during the take-off should take the entire flight in real life settings. This might be an ineffective strategy, as the exposure to the actual feared stimuli (i.e., take-off) might not be long enough to allow habituation. In contrast, in VR the coach can expose the client solely to the take-off phase repeatedly, until habituation occurs.

Examples of Technology Based Tools for REBC and Their Evidence-Based Status

In this section we will describe technology based tools that have been build based on the REBT/C theory and which have been investigated at least preliminary for their efficacy/effectiveness. Most of the available tools focus on coaching emotion regulation skills, rational thinking, problems solving, relaxation or positive emotions.

PsyPills App was designed as a smartphone based self-help tool for improving emotion regulation and building stress resilience (see https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/psypills/id589004229?mt=8). Using the self-report data provided by the user (i.e., emotion ratings), the app provides useful rational statements in the form of "psychological pills" (David, 2006) that aim to alter the experienced distress. The statements are derived from the REBT theory and are included in a psychological prescription. PsyPills might be very suitable in workplace, considering the characteristics of the modern work environments (e.g., frequent performance evaluations and high demands). The app has the potential to act as an effective "personal coach", providing effective and time-saving emotion regulation strategies. The "PsyPills" has been found effective in coaching stress management skills in a pilot study investigating its usage during the first 6 months (David & David, 2013a, 2013b; David & David, under review).

The Rational Positive Parenting Program (*rPPP*; David, Capris, & Jarda, 2017; David, 2014) is a parenting program that was developed to alter parents' maladaptive emotions through changing their cognitions, with both a face-to-face and an online version being available. Within an REBT framework (David, 2014), the online version of rPPP consists of eight modules that are gradually administered to parents. The first three modules aim to train parents to adopt more functional cognitions. Thus, parents receive functional statements ("psychological pills") based on the valence and functionality of the emotions that they report, as well as based on the type and content (theme) of their unhelpful cognitions. The next modules are designed to coach specific child behavior management skills and problem-solving skills. There is consistent empirical data supporting the efficacy of the rPPP program for both the remote (David, 2014; David et al., 2017) and face-to-face versions (Gavița & Călin, 2013; Gavita, David, Bujoreanu, Tiba, & Ionuțiu, 2012; Gavita, David, & DiGiuseppe, 2014), as shown by randomized trials. These data are in line with the results of the review conducted by Nieuwmboer, Fukkink, and Hermanns (2013), showing similar efficacy for the online and face-to-face coaching programs.

REThink is a serious game based on the REBC strategies which was developed to promote psychological resilience among children and adolescents by coaching emotion regulation skills. In a game format, children are trained to develop useful skills for a healthy emotional development (e.g., rational thinking skills, relaxation skill; see http://rethink.info.ro/index.html for details). REThink is accessible over the Internet, meant to be used primarily as a standalone application to promote

emotional resilience in youth and adults. The game makes use of the RETMAN character to change youth's faulty irrational beliefs and boost the rational ones. In the game, the RETMAN character (Merriefield & Merriefield, 1979; David, 2010; see www.retman.ro) and its five helpers, belonging to tested packages of REBT/C, act as a facilitators of rational thinking. The game action takes place on planet Earth and is divided into seven levels, each level having a different goal for skills development: emotional recognition, connection between beliefs and emotions, changing irrational beliefs, emotional control, problem solving, relaxation, and well-being. The game has been recently found to be effective in promoting emotional skills in youth (David et al., in preparation) and will be extended to be used by adults in various settings.

The RoboRETMAN is robotic device that has been developed based on REBT/C to coach specific emotional skills in children, built on the action figure of RETMAN (Merriefield & Merriefield, 1979; David, 2010; see www.retman.ro), and is offering rational statements in the form of "psychological pills" (i.e., "It is bad but not catastrophic to feel this way") to children in distress (e.g., feeling anxiety). The child selects and shows a radiofrequency card depicting his emotion to the robotic device and a rational statement is played for this specific emotion. The functionalities of the roboRETMAN are constantly tested and updated.

The efficacy of roboRETMAN in helping elementary school children to manage their negative mood was investigated in two experimental studies. The first study investigated its efficacy in helping children acquire strategies for managing test anxiety (see David & David, 2013a, 2013b; David, David, & Vanderborght, 2013). Sixty-nine children aged 9–10 years old participated in this study and they were randomly distributed in the PsyPills condition (19 children—the children received the reappraisal strategy written on a card), the roboRETMAN condition (24 children—the roboRETMAN condition), or a wait-list (WL; 26 children—no strategy given). Results showed that while all active conditions were effective in reducing test anxiety, the roboRETMAN condition was more effective than the WL, with a high effect size. Only children in the roboRETMAN condition reported a higher positive mood and lower levels of using irrational beliefs compared to both their initial levels and to the other conditions. We concluded that roboRETMAN brings more positive affect which might be due to the play preference of children. In another study (Costescu, David, & David, 2014) we investigated the efficacy of the Retman cartoons complimented with the roboRETMAN as a means of coaching elementary school children in reducing their anxiety. We found that the cartoons complimented with the roboRETMAN helped to alleviate anxiety and dysfunctional feelings in children aged 11–12 years old better compared to only a single mean.

Although there is little empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of VR-based coaching in organizations or other non-clinical settings (i.e., for optimization purposes), previous studies indicated that the gains acquired in VR tend to generalize in real life. This has important implications for coaching interventions, as it provides indirect evidence that VR-based coaching may be useful for

training new skills that would apply in work-related or other real life settings. Indeed, the preliminary investigations are promising. For example, the results of the study conducted by Bosse, Gerritsen, de Man, and Treur (2014) suggest that VR could be useful for training emotion-regulation skills. Moreover, the maintenance of the results at follow up support the stability and generalization of the acquired skills. VR environment was used in a few studies for reducing fear of flying in business clients that need to travel long distances, as basis for implementing the REBT/C based strategies. It is considered that by approaching these issues, the costs are reduced for both the employees and the organization (e.g., insurance costs, missing days, poorer performance in work-related tasks involving stressful social interactions, prolonged travelling time). Moreover, targeting these issues (e.g., fear of flying in employees of multinational companies) before they escalade might represent an effective prevention strategy. Cardos et al. (under review) has investigated the efficacy of using REBT/C based strategies in a flight VR environment (airport, airplane) in coaching participants overcome their fear of flying. The intervention was found superior to using only the VR environment as a mean for exposure. The main expected advantage of the REBC for flight anxiety is related to reducing the economic and the time costs associated to taking real flights for coaching purposes. Thus, VR REBC coaching offers important tools to coach skills which would be difficult to train in real life situations or with much higher costs.

Conclusions

A few examples of efficacy/effectiveness studies for remote RE-CBC programs have been briefly described in this chapter. Although technology based coaching services are increasingly available, the empirical research concerning its efficacy/ effectiveness and the involved mechanisms of change is still in its incipient phase. There are a number of studies that report promising results for technology based REBC. Although further empirical investigations are needed to establish the efficacy/effectiveness of these programs (i.e., on other outcomes and different contexts), the finding are promising, suggesting that technology can be used effectively in REBC for coaching adaptive emotion regulation strategies. It is worth mentioning that, to date, the efficacy/effectiveness of these tools has been investigated only in some areas and taking into account a reduced range of outcomes (e.g., emotion skills). Future studies are needed in order to evaluate the impact of different technology-based coaching applications on various relevant areas/ outcomes. Concerning the mechanisms of change involved in the remote coaching programs, there are few empirical data available. The fact that technology-based REBC can bring effects similar to face to face coaching, further supports the idea that remote coaching is not a new approach to coaching, but rather a new delivery strategy for the coaching programs.

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Part III
Applications of Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching

Life Coaching

Windy Dryden

Introduction

In this chapter, I will consider the practice of what I have called 'Rational-Emotive Cognitive-Behavioral Life Coaching' (RECBLC). It is important to be clear at the outset about how I am going to use the term 'life coaching' and also how it differs from other related modes of helping. Grant and Cavanagh (2010, p. 297) say that life coaching "is less about restoring or improving functionality and more about enhancing existing well-being. It typically tends to focus on goals that fall within the personal sphere rather than the work or employment sphere". It can thus be contrasted with counseling which has more of a focus on the restoration of functionality and with executive coaching which "focuses on helping clients who have managerial responsibility in organisations to achieve goals that improve their professional performance, and consequently the effectiveness of the client's organization" (Grant & Cavanagh, 2010, p. 297). However, while I can see the logic in Grant and Cavanagh's position, in my practice the boundary lines are more fluid, and since people invest a lot of themselves in their work, I consider that work issues have a place in life coaching, and this position will be reflected in this chapter.[1]

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[1] It is my view that coaching professionals have an ambivalent view on 'life coaching' on the one hand recognizing its value, while on the other fearful of the fact that life coaching is open to being practiced by unaccredited individuals who may bring the professional field of coaching into disrepute (George, 2013). I note with interest that while 'The Complete Handbook of Coaching' edited by Cox, Bachkirova, and Clutterbuck (2010) and published by Sage Publications features a chapter on 'Life Coaching' (written by Grant & Cavanagh, 2010), 'The SAGE Handbook of Coaching' edited by Bachkirova, Spence, and Drake (2017) not only contains no chapter on 'Life Coaching', but has no mention of the term in its index! While there are, at present, no formal training courses in REBLC, it is my view that this training initiative is needed if Life Coaching is to thrive in the Rational Emotive Behavioural community.

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Kodish (2002) was perhaps one of the first people to discuss what she called 'Rational Emotive Behavior Coaching'. She wrote that she shifted from being a therapist to becoming a coach for a number of reasons. First, on moving to California, she decided not to go through the licensing process there due to having a 'partial disability'. Second, she wanted to work outside the health-care system and avoid having to deal with managed care. Finally, the move from therapist enabled her to fulfil a long-held ambition to work from the premise that she could help people by educating them in life-skills.

Kodish (2002, pp. 235–236) contrasts coaching with therapy and stresses that coaching involves helping people to do such things as: move to a higher level of personal functioning; learn new skills; live a better, more balanced life; seek self-understanding; seek focus and motivation. While I would not dispute this, the life coach also needs to be able to help the person understand and deal with the emotionally-based obstacles that they are likely to encounter along the way to achieving their development-based objectives. Thus, in my view 'Rational-Emotive Cognitive-Behavioral Life Coaching (RECBLC) has a dual focus. It promotes enhanced development, and it deals with emotional problems, particularly when they interfere with the person's path towards development'. In this chapter, I will discuss both foci.

Promoting Development

When promoting development, the RECBC life coach should ideally keep in mind the following principles.

Help the Coachee to Focus on the Future

As Kodish (2002) notes, it is important to help the coachee look forward into the future to gain a sense of what they want to gain from the coaching process. How far they look forward will depend on a number of factors. In my experience, the longer a person is willing to commit to the coaching process, the further into the future they can be encouraged to look. Second, if they are clear about what they want to achieve, and this can be done within a reasonable period, then a short-term future focus can be created. However, even when this is the case, it is worth mentioning to the coachee that they could, if they want to, use coaching to take stock of their life as it is and to think about how they would like it to be in a number of life areas. If they agree, the greater number of areas they nominate the further they may choose to look into the future. Once the person has a clear idea of their 'future self' this can be used to set objectives for coaching.

Be Mindful of the Specific and the General

Cognitive-behavioral coachees are often urged to set goals/objectives[2] with their clients/coachees that are specific. However, the RECB life coach also needs to be aware that general goals/objectives are also valuable and the extent to which the coach can help the coachee embody general objectives in development-focused coaching with specific referents, they will help the person get the most from coaching. Helping the coach to have both a general and a specific focus is better than either focus alone. Thus, when a coachee mentions a specific objective, the coach can ask them to identify a more general principle that underpins the nomination of this objective. And when the coachee sets a general objective, the coach can ask them how would they know, specifically, when they have achieved this objective. For example, Marion wanted to set healthier boundaries at work and stated that she would know when she had achieved this when she is able to say 'no' to her boss when he asked her to make his coffee for him.

One method that RECB life coaches can use to good effect is known as the 'Wheel of Life' in that it brings together the 'general' (the person's life represented by a wheel) and the 'specific' (eight areas of the person's life represented by spokes on the wheel: (1) friends and family; (2) significant other; (3) personal growth; (4) fun and leisure; (5) home environment; (6) career; (7) career; (8) health). People often come to life coaching with a sense that they can get more out of their life in general, and the 'Wheel of Life' method can help them to identify specific areas of life that need particular attention. The coachee is shown a picture of a wheel with eight spokes with the space between each spoke representing a life area.[3] They then are given the following instructions: "Seeing the center of the wheel as '0' and the outer edge as '10', rate your level of satisfaction with each life area by drawing a line to create a new outer edge" (Kodish, 2002, p. 243). The visual representation of the coachee's satisfaction with each area of their life can lead to a useful discussion about what changes they want to make and can lead to the setting of coaching objectives in one or more life areas.

Encourage the Coachee to Utilise Rational Principles of Living

As I discussed in chapter "Rationality in Coaching", one of the unique contributions of a rational emotive behavioral approach to coaching is that it outlines a number of rational principles of living. In chapter "Rationality in Coaching" of this book, Michael Bernard discusses his 'Rationality and Happiness' Survey. This describes

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[2] In this chapter, I will use the term 'goals' to refer to what the person wants to achieve from coaching that addresses emotionally-based obstacles to development and the term 'objectives' to refer to what the person wants to achieve from development-focused coaching.

[3] The eight areas of life are: (1) physical environment; (2) career; (3) money; (4) health; (5) friends and family; (6) significant other/romance; (7) personal growth; (8) fun and recreation.

11 rational principles of living (e.g., *self-direction, short- and long-term hedonism, commitment to creative, absorbing activities and pursuits)* and asks a coachee how often they put these principles into practice in their life. This information can be used in life coaching in several ways.

First, as the survey suggests, the coachee can be asked to nominate the principles that they would like to put into practice more often. Once the coachee has made their selection, the coach encourages them to be as specific as they can as to where, when, how, and with whom they will apply the principle(s). In this approach, the coachee uses the principle to select specific ways of implementing it and thus actualizing it. For example, one of my coachees nominated 'social interest' as the principle he wanted to put into practice more often. This lead to discussions about the best way he could do this. He decided that he would apply to become a conservation volunteer at his local park because he was interested in the natural world and that he would apply to become a ward helper at his local hospital because he had seen what a good job another ward helper did when his grandmother was in hospital.

A second way that a coachee can use a rational principle in coaching is as a means of encouraging themself to achieve their coaching objective. Another of my coachees decided that he needed to take his career more seriously and his coaching objectives reflected this decision. He chose 'short-term and long-term hedonism', and 'high frustration tolerance and willpower' as rational principles of living that would help him to do this, and I helped him develop his action plan with these principles in mind.

Help the Coachee to Identify Their Values as a Foundation for Coaching

I see values as judgements of what the coachee regards as being of vital importance in their life. While values should, ideally, determine a coachee's priorities, they may not because of other more immediate preoccupations that the coachee has in life. If such preoccupations can be seen as proximal factors in the coachee's life, values can be regarded as distal factors.

A person often comes to coaching because they have a sense that there is something wrong with their life and that they are capable of getting so much more from their life. When a coachee says this, then it can be a sign that they may not be acting in accord with their values, and this should be explored with them. When they are violating their values, they are more likely to know that there is something really wrong in their life and generally, they will be motivated to change.

How can the RECB life coach assess their coachee's values? One way would be to encourage them to complete an online values assessment. One that I routinely suggest is the 'Personal Values Assessment' (PVA) devised by the Barrett Values

Centre.[4] This asks the coachee to complete a large number of question that reflect 24 values. The results that are given to the coachee place their values in order of importance based on their responses. I strongly recommend that the coach completes the test first before suggesting that coachees use this test to determine its accuracy for themselves as a person.[5]

Once the coach and coachee have the results from the PVA to hand, then the two can discuss how these may inform coaching. My view is that the RECB life coach should bear the following points in mind during this discussion:

- Coaching objectives that are based on values are more likely to be achieved and maintained when they rest on a person's core values than when they don't
- There are times in coaching when a coachee needs to be reminded of their values as a way of focusing them on their coaching tasks
- There are times in coaching when a person's values clash with one another, and the coach needs to help the person prioritise their values
- Sometimes the coach may encourage the client to consider why they don't hold certain values as a way of encouraging them to come out of their comfort zone and broaden their horizons on life. This may also help the coachee to identify emotional barriers to pursuing objectives that they may otherwise like to pursue

A second way that the RECB life coach can assess coachee values is to infer their presence from the person's answers to standard scenarios or questions. For examples, Kodish (2002, pp. 242–242) uses the following to stimulate coachee reflection: (1) "Think of a time when things were going particularly well for you. It can be an extended period of time or a 'peak experience.' Describe it to me"; (2) "What triggers you to feel really angry?"; (3) "The loss of what in your life would make life seem hardly worth living?" Kodish then abstracts from the coachee's responses underlying values and initiates a discussion to which the coachee adds other values. Then, Kodish (2002) suggests the following homework assignment. The coachee is asked to write down an agreed number of values that are most important to them in order of importance. Then the coach asks them to evaluate each of the values, on a five point scale, according to how much that particular value is being supported in their life at present. Then, Kodish (2002, p. 242) outlines how she uses this information in coaching: "In subsequent sessions, we work toward how to live life, associate with individuals, etc., in ways in which these values will be more supported in the client's life. What changes are needed? Etc."

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[4] https://www.valuescentre.com/our-products/products-individuals/personal-values-assessment-pva

[5] I consider my own results to be quite accurate. Thus, my three most important values are in order: (1) Perseverance (2) Judgment (by which is meant 'Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly'); and (3) Humor. My three least important values are in order: (1) Teamwork; (2) Appreciation of beauty and excellence and (3) Humility.

Help the Client to Identify Strengths and Encourage Their Use

Life coaching is predicated on the idea that the coachee brings to the coaching process several pre-existing strengths that the coach may encourage them to use in this process. Jones-Smith (2014, p. 13) defines a strength as an internal quality "….that which helps a person to cope with life or that which makes life more fulfilling for one and others" Jones-Smith (2014, p. 13). It is linked to a person's values or valued rational principles of living, but may not necessarily operationalize them. Thus, a coachee may be good at perseverance (strength) but may not use it to further their valued principle of living of social interest. Or another coachee, may value self-regulation, but not be very good at implementing it.

The RECB life coach can ask their coachee, "What strengths do you have as a person that you can bring to coaching that will help you get the most out of it?" Once the person has nominated a strength, the coach can ask further questions such as:

- "How can you use that strength in our work together?"
- "What can I do to help you use that strength during coaching?"

If the coachee cannot identify any strengths, then they should ask the following:

- "What would other people who know you well regard as your strengths?"
- "If you were applying for a job that you really wanted and you were asked you to list your strengths, what would you say?"

While the coachee should be encouraged to develop a list of strengths and think about how they draw upon these strengths throughout the coaching process, the coach should also be alert to prompt the coachee to use a strength when its application is called for, and the coachee has not recognised this.

Help the Person to Develop a List of External Resources and to Use Them When Necessary

If strengths are internal factors that a coachee can draw upon during coaching, resources are the external practical tools or people present in the coachee's life that are available to assist in their coaching. In the same way that the coach helps the coachee to develop a list of their internal strengths, they can also help the person to compile a list of external resources.

There is a phrase that I often use when discussing potential resources with a coachee. It is, "Only you can do it, but you don't have to do it alone". There are two ways in which a coachee can make use of other people as a coaching resource. First, they can use them as a *direct* form of help. For example, a coachee might seek help

from another person in the form of information or a suggestion for an interpersonal connection. In this respect, 'networking' with other like-minded people, usually within an occupational context is a good example of the use of other people as a direct resource. Second, the coachee can use other people as an *indirect* form of help. Thus, a coachee may have people in their life to whom they can turn to for psychological support or practical support and others who may help them talk through their ideas related to coaching. In this respect, the RECB life coach should be humble in their approach to coaching. Although they may play an important role in helping the coachee achieve their objectives, they are not crucial to the success of the process, and other people may play important roles too. The coach who realises this and acts on it will help their coachee more than the coach who thinks that they are the only interpersonal resource the coachee needs.

Help the Coachee to Set Meaningful Development-Based Objectives

The core of RECB life coaching involves helping the coachee to develop him/her-self in whichever life areas they nominate. The more areas they nominate, the longer life coaching will tend to be. Setting objectives is the best way that the RECB life coach has for ensuring that the coaching stays focused on what the coachee wants to gain from the process and helps both participants to evaluate progress and to judge when the work has been done.

The Features of a 'Good' Development-Based Objective

When discussing a development-based objective with a coachee, the RECB life coach keeps in mind that it has the following features:

- It has a direction
- It may be ongoing (thus it may not have a final end-point)
- When it does have a final end-point, this point needs to be maintained
- A development-based objective is broad with specific referents

The Conditions That Facilitate the Pursuit of a Development-Based Objective

While setting a development-based objective with a coachee, the coach needs to be mindful of the following conditions that facilitate the persistent pursuit of this objective. Thus, an agreed development-based objective should ideally:

- Have intrinsic rather than extrinsic importance.

The objective needs to be important to the coachee rather than to someone else. When it has both intrinsic and extrinsic importance, then these are powerful facilitative conditions

- Be underpinned by values that are important to the coachee (see above)
- Involve tasks that have intrinsic merit for your coachee

When the coachee enjoys the work that they need to do to achieve their objective, then they are likely to persist with these tasks than when they don't enjoy the work. However, toleration of lack enjoyment is important when the coachee does not enjoy what they need to do to achieve their objective.

- Be an objective that your coachee is prepared to integrate into their life. This means:
  - They can devote time to pursuing it on a regular basis
  - They have ready access to any resources they need to pursue the objective. It is not going to clash with other priorities that they have in their life
- Involve active rather than passive desires

It is important to help your coachee to see the distinction between an active desire and a passive desire, which can be useful here. An active desire involves something that the coachee wants and is prepared to take action to achieve, while a passive desire involves something that they want, but are not willing to take action to achieve.

- Be an objective for which your coachee is prepared to make sacrifices to achieve

If the person is not prepared to make any sacrifices to achieve their objective, then they may well be tempted to give up pursuing it if the going gets tough for them.

Help the Coachee to Design and Implement an Action Plan

Once the coach and coachee have agreed on a development-based objective, the next stage in RECB life coaching is to help them to devise an action plan and to implement it. In doing so, it is important to help the person anticipate and deal with obstacles to doing both. In brief, devising a plan involves helping the coachee to determine *what* they are going to do to achieve their development-based objective and implementing the plan involves helping the coachee to determine *how* they are going to put their action plan into practice.

Devising the Action Plan

When helping the coachee to devise an action plan concerning reaching their developmental-based objective, it is important to take the following steps, the order of which is to be determined between coach and coachee.

Help the coachee to discover clear benchmarks for their development-based objective. While a development-based objective may be broad, it is important that they have specific referents. This is to help the coachee not only to know when they have achieved the objective, if relevant but also to have clear ideas concerning their progress towards the objective.

Once the coachee has achieved their objective, then it is important to ask them how they will know if they are maintaining it. This involves setting clear maintenance benchmarks.

Help the coachee to list the actions that they need to take to achieve the objective. Once the coach has helped the coachee to map out a timeline for achieving their objective, the next step is to help them to specify what actions they need to take to meet it. In doing so, it is important to help them select actions that they already have the skills to perform. If they lack a skill that they need, the coach needs to decide with them how they are going to learn it and from whom. It is not a coach's job to teach skills that they don't have in their skills repertoire. However, it is their job to help the coachee to find the right resource in this respect. Having said that, if the coach can teach a relevant skill to their coachee, they should do so.

Help the coachee to prepare a realistic schedule to achieve their objective. This schedule will be determined partly based on the length of the coaching contract that the coach has with their coachee and how many objectives they wish to set and work towards during the coaching process. Once the coachee has determined the schedule, the coach helps them to allocate tasks to time slots so that both know what the coachee is planning to do by when. This will need to be monitored and modified on the basis of your coachee's experience of implementing the action plan.

Help the coachee to use their strengths and other helping resources. When helping the coachee to devise an action plan, the coach should encourage them to use their internal strengths and external resources identified earlier.

Ensure that the coachee can integrate the action plan into their life. When the coachee integrates their plan into their life, it means that they commit themself to act at particular times that are convenient for them and in suitable contexts. If this is not the case, the coach should help them to make modifications so that their action plan fits into their life.

Develop with the coachee a way of monitoring their progress to their objective. One of the features of an RECB approach to coaching is the emphasis it places on collecting data. This is best done by the coach suggesting to the coachee that they

keep an action plan diary. This would include information on what they plan to do every day in working towards their objective, what they did and their comments on any differences.

Implementing the Action Plan

When the coachee has launched their action plan, the coach has several tasks to perform to help them to stay on course towards their development-based objective.

Monitor the implementation of the coachee's action plan. Although the coachee will have assigned tasks to time slots (see above), it is important that the coach and the coachee are both clear about what the coachee is going to do at every point in the implementation stage. This time-action schedule is not one that is set in stone and will need to be changed in light of the coachee's experiences. Consequently, it is important that the coach monitors their progress on this. Such monitoring involves both being clear about what the coachee is going to do and reviewing what they did, exploring the meaning of any discrepancies between plans and achievements.

Any changes to the coachee's action plan should emerge out of their experiences of implementing it, and any difficulties should be addressed.

Help the coachee to capitalise on success. When it is clear that the coachee is doing well with their action plan, it is important for the coach to help them to capitalise on their success. One way of doing this is to find out what it is that they have been doing that has brought about their progress and to suggest that they continue to do what is working for them (Iveson, George, & Ratner, 2012). Another way is to encourage them to think of ways that they can generalise what they have been learning from implementing their development-based objective to other relevant areas of their life where they would like to develop themself.

Help the coachee to maintain their gains once they have met their objective. Once the coachee has achieved their objective, it is probable that they will have to take action to maintain the gains that they have met. Thus, it is important that the coach works with the coachee on the following issues:

- Help them to identify and implement steps they will they need to take to maintain their gains
- Help them to identify and deal with any obstacles that might interfere with such maintenance strategies
- Help them to develop a high tolerance for discomfort and boredom that they might experience during the maintenance process
- Help them identify and deal with any vulnerability factors that, if encountered, might lead them to experience lapses in the use of their maintenance strategies which, in turn, may result in the loss of gains already achieved from coaching

Help the Coachee to Pursue Other Objectives and Generalise Learning

Once the coachee has shown evidence of maintaining their nominated development-based objective, they are ready to pursue another objective, and the coach can help them go through the same process with the new objective informed by the work that they have done on the first objective. As they make progress on the second objective, the coach can encourage them to look for patterns of thinking and behavior that have helped them in the pursuit of the objectives that they have nominated at the outset and to use these patterns as they increasingly take on the role of their own coach. The more the coach helps the coachee to identify and use helpful patterns of thinking and acting from the work they have done together on the coachee's objectives, the more the coach can help them to formalise these as self-development principles and generalise them across different life domains.

Dealing with Emotionally-Based Obstacles to Coaching

So far, I have discussed Rational-Emotive, Cognitive-Behavioural life coaching as if it were a smooth process where the coachee proceeds towards their nominated objectives without impediment. However, nothing can be further from the truth, and in this section, I will discuss common emotionally-based obstacles to the pursuit of development-based objectives and how to deal with them. This work is the province of REB therapists applied to a coaching context.

Three Forms of Emotionally-Based Obstacles to Coaching

Emotionally-based obstacles to coaching take a number of forms.

1. Once a coachee has nominated an objective then they may encounter an adversity that relates directly to the pursuit of the objective. Their emotionally disturbed response to this adversity constitutes an obstacle.
2. While coaching is underway the coachee may an encounter an adversity that is not related to coaching, but their response to it constitutes an obstacle to the process.
3. The coachee's selection of a coaching objective is negatively influenced by an emotional problem.

The aim of helping the coachee in the first two cases is so that the person can deal constructively with the adversity and resume the pursuit of the coaching objective. The aim of coaching work in the third case is to help the person deal with their

problem so that they can set meaningful coaching objectives where they are not 'playing safe'.

Dealing with Coaching-Related Emotionally-Based Obstacles Coaching Progress

Common emotionally-based obstacles to coaching that frequently occur include (1) a range of emotional problems such as anxiety, non-clinical depression, guilt, shame, unhealthy anger and hurt and (2) problems of self-discipline, the main one being procrastination. In this section, I will discuss how to deal with each category of problem using the 'Situational ABCDEFG' framework.

The 'Situational ABCDEFG' Framework

RECB life coaching uses the 'Situational ABCDEFG' model more frequently associated with REBT to deal with a coachee's emotionally-based obstacles to coaching progress. In this model, a coachee's disturbed response ('C') to an actual or inferred adversity ('A') is understood within a situational context. The person is not disturbed by their exposure to 'A', but because they hold a set of rigid and extreme irrational beliefs at 'B'. At some point in the process, the coach helps the coachee to set a goal ('G') which reflects a healthy response to the same adversity at 'A'. To help the coachee to achieve this goal, the coach invites them to examine or dispute these beliefs successfully 'D' with the purpose of encouraging them to develop an alternative set of flexible and non-extreme beliefs. To experience the full effect (at 'E') of these new beliefs, the coach needs to help the coach to act on these new beliefs and to do so consistently and regularly to facilitate change at 'F'.

It should be noted that the main purpose of using the above framework in life coaching is to help the coaching overcome the barrier sufficiently well so that they can resume the business of coaching.

Dealing with Emotional Problems

As noted above, a coachee may experience an emotional problem during coaching that relates directly to the coaching process or that has nothing to do with the coaching process but serves to deal. An example of the former is the coachee who experiences anxiety when trying something new in the pursuit of their development-based objective. An example of the latter is the coachee who feels guilt in the face of sister's death because he considers that he had neglected her when she was alive and can't face doing anything like coaching where he puts himself first. The ingredients of emotional problems are as follows:

- The person encounters something that they consider to be an adversity in relation to an important aspect of their personal domain[6] (Beck, 1976). Examples might be 'threat' in the case of anxiety and 'being selfish' in the case of guilt.
- The person holds a set of irrational beliefs about the adversity.
- The person acts in ways to avoid facing the adversity or so that they don't feel emotionally disturbed about the adversity if they can't avoid it. These strategies may 'work' in the short-term, but only serve to maintain the problem in the longer-term.
- The person's irrational beliefs lead them to make highly distorted negative inferences about adversity-related variables and about their ability to cope with the adversity. These cognitions (and others such as rumination) are best conceptualised and dealt with as cognitive consequences of irrational beliefs at 'C' rather than as inferences at 'A'.

The RECB life coach needs to do the following in dealing with the coachee's emotional problem:

- Help them to understand that an unhealthy negative emotion (UNE)—such as anxiety—can be differentiated from a healthy negative emotion (HNE)—such as concern—and that their response (at 'C') is, in fact, unhealthy rather than healthy.
- Have them select a concrete situation in which the emotional problem occurred and using this, help the person identify what they were most disturbed about at 'A'.
- Encourage the person to assume temporarily that 'A' is true. While challenging this inference, if distorted, may help the person gain relief from their UNE as they see that their inference was mistaken, this strategy will not help the person deal with the adversity the next time it is considered to be present.
- Educate the person about the 'B-C' connection and help them to identify their irrational beliefs about adversity that led to their UNE.
- Help them to nominate an HNE as a suitable goal when dealing with adversity. The overarching goal of the RECB life coach here is to help the person face and deal constructively with the adversity at 'A'.
- Help them to see that there are flexible and non-extreme belief alternatives to their irrational beliefs and that these beliefs will lead to them to experience an HNE rather than a UNE.
- Engage them in a dialogue the purpose of which is to encourage them to questionboth their irrational beliefs and the rational alternatives to these beliefs by asking them to question the empirical, logical and pragmatic status of these beliefs.
- Encourage them to act in ways that are consistent with their developing rational beliefs and inconsistent with their irrational beliefs and to do this until they have solved their problem sufficiently to enable them to resume the development-focused work of life coaching.

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[6]The personal domain is a kind of psychological space that contains anything that the person deems to be personally valuable.

Table 1 The REBC conceptualisation of procrastination

Condition	Demand (rigid belief)	Outcome
Comfort	"I must be comfortable before I start the task"	Procrastination until I am comfortable
Mood	"I must be in the mood before I start the task"	Procrastination until I am in the mood
Competence	"I must feel competent before I start the task"	Procrastination until I feel competent
Motivation	"I must be motivated before I start the task"	Procrastination until I am motivated
Immediate understanding	"I must understand what I have to do before I start to do it"	Procrastination until I have such understanding
Pressure	"I must be under pressure before I start the task"	Procrastination until I am under pressure
Immediate gratification	"Faced with the choice of doing something that I enjoy or starting the task, I must do what I want to do"	Procrastination until I have done what I want to do

Dealing with Procrastination

I define procrastination as the coachee putting off doing what is in their interests to do, at a time when it is in their interests to do it. As such, it is, by definition, self-defeating. While all people procrastinate at times, when this interferes with the person pursuing their development-based objective, the coach needs to help them address the issue.

The RECB conceptualisation of procrastination is that when the coachee procrastinates, they are demanding or insisting that certain conditions exist before they get down to the task at hand and that they will put off the task until these demanded conditions are met. Here are some common examples of such conditions, the demands that accompany them and the outcome of these demands (Table 1).

The coach's main task here is to encourage the coachee to identify the conditions they believe have to exist before they start the task and help them to develop a healthier flexible belief towards these same conditions. For example, if the coachee demands pre-work comfort, they will be helped to see that while they might prefer to be comfortable before they start the task, it is not necessary for them to be so. They can start the task feeling uncomfortable and then see what happens. Typically what will happen if the coachee starts the task feeling uncomfortable while holding this new flexible belief is that they will initially feel more uncomfortable, but then the discomfort will decrease and soon pass as they get involved with the task.

The aim, therefore, is for the coachee to adopt and apply a flexible belief about the conditions they currently believe have to exist before they start the task. The following outlines the healthy flexible beliefs about the same conditions as those listed above and the outcome of holding these flexible beliefs (Table 2).

After the coach has helped the coachee to identify the rigid belief that underpins their procrastination and its flexible, healthy alternative, the focus will be on the

Table 2 Overcoming procrastination: the REBC view

Condition	Non-dogmatic preference (flexible belief)	Outcome
Comfort	"I would like to be comfortable before I start the task, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task even though uncomfortable
Mood	"I would like to be in the mood before I start the task, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task even though not in the mood
Competence	"I would like to feel competent before I start the task, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task even though not feeling competent
Motivation	"I would like to be motivated before I start the task, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task even though not motivated
Immediate understanding	"I would like to understand what I have to do before I start to do it, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task even though I do not understand what I have to do
Pressure	"I would like to be under pressure before I start the task, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task even though I am not under pressure
Immediate gratification	"Faced with the choice of doing something that I enjoy or starting the task, I would like to do what I want, but this condition isn't necessary"	Start the task having decided to forego immediate gratification

following. The coach will encourage the coachee to see that their rigid belief is false, illogical and unhelpful to them, while the flexible alternative to this belief is true, logical and more helpful to them. In particular, they will be reminded that their rigid belief leads to procrastination, while their flexible belief will help them to begin the task. When the coachee believes that a particular condition needs to exist before they start the task (rigid belief), they may well come up with several so-called "reasons" to justify their procrastination. If they are honest with themself, they will see that such "reasons" are rationalisations and self-deceptions and that they can respond constructively to these rationalisations and even start the task while they come into their mind.

Once the coachee has grasped these points and has gotten some practice at responding constructively to their rigid beliefs and rationalisations in the coaching session, they will be helped to put their learning into practice at home using the following steps.

1. Set a specific time when they are going to begin the task
2. If they do not start at the appointed time, they should identify the condition that they are insisting has to exist before they start and remind themself that this condition is desirable, but not necessary.
3. Start the task in the absence of the condition even though it may feel strange and uncomfortable to do so and see what happens after a specified time.
4. Identify and respond to any rationalisations they have given themself not to start the task and then start the task. They should do this even though the rationalisations may be in their mind to some extent.

It is important that the coachee repeatedly acts in ways that are consistent with their flexible beliefs about the task and refrain from being seduced by their rationalisations.

Other coaching methods for dealing with procrastination. After the coachee has made progress at developing the relevant, flexible belief and responds effectively to their rationalisations, they can be helped to do some of the following.

- Set work-based goals and be goal focused
- Improve their management of time
- Choose the best working environment for them
- Improve their task-related behavior
- Reinforce their task-related behavior
- Chunk periods when they are working on the task and take suitable breaks without returning to procrastination behavior
- Get exercise and develop good nutritional habits to protect them from lethargy
- Get a good night's sleep to keep them fresh for work on the task

However, the RECB life coach will know that none of the above useful practices will help the coachee overcome their procrastination in the longer term without them:

1. first changing their relevant rigid belief to its flexible alternative and
2. then changing the rationalisations that support their rigid belief and the procrastination that stems from them

In conclusion, it is my view that given RECB life coaching's dual focus on promoting development and on helping the coachee to address their emotionally-based obstacles to developing themself described in this chapter, its coaches are well prepared to help their coachees approach the task getting more out of their life with confidence and optimism.

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Motivational Coaching

Michael S. Broder

As one who has run several organizations where I have always considered the greatest asset to be my team—usually professionals or highly skilled workers—providing the necessary ingredients for optimal performance is practically always job one.

Thus, motivation in the workplace has always been of great interest and importance to whatever mission I am focused on at a given time. As a psychologist and a teacher who trains both professionals and graduate students, being an effective source of motivation is crucial as well. This chapter will emphasize a cognitive behaviorally oriented coaching system I've developed for assessing those you wish to motivate, along with tools for implementing the best circumstances for maximization of their potential in a specific role. This system can also be used as a strategy for self-motivation. It has been influenced by the work of Albert Ellis (1994) who originated REBT, Aaron Beck's CBT (1976) and Arnold Lazarus' Multimodal Therapy (1981) as well as other theorists mentioned below.

Whenever I speak on the topic of motivation or coach managers on how to motivate subordinates, I emphasize a fact that far too often is overlooked: that in my experience (since first starting my own organization in 1968, and running several others; business, professional and non-profit; along with the experience of the most effective motivators I've worked with for over four decades)—*motivation is never a "one size fits all" process.*

In *Stage Climbing: The Shortest Path to Your Highest Potential* (Broder, 2012), I present a model for both assessing the optimal type of motivation a coach can use with their coachees/clients, by recognizing the *stage of development* at which a coachee is operating, along with strategies to implement the best intervention at a given time. The Stage Climbing model is a CBT based system designed to identify the beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral patterns typical of different developmental life stages. Recognizing the developmental stage at which a client or coachee is operating, helps to identify and the explain obstacles—characteristic to that stage—which power present day patterns and impede opti-

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mal performance; but perhaps even more importantly provides the guidance for selecting the most effective motivational tactics.

I am suggesting that blending REBT/CBT (Beck, 1976; Ellis, 1994; Lazarus, 1981) with aspects of developmental theory can produce a more effective result than any 'one size fits all' approach. By drawing on some features of the developmental theories of Erick Erikson (1963), Kohlberg (1987) and Sullivan and Grant (1957), I have found that a cohesive and consistent set of beliefs and behaviors can be identified for each developmental stage that enable us to understand motivation as well as why individual motivatees tend to respond in predictable ways.

This chapter will illustrate the basic premise of this working model along with its implications for motivational coaching.

Stage Climbing is grounded in a well-established principle: namely, that we human beings mature mentally and emotionally in predictable stages, just as we do physically. In the pages ahead, you will learn about the seven distinct stages of one's life that are the basis for the Stage Climbing model and which start at birth (Stage One).

As we outgrow or complete one stage, we move to the next on a continuum. That's how nature intended us to develop, mature or evolve. However, for a variety of reasons, we all tend to leave behind parts of ourselves—or what I metaphorically refer to as *hooks*—in each stage. Hooks to our lower stages are the obstacles that hold us back from automatically, fully, and organically advancing to the next stage in any aspect of life being focused on; such as our relationships, business or career, social or parenting skills, or spirituality. One important role of a coach is to help clients to manage their hooks, by doing whatever it takes to prevent those hooks from being obstacles to achieving maximum success, happiness or fulfillment in a given situation.

How this is done varies from stage to stage, as will be apparent as we explore in some detail, each of the seven stages (which are summarized in the table below), and their implications for motivation.

Summary of the seven stages	Typical hooks at each stage	Typical pattern when operating at given stage
Stage One—Comfort/ Security Seeker	Inability/unwillingness to take initiative	Dependency, victimhood and powerlessness
Stage Two—Primitive Self	Undisciplined, blind to long-term consequences	Self-defeating need for instant gratification
Stage Three—Rigid Rule Abider	Fear of leaving comfort zone, over-conformity, authoritarian	Rule-bound or need for others to be blindly compliant, stays in comfort zone, afraid to take risks
Stage Four—Approval Seeker	Anxiety (fear of failure, looking foolish, rejection, etc.), obsessed with being accepted, liked or loved	Insecure, need for approval and to fit in often overwhelms larger goals
Stage Five—Role Juggler	Stress, vague feeling of unfulfillment (or dysthymia), despite "having it all", feelings of overwhelm	Sees self as "sum of all life roles", ignores passions and purpose in favor of money and other extrinsic rewards

Summary of the seven stages	Typical hooks at each stage	Typical pattern when operating at given stage
Stage Six—Passion Pursuer	Creativity, talent, uniqueness and other Self-Actualizing traits	Intrinsically (self)—motivated by enjoyment of mission (First of two target stages)
Stage Seven—Purpose Driven	All the characteristics of Stage Six, plus the need to contribute to larger purpose beyond self	Beyond self-gratification, practices benevolence without expecting direct extrinsic reward

Whether you are simply trying to nail down what motivates you personally or how to motivate someone else in order for them to be maximally effective, when using the Stage Climbing approach described in this chapter, *it is crucial to identify the stage from which you or whomever you wish to motivate are operating with respect to the task or environment where achieving optimal motivation is the goal.* This is the main premise for using Stage Climbing as a motivational tool. As in psychotherapy, where job one is to begin where a client *is* (as opposed to where you would like him or her to be), when motivating, the stage (or stages) you are working with is the starting point for identifying and then applying the most effective motivator(s). An understanding of the stages themselves will make the corresponding motivational strategies clearly identifiable.

A *stage* is a cluster of behaviors, cognitions and/or motives (which themselves can dramatically vary in the level of maturity across different areas of one's life). Stages then become the *lenses* through which one can identify what motivates him or her. Astute coaches and managers who coach subordinates can then recognize characteristics in coachees and subordinates that would be most effective for helping them to select the best approach to motivation. The Stage Climbing model contains seven ascending stages, numbered from one to seven. Hooks in the lower stages (One to Four) are the ones that are most problematic. Stage Five is the most neutral stage; and Stages Six and Seven are the ones that most high achievers aspire to and operate at. Stage Climbing was designed with an optimal degree of transparency for the observer and subject alike, as well as for self-assessment. Most adults can recognize parts of themselves in each stage with respect to one or more areas of their lives—all at the same time and without obvious contradiction. (It is this aspect that also makes it a useful assessment tool for use in management and psychotherapy.)

It is extremely common to be operating at a different stage with respect to various aspects of a love relationship(s), in one's job or career, as a parent, socially, spiritually, or with respect to ones' view of self, for example. Thus, one can be extremely evolved, i.e. operating in the highest stages as a professional or with respect to career issues, while operating in a much less mature manner in love relationships (or the other way around). Therefore, different motivational strategies are also effective for the same person, depending on the area of life or the specific situation being focused on.

The Stage Climbing model refers to the stage that is most consistent with how one normally (though not always) functions in a specific area of life as his or her

default stage. Think of a default stage as the *principal operating position* in that life area. Quite obviously, one's default stage can vary drastically from one life area to another.

In the terminology of Stage Climbing, a *hook* is a belief, feeling, or behavior that is *uncharacteristically* typical of a stage higher *or* lower than one's default stage. Some hooks, such as those to the higher stages (Six and Seven) are beneficial, while others such as those in the lower stages can be extremely counterproductive, as we will explore in this chapter. In therapy and life coaching as well as types of coaching in the workplace performed by managers, we spend much of our time treating the problematic hooks that hold our clients back, by teaching clients how to *manage* them. Moreover, in the workplace, we use the hooks we can observe, as clues to help us select a motivational strategy, normally with the goal of optimal performance for those we wish to motivate. Hooks in various stages can be thought of as guides to the path toward one's highest potential. I will illustrate this with examples by stage.

The Stage Climbing approach challenges coaches first to identify the stage of a coachee they would like to help motivate. This can be done simply by focusing on his or her present behavior and/or performance (as well as other factors that are relevant to a performance review, for example). The seven stages below illustrate this along with optimal strategies for motivation, by the seven stages:

Remember, the stages themselves are simply plateaus of development that pinpoint how much one has matured or evolved in any given life area; cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally and/or socially (for example). Think of stages as *benchmarks* that can explain what drives or motivates one in practically all situations across different areas of life.

As I summarize each stage below, please note that for the sake of brevity, I may refer to those who are operating at a given stage as Ones, Twos, Threes, Fours, Fives, Sixes or Sevens. This by no means implies that anyone is ever incapable of operating at other stages—higher or lower—in different situations (or different workplaces, for example) or in every part of their lives.

The Seven Stages and How to Use Them in Motivational Coaching

The stage at which coachees you are assessing are operating is identified by the behavior, attitude or pattern they present. This can be indicative of their actual default stage and/or the hooks which govern them in the aspect of life or situation for which they are being coached.

Stages One through Four are our normal or typical *default stages* from birth through late adolescence. However, *problematic hooks* in the first four stages are also the ones that most often keep adults stuck and sometimes unable to reach (and sometimes even recognize) their highest potential.

Stage One **is the only possible stage during infancy;** as an adult (obviously much later in life than would be *normal* psychological development), problematic hooks in the form of beliefs, attitudes and behaviors typical of Stage One can potentially power excessive dependency on others, and even defeat efforts to take initiative—much like an infant—often resulting in feelings of inadequacy, victimhood and a preoccupation with safety and security.

Ones long to have all their needs met with minimal effort or obligation. Conflict is handled at Stage One by doing what is easiest, such as latching on to, surrendering and/ or allowing some person or force that they consider stronger or "more capable" to take over the situation, thus allowing them to disown any conflict by obeying, being compliant and supporting any means of resolving conflict that keeps them under the radar screen.

When operating at Stage One, happiness (and even success) is being in a reality where things are easy, with no demands or challenges to worry about. Like those who operate in every stage, the cognitions by which they view themselves is what govern their actions. Examples for Stage One include, "I am inadequate"; "I am helpless"; "I can't do it"; "Life is too hard and thus, I must be taken care of", etc. These self-views can zap practically any vision of success or independence. Thus, genuine success is not *yet* in their line of vision, other than to be defined by having a reliable and dependable caretaker who is also a provider of all necessities. The ideal career or job for a One provides safety (often in a sheltered work environment) and security, and is optimally unchallenging and conflict free. While many Ones (and I'd argue most), are so resistant to any kind of intervention, a One motivated to change his or her life, can achieve amazing results.

For example, here is how one client (I'll call her Susan) explains her Stage One hooks: "I could never handle conflict. I just walked away whenever anything upset me and went right to self-pity, until I had no more marriage, almost no friends and couldn't keep a job. I finally realized that the problem wasn't everyone else, but me. That realization was the first step in turning my life around, by refusing to no longer be a victim". For Susan, some cognitive restructuring along with baby action steps designed to give her a win along with reinforcement of her new rational beliefs, was what it took for her to take the initiative to dramatically turn her like around. Once she realized that she "can do it", the bulk of the work was done, and she was able to make larger and larger strides until she was clearly in control of her life. Susan's situation also illustrates that by managing, removing or neutralizing Stage One hooks, it is possible to be operating at the higher and even the highest stages very quickly!

This case also illustrates what it took for Susan to be able to leave Stage One behind. (I will present an example of someone doing this type of stage climb for each stage.) For most coaches, helping a coachee to Stage Climb in this manner would probably be their first choice. However, when performing motivational coaching, this is not always an option, since for a variety of reasons, being a mechanism of change may not be appropriate for a motivational coach. For instance, a coachee may for a variety of reasons be resistant, unwilling or unable to make significant changes in a context such as the workplace. Thus, it is essential to recognize

what a motivational coach's best options are, when working with a coachee that will probably not see coaching as an opportunity to change. For this reason, I will present strategies throughout this chapter—by the stages—for motivating the coachee you have as he or she is.

To optimally motivate a *One* in the workplace, provide an atmosphere that is nonthreatening, comfortable, devoid of pressure or conflict and as easy and secure as possible. Also, it's best to give them small tasks at which they can easily succeed, and arrange for them to work with others who can help them in a non-threatening way. Until they understand that it's in their best interest, pushing them to advance themselves generally triggers anxieties generated by their view of self, and predictably backfires.

Note: Remember that a One as we are describing it here is defined by the behavior and performance displayed in the workplace (or in whatever other context they are being coached), regardless of what would be the "normal" stage of development (for an adult in our society this is Stage 5) or stages they are capable of operating at in other situations. This principle applies and should be kept in mind when selecting a motivational strategy for those operating at each of the other stages as well.

Stage Two is the normal and typical stage for toddlers, where learning limits is the principal task. Problematic hooks in Stage Two can thereafter and as an adult, normally lead one to a life without regard to limits or boundaries, resulting in primitive and highly undisciplined behavior with extreme self-centeredness along with the "toddler like" tendency to act out and create much chaos for themselves and others.

For a *Two*, happiness and success are achieved by getting exactly what they want without regard to how it affects anyone else (their feelings of entitlement can be boundless) and where the end justifies the means; while avoiding any scrutiny, punishment or other consequences for their behavior.

Like those who operate in every stage, the cognitions by which they view themselves is what governs their actions. For example:

- "I *must* always enjoy myself, have and do whatever I want, regardless of the effect I (or my actions) may have on others. Life, should/must always be easy for me".
- "I don't want to change. The other person (people, or the world) should change". "I cannot stand frustration or discomfort. I do things simply because I can and don't concern myself with long-term consequences. I won't change or alter my behavior even, if I know it's the 'right thing to do'."
- "People around me (such as in the workplace) are merely resources for money, sex, power, cover, or position".
- "The best way to handle your conscience (if you have one) is to ignore it".
- "I will be/do/say whatever I have to in order to get what I want at any given moment or in any given situation".
- "I must always be treated as I demand to be (or with respect); and anyone who doesn't is just asking for revenge".

Adult *Twos* tend to handle conflict by using some form of deception or strong-arm tactic. In other words, "doing whatever you have to do" or "being whatever you have to be"—sometimes even without limits—to assure that they get their way or get away with whatever they do. To get what they want *Twos* routinely lie or deceive. Thus, they might be extremely charming to manipulate someone, and/or extremely brutal to bully or force them, or any unique combination thereof; that is whatever it takes to control, overpower and win in the moment.

Success in the workplace is achieved by getting away with something, achieving dominance over people, stealing or dishonestly "making" easy money, grabbing credit that isn't earned and enjoying the harassment of others in whatever form it takes.

In situations where people under my charge were exposed for deliberately violating policy, claiming undeserved credit or other forms of dishonesty, harassing subordinates or coworkers, or engaging in illegal or unethical behavior; I have tended to terminate them immediately. I know of a few, but very few happy workplace stories about giving someone who operates at Stage Two, a pass or second chance. On rare occasions, I have tried, but without a lot of success to report.

However, much as it is with Ones, Twos can change once they realize that continuing their Stage Two behavior is not in *their* best interest.

Joe: "I finally decided to turn my life around after being incarcerated for being part of a scam. Before that, 'the world was my oyster'. I was very good at manipulating, deceiving, controlling and overpowering people in almost any situation. What motivated me to change, was the realization that unless I did life would never get better".

In my early career, I worked with criminals who were given probation or parole with the stipulation that they receive treatment. Those who genuinely climbed out of Stage Two, were almost without exception motivated by the threat of losing a relationship they valued or a career opportunity that proved to be a better deal than anything that could prompt them to reoffend. But any life coaching or other opportunities for help they are offered, must for them *clearly* pass the, "what's in it for me?" test.

To optimally motivate a *Two* in the workplace: Some organizations do have a role for someone who can use their Stage Two tactics for the organizations' benefit. As long as you are not the recipient of those tactics, your wisdom, values, principles and ethical threshold prevails. Depending on the individual you are trying to motivate (and assuming he or she is willing and capable of operating at higher stages at times), certain strategies for those in the higher stages below, may be appropriate for these rare situations.

Stage Three is the usual stage through late childhood, where it's important to learn about and integrate the rules of living in a civilized society, establish a routine, stay within a comfort zone (usually defined by others) and to fit in with people around them—outside the house—that they have not necessarily chosen. Thereafter, ones' *problematic* Stage Three hooks can result in various degrees of rigidity up to and even including an authoritarian personality—not yet ready themselves to be unique, or to allow others under their control to "think outside the box". Threes can

be extremely inflexible regarding rules and ideas. In their quest to be conflict free, they tend to look for and hang on whatever answers their "book of rules" (which to them is their "bible") that governs them, demands. Thus, the most effective way to recognize a *Three* is by their inflexible adherence to a rule, regardless of how relevant to the specific situation it might be. To a *Three*, there's no other way.

Conflict is generally handled at Stage Three by following a set of black-and-white rules that "clearly dictate" who/what is right and who/what is wrong. Because challenging rules or authority is generally out of the question, Threes are often *in* a box. Closed to new ideas that question their deeply embedded rules, they tend to seek people and situations that merely reinforce their conformity to certain beliefs, lifestyle choices, and ways to behave. When *Threes* find more comfort in the rigidities they have adopted than any pain they experience because of being stifled by them, there can be little reason leave their comfort zone, which is what I have long referred to in previous books as a "*comfortable state of discomfort*" (Broder, 1988). Therefore, it's much easier for them to comply or "surrender" as the means to end the conflict.

Executives and managers in the workplace who operate from Stage Three, characteristically use fear and intimidation to manage their subordinates with an authoritarian "my way or the highway" attitude. Quite often in organizations that thrive on authority based management styles, Stage Three bosses experience their own superiors in the same way, never questioning someone of a higher position or rank. For many organizations (e.g., military, post office, police and fire departments, and large construction or factory-type operations, for example), this form of unbending "by the book" management is deliberately and often rightly perceived as necessary to accomplish the organizational mission. The Stage Three atmosphere can be one that is unforgiving, and unbending on discipline. (Think prisons or wartime military operations, at it's extreme, where motivation is often limited to obeying the rules and doing what is demanded of you, simply to avoid harsher punishment or other feared consequences.) It typically discourages and often punishes even dissenting opinions of subordinates, even if they make a great deal of sense and are given with the best of intentions regarding the bigger picture. Thus, a Stage Three management style certainly does have its place, but for maximum motivational effectiveness, it's based on fear and, thus contains rather obvious limitations.

Happiness and success for Stage Three adults can best be described as the content feelings they associate with living life "properly" by staying within the black-and-white parameters of their acceptable world. Fitting in, not attracting negative attention to themselves and doing or thinking what they "should" be doing or thinking (as well as doing their part in getting others around them, to "toe the line"), so that they fit in well with like-minded people who are part of their world.

Below is a sampling of some of the most common attitudes and beliefs that to some extent, *Threes* typically have about themselves, that power their Stage Three hooks. *They can be considered problematic, to the extent that they impede one's goals in the area of life where motivation is an issue.* However, for the purposes of this chapter—which is written for the person whose task it is to do the coaching and/or motivating—it is assumed that changing these beliefs

(through cognitive restructuring and other therapeutic strategies that are beyond our focus here) is not usually an option:

- "I *must fit in* by doing only what I *should* do and by being what I *should* be—that which is expected of me—or some dire consequence will result".
- "Others must do things *my way* and/or even believe the same things I do" (for Threes in a position of authority).
- "The *only* way to avoid conflict is to follow strict tradition and obey the rules exactly".
- "I've had certain beliefs and attitudes as long as I can remember. And even if they no longer serve me, changing them will lead to more chaos and conflict in my life than I can handle".
- "Without a tight and predictable structure, I can't manage my life".
- "It's *always* wrong to question authority. There's no such thing as a good reason to break the law or disobey a rule and those who do should *always* be punished severely".

Jim: "I had no interest in joining the family business, which was lucrative career track for my siblings and their spouses as well as my father and uncles, but I gave in and felt miserable for it". For Jim, some cognitive restructuring to address his guilt and all his fears related to leaving his comfort zone with little or no family support, enabled him to make the career move he was truly motivated to make by following his passion. "My own *self*-acceptance improved greatly, once I understood how this family rule made it necessary for me to choose between conforming and having a life I didn't want and having the life, I truly wanted. All I can say now is 'what a no-brainer!'" Jim's situation is a clear illustration of the power of *intrinsic* motivation over *extrinsic* motivation.

To optimally motivate a Three in the workplace: Provide as conflict free an environment as possible, where the rules are crystal clear, unambiguous and where reinforcement for following or championing them is regularly given (be it positive or negative reinforcement). *Threes* characteristically understand that there is little possibility of making waves, if the policies and directives are followed and the well defined boundaries are adhered to. Optimally, there is a clear contract, and assurance that "by doing whatever is expected of you and staying on the good side of whoever or whatever is the authority to be obeyed, you'll be rewarded with security and other tangibles and well as the potential to be promoted and be in the rule enforcement role yourself". *Authoritarian* (as opposed to authoritative) management is what is most respected by Threes. *Effective coaches and managers can also be powerful forces for encouraging a Three to wonder outside of their comfort zone, when appropriate, for a glimpse at and appreciation of their uniqueness.* As with Jim, sometimes this kind of mentoring can be the breakthrough that opens the door to higher stage functioning.

Stage Four is the typical stage throughout adolescence, which is when we not only form our *unique* identities, but ideally come to accept ourselves for the unique individuals we've become (as opposed to simply fitting in as would a *Three*). As an adult, however, our problematic Stage Four hooks often trigger in us: anxiety or

depression, insecurity, self-doubt, alienation, shame, and a wide variety of self-defeating behavior as well as an excessive amount of approval seeking, perfectionism, fear of failure and self-consciousness—much like the typical aspects of adolescence that are most difficult emotionally. In my experience, problematic Stage Four hooks are the most common presenting problems for which people seek psychotherapy.

Above all, *Fours* strive be accepted, admired, respected, and/or loved by those who matter, on any level (regardless of how minor). And since image is often an obsession, sometimes these needs even extend to total strangers—in the case of celebrities or those who may be known in a specific niche or community. In any case, *Fours* are most typically influenced, governed and even haunted by thoughts of approval, validation and how others view them. And this goes beyond those who have *actual* authority over them, such as superiors at work or people who are officially or unofficially at some higher level in a given aspect of life.

Fours typically handle conflict by taking the road that produces the most validation or the least rejection from others; the least anxiety, self-doubt or embarrassment. Happiness and success is about *receiving* acceptance, love and approval, fame, and positive recognition (such as winning an award or doing something that triggers widespread praise or positive recognition).

These are a sampling of the attitudes and beliefs that power all of this anxiety and insecurity that characterizes problematic Stage Four hooks:

- "What others think of me *is crucially important*, regardless of who they are or how I feel about them". "Impressing others is a *necessary priority* for me".
- "I *must* be loved or approved of by others (a specific person, group or people in general) and/or meet their expectations".
- "I can *only accept myself* to the degree that I am accepted by others. I must do whatever it takes to be accepted in order to feel good about myself, as rejection is *unbearable*".
- "Failing at something (e.g., a work project, a relationship, my job/business, an exam, a sexual performance, or to meet a goal) makes me a *total* failure to myself, in the eyes of others, or both". "Any result less than *perfection* is totally unacceptable".

Jana: "I became a teacher because I was attracted to the stature and power it seemed to provide. But I did not at all enjoy the actual day-to-day work. I soon quit being an art teacher, which felt repetitious and too structured, to pursue a career in graphic art, which allows me to quietly do exactly what I love doing all day. I guess I had to get this 'prestige thing' out of my system first".

For Jana, understanding that her conflict was between *being something* (an art teacher motivated by being looked up to by her students) and *doing something* (graphic art—which she believed she was born to do—motivated intrinsically by her passion and best talents) was what pushed her to make the career change.

I have also seen doctors and lawyers, for example, in my practice who disliked the work they did, but admitted they were there because of their professions' prestige and the acceptance they perceived from their parents and/or others for doing a

certain type of work. In fact, I once coined the lighthearted term *"beaholic"* to describe this all too common Stage Four trait, in which one is focused on their title and the image it exudes, while not necessarily liking or living up to the actual duties and responsibilities of their role.

To optimally motivate a *Four* in the workplace, *recognition is the key*. *Fours* seek awards, celebrity, prestige, validation, praise, love, and approval in as global away as possible (as opposed recognition for some specific achievement). An opportunity to impress friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and relatives or the public (many *Fours* crave celebrity) is rarely missed; if at all possible.

An effective manager trying to optimize or reinforce good performance in the workplace will give ample praise (as publicly as possible) and be as generous as possible with personal validation. At Stage Four, this is often far more validating than money, for instance. *Fours* who are promoted to management positions need to be coached about how the nature of respect and deference they receive from subordinates is more often related to their *position*, rather than to them *personally*. Otherwise, they can be easily manipulated and/or tempted to form double (and sometimes even highly inappropriate) relationships with subordinates, for example. The need or demand to be liked by subordinates can greatly dilute the quality and effectiveness of someone who could otherwise be an excellent manager, teacher or coach.

Stage Five is the normal or typical stage for an adult in our society. At Stage Five, one's self view is generally as a role juggler, or the sum of his/her life roles (for example, roles undertaken in one's business or career, as a spouse, breadwinner, student, parent, friend, golf partner or church fundraiser). A characteristic view of life at Stage Five is generally content, comfortable, dispassionate, or neutral. This stage offers the ideal attitudes and frame of mind to function best, while doing what's merely necessary to keep life together and functioning. Therefore, a Stage Five frame of mind is important to have at times with respect to certain relationships (generally ones that are not chosen and often not even desired) and activities (such as doing obligatory chores) as well as to handle many of the tasks and issues that are necessary so that life goes on and to set the stage for the more enjoyable and passion driven parts of life.

However, normal is not the same as ideal. For example, some people describe particular aspects of this stage as "going through the motions". Thus, disappointment often results when higher degrees of fulfillment are expected than Stage Five can deliver. For example, it is at this stage where we make a living, but not necessarily enjoy our work. The downside result most often reported by *Fives* is "something missing", overwhelm, stress, and the inability to convert success or even the sense of "having it all" to feelings of happiness or fulfillment. Career wise, job and career satisfaction surveys routinely find that somewhere around 80% report a significant degree of dissatisfaction with their job or career. Sadly, this means that a clear majority of people in the workforce are not *intrinsically* motivated (as in the highest stages), but motivated by necessity and *extrinsic* rewards, such as money, connections, belongingness (being part of a group), "fairness", a place to go/something to do everyday, and various perks.

Thus, for *Fives*, the definition of happiness (or contentment) and success is to have affluence and/or whatever they believe is necessary for living a good, worthwhile and effective life as well as having all their roles adequately covered, comfortably balanced (for example, pursuing a hobby and making time for pleasurable activities to "recharge your batteries") and problem free life—without being overwhelmed or "feeling stressed". "Pleasurable activities" include those that provide a 'healthy alternative' to work and chores. When taking on something new, *Fives* are most likely to evaluate the monetary aspects of it as well as how it will affect other life roles.

Conflict for Fives is generally handled by evaluating whether and how the source of conflict is related to life's bigger picture, then by taking the action(s) that come as close as possible to maintaining life's balance.

Problematic Stage Five hooks are powered by the following attitudes and beliefs about oneself:

- "I feel trapped with no choices—my life runs me".
- "Life is full of obligations that I must personally meet and often don't enjoy".
- "I must keep it all together and masterfully step up to the plate with all of my roles and duties (regardless of whether or not they are working or provide me feelings of satisfaction, fulfillment or gratification)".
- "I cannot tolerate the void caused by_____ (a lost job, ended relationship, etc.). I must (or can't rest until I) fill that 'slot' immediately".
- "If I ask for help in fulfilling a role or obligation, it means I am weak".
- "Even though I 'have it all', in reality still feel unfulfilled".

Marcia: "I got laid off from my job as a bank manager as part of a major downsizing of the company. I was devastated—angry, depressed and very scared about my future".

Marcia's first impulse was to fill her job slot with what she'd been doing. But after some cognitive restructuring designed to address her anxiety and anger, she decided to change careers. "What surprised me the most, was that when I got beyond the fear and anger, I was not motivated to get another job in the banking field, where I'd worked for 25 years. Sure, I missed the money, benefits, prestige and security. But that I was selected to be one of those let go, enraged me like nothing I'd experienced before. After much soul searching, I decided to make a career change to the travel industry. Now I am actually grateful for the layoff, as it was wakeup call that pushed me toward doing what I really wanted to do". Marcia made the climb to Stage Six in her career, that she acknowledges she may never have considered on her own, had it not been for the crisis that was triggered by losing her job. This motivated her to look at other parts of her life as well. Her story is not an uncommon one.

To optimally motivate a *Five* in the workplace: Most managers, particularly those who themselves operate at Stage Five tend to have the least trouble understanding how to motivate the Fives who report to them (as opposed to virtually any other stage). Money, benefits, privileges, promotions, connections, fairness, respect from others for *specific* things (such as an aspect of job performance and how roles and

responsibilities are handled) tend to be the most effective Stage Five motivators. Having work obligations under control with an acceptable degree of efficiency and competence, so that superiors up the chain are satisfied, is characteristically what it takes to be sufficiently rewarded. And for most *Fives*, that's the definition of effective motivation—reminding us once again, that *normal and optimal are two very different things.*

Stages Six and Seven are the stages to which most people *aspire*. For this reason, I call them *"target stages"* They define how we operate at our best. When operating at one's target stage, passion and purpose are the driving forces; and fulfillment and happiness are *internally* generated. In Stage Climbing (Broder, 2012), I refer to operating at these target stages (Six and Seven) as *"the zone of your highest potential"* and *"the life you were born to live".*

This is the zone where we naturally and with the least effort, perform at our best. In practice, much like clouds block the sun, by removing one's problematic hooks at each of the lower stages, clients find themselves operating at their target stages, which are characterized by a unique variety of the characteristics first described by Maslow (1971), in his definition of Self Actualization.

Indeed, a self-view of life at these stages includes feeling the very best about oneself, and attuned to one's life's purpose—which often includes even a spiritual perspective.

Here are some examples of the key attitudes and beliefs, that when hardwired, lead to the self-permission to access this zone of one's highest potential, aka Stages Six and Seven:

- "I want to be doing what I love and to feel rewarded *internally* as well as externally".
- "I can handle being overwhelmed and resolve to use those times when I *feel* overwhelmed and anxious as learning experiences that can act as insight to draw upon when deciding what to keep in my life or whether to take on something new".
- "Joy, satisfaction, fulfillment and gratification are nice to have, but I realize and accept that there are many things I choose to have in my life that don't or can't provide them to the extent that I wish they would". (This is an important attitude for things in life that cry out for a Stage Five frame of mind.)
- "I can ask for help from others without getting down on myself".
- "I have the power to determine my destiny and change my life".

These are where Stages Six and Seven are similar. However, there are also important differences:

Stage Six characterizes an adult with strong integrity and comfort with one's own uniqueness. Stage Six behavior is a sign of maturity in the part of one's life where *Six* is the default stage. For our purposes, we assume it's the workplace. At Stage Six, *we rise above our roles*; and operate according to our own unique and internally generated set of principles, values and passions. To the extent that these become driving forces, genuine fulfillment, spiritual connection, love, excellence, curiosity and creativity result.

At Stage Six, what motivates us is doing what we love, where we are most creative, are best at and most enjoy. This includes striving to fill a niche, perhaps as well it could possibly be done and in one's own inimitable and passion driven way, with *intrinsic pleasure* as the main source of motivation.

Sixes are most often comfortable operating according to their own values, core principles consciously identified purpose, and code of ethics. Most typically, they handle conflict by trusting their own instincts.

Happiness and feelings of success are characteristically measured by the degree that something specific triggers the best feelings about oneself. These feelings are also triggered by the satisfaction of reaching a difficult goal or solving a tough problem, the excitement that comes from feeling/being unstoppable and being attuned to a genuine purpose.

Here are some typical Stage Six career and workplace attitudes:

- "I love what I do and *feel at my best about myself* when I am doing it".
- "It's what comes easiest to me, feels most flowing and natural".
- "I feel fulfilled irrespective of the financial and other external rewards I get (although I still may vigorously strive for them, as I see fit)".
- "I get off on the challenge of what I am doing—it's my calling—often without focusing on the results".
- "If I were the wealthiest person on earth, I would still choose to be doing some form of what I am doing".

Kenneth, is a 40-year-old former corporate attorney, who changed his specialty to prosecuting criminals: "Had you asked me when I was earning over eight times as much as I make now as a prosecutor why I worked in corporate, I would have pointed to the money and perks or said, 'I'd go nuts if I weren't doing *something*'. Now that I love what I do and am very good at it, the answer is a lot easier. Even though I am making much less money, I wouldn't want to be doing anything else. My work has a purpose and I look forward to stepping up to the plate and meeting the many challenges of it every day. No amount of money could ever replace that. If I ever make another career change, it would have to be a combination of me hearing another calling and no longer feeling as passionate about and committed to my present work". Kenneth went on to say that if he was wealthy enough never to have to work again and there was no money to pay him, he'd do exactly what he's doing without pay. Like some of the other examples presented in this chapter, his motivation is typical of those who've climbed from Stage Five to Stage Six, career wise.

To optimally motivate a *Six* in the workplace: If there are people who operate *exclusively* at Stage Six, they are rare. However, anyone who chooses a career path by following his or her passion, is or certainly has the potential to be operating at Stage Six to a significant extent in that life area. Wise managers who recognize and reinforce Stage Six behavior, usually find their efforts to be quite worthwhile. In addition, it makes good business sense. *Sixes*, by definition, are motivated intrinsically and therefore find that their greatest reward is the satisfaction they experience that results from doing what they love and were meant to do as dictated by their

unique gifts and talents, meeting a challenge, creating, performing optimally with passion, ease and even fun (as opposed to tedious effort and financial concerns, for example). Therefore, it is most important to recognize this. *Give them whatever tools and environmental conditions they need to do their job optimally and then get out of their way* (as much as possible), *in order to let them work their magic.*

Sixes rarely respond well to *authoritarian* management styles. The best manager of a Six will be *authoritative* and acknowledge that respect needs to be earned (or commanded), never *demanded* merely by title or rank. Reinforce their tendency to give dissenting opinions, as those operating at Stage Six are characteristically valuable members of the team.

Also remember that Sixes can be most vulnerable to job burnout. (Burnout uses the metaphor of fire. This metaphor is excellent, since something needs to be on fire in order to burnout.) When sixes are experiencing burnout, often their first choice is to find another passion driven mission and leave. If this is not possible, they will sometimes revert to operating at Stage five until the right opportunity emerges. Thus, all parties will be well served, by treating burnout as an occasion to explore where and how a member of the team operating at Stage Six has evolved, in order to leave no stone unturned in creating the best circumstances to keep this valuable person on board.

Stage Seven is the highest stage attainable in this Stage Climbing model. To the extent that one is operating at Stage Seven, he/she is beyond needing *self*-gratification, and finds fulfillment through acts of benevolence, purpose-driven and often spiritually-driven contributions to others; to the world, and to being an agent of change in some large or small way. *At Stage Seven, self-interest is eclipsed by a defined purpose outside of oneself.*

Sevens strive to change the world or a part of it in some way——large or small, in order to have the greatest possible impact on a cause with which they are involved. Sometimes merely the satisfaction that comes from the opportunity to touch one life (as a mentor or even as a parent, for example), the lives of certain people around them or championing a cause that betters many lives is sufficient motivation.

Sevens characteristically handle conflict by carefully listening to all points of view, considering each possibility, then making the decision or taking the action(s) that comes closest to best serving everyone involved by consensus, if possible—then staunchly standing by their decision or action, as much as is necessary, as long as it's consistent with the big picture mission or purpose. Sevens are quite commonly encountered doing volunteer work, for example; serving on charity boards or performing other kinds of service for which they are not given tangible rewards or any type of quid pro quo.

Their happiness and success generally results from achieving their desired impact on a person, people or segment of the world that they intrinsically care about. Helping others and seeing them reap the benefits of their efforts for the greater good is usually the only reward they need. Like *Sixes*, they are governed by their own values, principles, purpose, calling and connection to their own unique form of a higher power.

To optimally motivate a *Seven* in the workplace: I did not offer a case for this stage, since *Sevens are perhaps the easiest to motivate because they tend to be self-motivated in whatever capacity they find themselves operating as a Seven.* They require little more than the opportunity and freedom to serve, in an environment where their mission or cause is effectively advanced. Recognition or other rewards that are effective motivators at other stages are often appreciated, but rarely affect ones' degree of motivation at Stage Seven. Examples of this include the best parenting, whistle blowing, taking an unpopular stand on an issue that could result in negative consequences, random acts of kindness, charitable contributions of time or money, helping someone who has nothing to offer you in return, and investing valuable resources in a cause that will in some way affect the larger world or some subset of it.

Applying the Stage Climbing Model

An understanding of the each of the seven stages (the motives, cognitions and behaviors that define them), is the starting point for observing the stage at which someone you are seeking to motivate, tends to operate in the specific area where motivation is in order. This chapter assumes that as a coach or manager, you are working with what you have, as opposed to what you would like to have. Thus, many of the strategies for helping someone to operate at higher stages (such as in the role of a psychotherapist) is beyond our scope of this chapter.

Even though Stages Six and Seven appear to be quite appealing (since *Sixes and Sevens* are for the most part intrinsically or *self-motivated*); remember that the majority of the people needing motivation to achieve optimal performance are at least knowingly seeking and striving for *external motivators* such as money, recognition, advancement, security, a conflict free work environment, the freedom to stay within their comfort zone (if they choose to), and other rewards typical of those operating at the stages below Six and Seven.

In summary, it's the stage at which one is operating that determines the motivation to which you or whomever you wish to motivate will be most likely to respond optimally. *The Stage Climbing model demonstrates that it is generally unnecessary for adults to navigate each of the seven stages in any particular order.* Thus, it's not only possible, but quite common for anyone (beginning even with those who may be operating at Stage One) to remove one or more problematic hooks and then find themselves operating at the highest stages, as a result of applying specific cognitive behavioral strategies tailored for maximum effectiveness at each stage. However, what makes this possible is a sufficient degree of *self*-motivation, not unlike what is key for a successful psychotherapy outcome.

I conclude with a summary of the most effective motivators at each stage:

- **Stage One**——Whatever feels easiest, safest, least threatening and most comfortable

- **Stage Two**——Opportunities to lure people in and/or reap rewards without paying the necessary dues or need to "play on a level field" … The ability to behave irresponsibly without consequences… Finding opportunities for themselves, that may be in conflict with the role for which they were hired
- **Stage Three**——Not making waves, by doing whatever is expected of you, and staying on the good side of whoever or whatever is considered to be an authority that needs to be obeyed … Your power and authority to rule others
- **Stage Four**——Awards, celebrity, prestige, validation, praise, love, recognition, and approval of you (as *globally* as possible) … The opportunity to impress friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and relatives or even the public (such as with various levels of celebrity).
- **Sage Five**——Money, benefits, privileges, professional recognition from others for a specific achievement (or for a *specific* role you play such as a manager) and/or how roles and responsibilities are handled … Having all roles, chores and obligations under control, with overwhelm and stress in check.
- **Stage Six**——The feeling of satisfaction associated with doing what you love and were meant to do, as dictated by your unique passions, sense of purpose, gifts and talents … Meeting a challenge… Answering a calling and becoming intrinsically committed to it… Performing optimally with passion and ease as opposed to effort and difficulty… Whatever triggers feelings of joy and *self-motivated* involvement… The opportunity to be genuinely creative and the creative process that results… Feeling the best about oneself (Note: Stage Six motivators generally apply to Stage Seven as well.)
- **Stage Seven** (in addition to Stage Six motivators)—The opportunity to serve one person (or many), a larger community and/or a cause or mission you strongly believe in enough not to need extrinsic rewards … To solve a problem that has an impact on people or things that are larger than you and perhaps even the circle of people around you… The satisfaction of touching even one life (as a parent, for example) or bettering many lives.

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Resilience Coaching

Michael Neenan

Introduction

I've long been interested in resilience particularly focusing on stories of people who survived very dark times (e.g. Nazi concentration camps) and were certainly marked but not broken by their experiences and managed to find meaning, purpose and happiness in their post-adversity lives. They refused to become trapped in embittered victimhood as a result of these grim experiences. What were the qualities they possessed that enabled them to survive and thrive? (Some qualities associated with resilience will be discussed later.) Whatever life throws at you, life events requiring resilient responding to them can be viewed along a scale of severity from the unpleasant experiences of daily life (e.g. bullying boss, partner's affair) to highly traumatic experiences (e.g. being raped). The strength of your resilience response in combatting these events will probably vary throughout your life.

When I entered the world of mental health as a trainee in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), the focus was on maladaptive responses to adversity. Mental health was a misnomer: it was mental ill-health that was the real subject. The resilience literature, on the other hand, examined the factors that contributed to successful adaptation to adverse events—what the person was doing right. Resilience is often viewed as the bedrock of positive mental health (Persaud, 2001). I was having a parallel education: understanding both maladaptive and adaptive responses to tough times. I eventually married my two interests by developing resilience through the application of cognitive behavioural psychology (Neenan, 2017).

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Rational-Emotive Cognitive-Behavioural Coaching (RE-CBC)

Rational-emotive cognitive-behavioural coaching (RE-CBC) is derived from the theory and practice of two leading cognitive behavioural theorists, therapists and researchers: the late Albert Ellis (REBT) and Aaron Beck (CBT). The cornerstone of RE-CBC is eliciting clients' appraisals of troublesome events (internal and external) in order to understand and help them to change their unproductive emotional and behavioural reactions to these events. What we think (our attitudes, beliefs, meanings) and how we think (the way information is processed to arrive at our conclusions about the self, others and the world) are of particular interest in RE-CBC. Following on from this, RE-CBC can be defined as:

> helping individuals to develop their capabilities in order to achieve their goals in selected areas with a particular focus on the beliefs, emotions and behaviours that help or hinder this development (Neenan & Dryden, 2014).

For example, a manager working in a high pressure environment had to deal with over 200 emails a day and wanted to learn 'greater email efficiency' in order to reduce the times she felt anxious and overwhelmed by this onslaught ('It's doing my head in', i.e. perceived loss of control). When she thought like this, she avoided her emails which then added to the backlog. As her coach, we devised an email classification system (immediate response, today, tomorrow, next few days, delegate) and brief criteria for choosing each category as well as increasing the time she spent on her emails by taking it from other areas such as having shorter team and individual meetings. These measures restored her self-confidence, her anxiety and avoidance dropped sharply: 'I'm controlling the flow of emails now rather than me believing they're driving me round the bend!'

Before we move on, a brief mention of the different types of coaching where RE-CBC is applied:

- Life Coaching—helping people to become self-empowered to achieve their goals including workplace ones;
- Skills coaching—learning a new skill and/or improving an existing one;
- Performance coaching—closing the gap between actual and desired performance;
- Resilience coaching—developing a resilience improvement plan (RIP), i.e. how to make yourself more resilient;
- Developmental coaching—longer-term, open-ended approach which usually focuses on fundamental personal and professional issues (as shown in the coaching case example later in this chapter).

RE-CB coaches, like coaching in general, do not see clients seeking primary help for clinical problems (e.g. severe depression or panic disorder) but emotional problems usually appear at some stage of the coaching process such as procrastination, having a short fuse when under pressure or worried about being seen as weak or incompetent. RE-CBC has many of the characteristics associated with the general model of coaching: staying mainly in the present (information from the past is

collected if needed to clarify the client's current concerns), setting goals, devising action plans, improving clients' self-regulatory skills to keep them goal-focused, monitoring progress, teaching problem-solving skills, dealing with psychological blocks to change (coaches without a background in psychology are often taught the ABCDE model of psychological problem solving which is explained later in this chapter; see Landsberg [2015]). Therefore, this close fit between the specialisation of RE-CBC and the general form of coaching leads Grant (2012: xv) to state that 'the cognitive behavioural approach is fundamental to coaching'.

Resilience training and RE-CBC also have a very good fit. Leading resilience experts, Reivich and Shatté, in their book *The Resilience Factor* (Reivich & Shatté, 2002:11) write*:* 'Our research has demonstrated that …the principal obstacle to tapping into our inner strength lies with our cognitive style – ways of looking at the world and interpreting events that every one of us develops from childhood.'

When I, among others, adapted CBT to become RE-CBC (Neenan, 2008; Neenan & Palmer, 2012; Neenan & Dryden, 2014), I offered resilience as the framework within which coaching issues could be discussed. I wasn't imposing this framework. Companies invited me to run resilience-building workshops and individuals contacted me with their 'How do I make myself more resilient?' requests. Resilience is a subject of enduring interest to individuals, groups and organizations (Flach, 2004; Pemberton, 2015; Southwick & Charney, 2012). Reivich & Shatté (2002: 1) put the case for the importance of resilience:

> Everyone needs resilience. More than fifty years of scientific research have powerfully demonstrated that resilience is the key to success at work and satisfaction in life. Where you fall on the resilience curve – your natural reserves of resilience – affects your performance in school and at work, your physical health, your mental health, and the quality of your relationships. It is the basic ingredient to happiness and success.

Given that everyone has some degree of resilience—it's often said that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary—the focus with some of my coaching clients is on those areas where their 'natural reserves of resilience' are depleted and there's usually a frustrating sense of little or no forward momentum, no matter what they try. This depletion usually results in faltering performance, reduced productivity, constricted thinking and low self-confidence, e.g. 'It feels as if I've lost control and nothing works'. These clients often succumb to the 'tyranny of the shoulds' (Horney, 1950) such as 'This shouldn't be happening to me', 'I should have sorted it out by now' or 'I shouldn't be put in a position where others can see I'm not coping very well'. I once saw a client who believed that her resilience strengths were dependable and durable for every adverse situation she encountered in her life and was surprised and irritated to learn that when circumstances changed, her level of resilience altered (she came to coaching because the advance of her career plan wasn't keeping in step with her timetable for it).

What Is Resilience?

The popular but misleading view of resilience is bouncing back from adversity. This definition is misleading because bouncing back suggests only one speed of recovery; little, if any, emotional pain and struggle are experienced and your life returns to the pre-adversity status quo. More accurately, there are different speeds of recovery from tough times (coming back), more often than not 'suffering and struggle are experienced in forging resilience' (Walsh, 2016: 5) and what you've learned from these experiences can result in your life not returning to its pre-adversity state. A definition of resilience I would offer is:

> Marshalling your resources (e.g. psychological, spiritual, social) to cope adaptively with tough times and emerging from them sometimes a better, stronger, wiser person.

I say 'sometimes' because the uses of adversity (to borrow Shakespeare's phrase from *As you Like It*, Act II, Scene 1: Line 12) may be used up when the adversity has passed and any lessons learnt are now forgotten. A widespread definition of resilience I heard while running courses in companies was 'You suck it up and move forward'. This suggested the image of hardy individuals withstanding the hard knocks of corporate life, learning valuable lessons in the process, which were then carried forward into their next task or project. But I also saw 'sucking it up' often being used as a mantra, a reflexive response to others' enquiries as to how the individual was coping, with no real psychological processing of events in order to improve resilient responding to future workplace challenges (the coaching case study shows mantras being used without any favourable impact on the client).

Some people like to call themselves 'a resilient person' as if they're stress-resistant to whatever life throws at them, but the reality is more complex:

> Resilience should not be conceptualized as a static trait or characteristic of an individual. Resilience arises from many processes and interactions that extend beyond the boundaries of the human organism, including close relationships and social support. Moreover, an individual person may be resilient with respect to some kinds of stressors and not others (Masten & Wright, 2010: 215).

There is no automatic transfer of resilience attitudes and skills from situation to situation, so the person may demonstrate varying levels of resilience in each one as well as during different life stages; for example, he copes well with hard times when younger because he has a lot of social support whereas later in life when he is socially isolated his struggles are longer and harder to endure.

However, it should be pointed out that there is empirical support for both a trait (i.e. stable personality characteristic) vs. process (i.e. dynamic interaction of internal and external factors) view of resilience (Reich, Zautra, & Hall, 2010). So a trait approach would include attributes such as self-acceptance, openness to experience, not dependent on others' approval and a high threshold for tolerating frustration and discomfort. These attributes function as protective factors, i.e. acting as a buffer against hard times.

A point of interest for me in developing resilience programmes is when individuals maintain a rigid adherence to their preferred coping strategies when one of the hallmarks of a resilient outlook is flexibility of response to changing circumstance. For example, one person favours self-reliance (trait approach) but refuses to accept help when she clearly needs it while another person looks to relationships (process approach) to sustain him but won't learn to develop more self-support activities as support from others recedes. The first person fears being seen as weak for accepting help while the second person is reluctant to put in the effort to build these activities and believes they won't really help him.

Resilience has traditionally been discussed in the context of adversity but in recent years this discussion has been expanded to teach people resilience attitudes and skills to cope with the vicissitudes of daily life (Brooks & Goldstein, 2003). For example, some schools provide resilience training to run alongside their pupils' academic studies. Resilience is a quality sought in employees (Coutu, 2003) and career resilience (Grotberg, 2003) is required to keep adapting to a constantly changing work environment. So, what are some of the qualities that underpin a resilience outlook (this is a non-definitive list)?

- Keeping things in perspective: appraising events in a calm and measured way that enables the person to distinguish between what aspects of a situation are within her control to change and which ones are not.
- Self-acceptance: refraining from self-rating (e.g. 'I'm a failure') but rating aspects of the self such as certain behaviours and attitudes ('They're unhelpful') that interfere with goal-achievement. When adversity strikes, it's important to accept yourself for the emotional conflicts—e.g. 'Why me?' despair alternating with 'Get on with it!' grit—and intermittently faltering behavioural progress that are usually part of the struggle instead of berating yourself for not rising immediately to the challenge of adversity and overcoming it with faultless determination (this might be a perfectionist's definition of resilience).
- Flexible: the ability to think and act flexibly in the face of challenging and changing circumstances rather than locked into a fixed mindset of how things should or shouldn't be without any accompanying evidence to support the person's viewpoint.
- Support from others: asking for or accepting support in your time of need. Resilience is not developed in social isolation. Positive relationships are seen as a key protective factor across the lifespan when hard times arrive (Masten & Wright, 2010).
- Self-control—directing your mind and behaviour to carry out the steps required to achieve your goals and restraining the impulses that interfere with this process or threaten to undermine it such as not making decisions based on how you feel in the moment (e.g. comfort eating because you're upset) but how you want to feel at a later date (e.g. pleased with losing two stone).
- Curiosity: trying things out, asking questions, making discoveries to increase understanding of yourself and the world around you.

- Humour: finding light moments in dark times and, more generally, not taking oneself too seriously.
- Finding meaning: to guide a person through hard times towards a brighter future.

The word 'resilience' contains some of the qualities of a resilient outlook:

Reacting adaptively to adverse events
Effort to find solutions to problems
Seeking or accepting support when needed
Insight into what can and cannot be changed
Laughter to lighten dark times
Internal locus of control
Enduring discomfort and distress
New ways of seeing things (finding meaning)
Cognitive and behavioural flexibility
Engaging in positive relationships

Before explaining and discussing these qualities with clients, the coach should elicit their views of resilience and then compare them with his presentation of the subject. In essence, clients are receiving an education in how to make themselves more resilient. Also, client strengths should be listed—these can be revealed by asking for episodes of successful problem solving. Strengths can be built on and new ones learnt. For example, a client develops greater self-control by following the coach's suggestion of giving herself a daily dose of discomfort (spending an hour each day on tackling previously avoided paperwork) until the backlog is cleared. A new strength to learn is often self-acceptance as so many psychological problems in both coaching and therapy stem from self-depreciation. Extra-session activities based on internalizing self-acceptance would be clients placing themselves in situations where they, not just their opinions, are likely to be criticized, ridiculed or rejected (but not in situations where there could be a threat of physical harm).

Emotion and Behaviour in Resilience

Resilient responding to adversity is neither the absence of emotion (admitting to or showing negative emotion might be seen as a weakness) nor trying to feel positive about what's happening to you (looking on the bright side rather than acknowledging how you really feel). Resilience is about managing emotions, not supressing or manufacturing them. The only way that you can have an unemotional response to an event is if you truly don't care what has happened to you because the event has absolutely no significance for you. By definition, adversities are negative events which trigger negative emotions because we didn't want these unpleasant events to have occurred. However, since resilience depends on being flexible in thought and action when responding to adversity, you're not stuck in your negative feelings. These feelings only become problematic when they stop you from taking positive steps to change a situation which can be changed (e.g. improving your work performance) or adjusting constructively to it if it cannot be changed (e.g. you're sacked).

As resilience involves struggling to find a constructive way forward during tough times, you might believe that you have to win every struggle you're engaged in otherwise you're not demonstrating resilience. Not so. Being highly resilient is something to strive towards but is never perfectly executed at all times in all adverse situations. Bearing this in mind, acting resiliently can be seen as a ratio between helpful and unhelpful behaviour in pursuit of one's goals (e.g. executing helpful behaviour 80% of the time and unhelpful behaviour 20% of the time). So resilience does involve acting non-resiliently at times or, maybe more accurately, what appears to be non-resilient to the observer of the person's behaviour and/or the person's own self-observation.

The resilient mind is not calculating moment by moment which actions are helpful or unhelpful; that's too much to expect in the midst of adversity. You would have to be omniscient to decide that each step taken is not only the correct one but also in the right road-to-recovery sequence. In retrospect, you can see where your behaviour was more productive, more of the time. When tough times arrive, knowing theoretically there's a constructive way to deal with them is not the same process as being able to specify in concrete terms what it is, and it may take some time before this way becomes clear in your mind.

The resilient mind is both fallible and exhaustible so it will reach the limits of its *current* flexible thinking and behaviour about how to deal with this continuing adversity—you don't have unlimited adaptability. The person might say at this point: 'I really don't know what to do. It's seems hopeless.' The person hasn't now become non-resilient! A period of brooding introspection, an anguished search for a way to revive himself and return to flexible thinking and action is in itself an attempt at problem solving. To the resilient mind, no experience is wasted as everything is grist to its learning mill. The question to ask is: overall, am I headed in the right direction?

So, dealing with hard times involves despair and determination, trial and error—this is all part and parcel of struggling resiliently. Maybe to the observer with his checklist of resilience attributes and timelines (e.g. weeks vs. months) in determining the cut-off point between resilient and non-resilient behaviour wouldn't see or understand this. That's why I prefer my term 'coming back' to the popular one of 'bouncing back' as it allows for different speeds of and pathways to recovery from misfortune.

To return to the ratio between helpful and unhelpful behaviour, it's important to ensure that your resilience balance sheet shows more assets (occurrences of helpful behaviour) than liabilities (occurrences of unhelpful behaviour). For example, during a period of unwanted unemployment and unsuccessful job interviews, most of a person's days are structured with meaningful activities (80%) while on other days he lapses into inertia and 'What's the point?' brooding (20%).

Resilience and Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance promotes long-term psychological stability (but not unwaveringly so) and quickens the process of self-righting (i.e. returning to normal functioning) when your life takes some unexpected knocks as your focus and energy is on problem solving such as finding another job, not berating yourself for losing it. In contrast, self-depreciation means you give yourself two or more problems for the price of one. For example, (a) losing your job, (b) calling yourself a failure, (c) rowing more with your wife, (d) increasing your drinking, (e) retreating into social isolation, (f) shouting frequently at the children, and (g) not looking for another job. So how many problems do you want to deal with I ask my clients? Self-acceptance—fewer; self-depreciation—more.

Linking self-acceptance to resilience is a frequent discussion point as many business people I've coached over the years base their self-worth on how tough and successful they are (being seen as weak is a big fear). Some clients are not interested in learning self-acceptance as they believe it's impossible or unnatural not to rate themselves. With these clients, I try to encourage them to develop a multidimensional identity ('Remember the other things about yourself', e.g. marathon runner, family man, community activist) to face life's challenges thereby not putting all their eggs (i.e. their worth) into one basket (e.g. 'My work is my worth', unidimensional). So an important loss (e.g. not getting a promotion) is viewed in relative, not absolute terms, as the other dimensions of the person provide a sense of a continuing favourable identity, not a loss of identity. Another way of dealing with self-depreciation is to make it time limited, e.g. 30 min a day for a week. Clients frequently state they got bored with their self-attacking and grudgingly focused on problem solving.

The Process of Rational Emotive Cognitive Behavioural Coaching

Clients usually contact me to improve their current responding to events such as 'I want to be quicker off the mark in dealing with a crisis'; 'I can't seem to cope with this situation and I feel I should be coping with it'; 'I want to learn to take criticism without feeling hard done by' or 'I've hit a brick wall in my career. I can't understand it' (this client thought he had an unlimited adaptive capacity). RE-CBC and resilience are explained and how they are linked can be shown in this quote from the philosopher Anthony Grayling (2005: 23):

> Attitude is very consequential stuff. It determines everything one does, from falling in love to voting for one candidate rather than another. As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry [French author and aviator] said, 'The meaning of things lies not in things themselves, but in our attitudes towards them.'

Understanding *meaning* is at the heart of RE-CBC and resilience. The quickest way to discover if a person is 'struggling well'—Higgin's (1994) wonderfully pithy description of resilience—is to reveal her attitudes to coping with adversity. However, a snapshot taken at a particular moment of her 'struggling well' progress does not guarantee an accurate prediction of its outcome as she might give up if she encounters too many setbacks. Conversely, someone struggling poorly might eventually receive some unexpected social support which enables him to achieve a favourable outcome to his troubles.

RE-CBC and the development of a resilient outlook both see taking responsibility as fundamental to achieving a person's desired goals: she is responsible for her thoughts, feelings, behaviours and for carrying out her goal-related tasks. Trouble arises and blocks development if a client blames others for his cognitive, emotional and behavioural reactions to events and/or expects others to make the path to goal-achievement easy for him.

In the next section, we look at the RE-CBC sequence: (1) Relationship building; (2) Assessment and goal-setting; (3) Interventions; (4) Extra-session tasks; (5) Review of tasks.

The Rational Emotive Cognitive Behavioural Coaching Sequence

The typical structure of a coaching session is reviewing the client's extra-session goal-related tasks; selecting issues for discussion; agreeing on further tasks to be carried out and obtaining client feedback on how the session went. Initially, agreement is reached on the number of coaching sessions. This number can change depending on how coaching unfolds. When coaching ends, progress is summarized, lessons learnt are reviewed and a few follow-up sessions can be arranged in order to determine if the client's gains from coaching are being maintained.

Relationship Building

The coaching relationship can be seen as a partnership in problem solving: the coach helping to widen the client's constricted/rigid perspective to see what other options are available to assist his goal-directed striving and the client choosing what options to pursue which might also help him to interpret events in a more flexible way—'I like your idea of my first thoughts not automatically being my best thoughts and through the process of rethinking I've found a better way to deal with the situation'. Problems should not be automatically equated with psychological blocks: solving the former can be a relatively straightforward process through the client's adoption of an experimental outlook (e.g. starting boring paperwork earlier rather

than later) whereas the latter are usually ingrained beliefs that can be hard to change and the client is often ambivalent about changing them, e.g. 'It's natural for me to see anything less than a hundred per cent as failure. If I modify my beliefs, I'll become a mediocrity. Who wants a living death?'

Clients are encouraged to see the workplace as a laboratory where they test new ideas and behaviours—an empirical approach—and also to emphasize that trying things out doesn't mean instant success and revisions have to be made to the coaching plan in the light of incoming information from these various workplace experiments. Difficulties in the coaching relationship such as the client's brusque manner or the coach's long-winded explanations can be resolved through 'metacommunication' (Safran & Muran, 2000). For example, the coach and client stepping outside of the strained relationship in order to comment upon it in a non-blaming spirit of collaborative inquiry. The coach carries the main responsibility for initiating and keeping open this metacommunication channel.

Assessment and Goal-Setting

Once RE-CBC has been explained and informed consent given to proceed, an initial and usually brief assessment is carried out which focuses on the client's concerns, the context in which they arise, what the client's wishes to achieve in coaching and any additional information she would like to add to the assessment. The assessment can be updated and refined as coaching proceeds. In RE-CBC 'there is no need for an in-depth assessment and case conceptualisation unless a particular problem or issue is difficult to resolve' (Palmer & Szymanska, 2007: 89). Clients' strengths are listed to help in achieving their coaching goals as well as reminding them of their past problem-solving successes and their ability to persevere when misfortune strikes.

Goals are specified in clear, specific and measurable terms so progress monitoring can be conducted. Also, it's important to establish that the goals are within the client's control to achieve. Goal-negotiation is often required to clarify the difference between control and influence, e.g. 'I want to make my colleagues respect me' (that's up to them to decide) versus 'I want to make some changes in my behaviour which I hope will lead to gaining their respect' (this outcome could occur). Goals should be stated in positive terms (what you want to achieve) rather than in negative terms (what you want to stop doing). As Cormier and Cormier (1985: 223) observe:

> When the goal is stated positively, clients are more likely to encode and rehearse the things they want to be able to do rather than the things they want to avoid or stop. For example, it is fairly easy to generate an image of yourself watching TV. However, picturing yourself *not* watching TV is difficult (emphasis in original).

However, not all clients are interested in specifying concrete and measurable goals; some will advance general aims for the coaching conversation, e.g. 'I want to explore different ways of dealing with things, mentally roam so to speak.' This

discursive approach can trigger anxiety in the RE-CB coach as she is used to establishing clear goals and devising action plans. So the question is: Is the client's request outside of her current coaching competence or is it really her fear that by stepping outside of the familiar she will flounder and be exposed as incompetent? If it's the former, refer elsewhere; if it's the latter, she can see it as an experiment in thinking on her feet (aided by good supervision). If coaches are going to stress the importance of flexible thinking, then they'd better demonstrate it themselves.

Interventions

A significant part of the coach's role is to ask questions in order to probe, clarify and stimulate the client's thinking. Auerbach (2006) calls the cognitive coach's role as being a 'thought partner'. The main questioning method is a Socratic one (derived from the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates). Socratic questions aim to promote reflection, examine thinking, develop new perspectives on problem solving and goal attainment. This information needs to be drawn out of the client (and some of it the client will already know but had forgotten) rather than presented to him by the coach. Questions other than Socratic ones are useful at times.

- Closed ones to focus the client's reply: 'Have you decided which issue to work on first?'
- Confirm what the client has said: 'So, is the sticking point your manager's refusal to apologize?'
- Direct questions to gather assessment information: 'How many times this month have you been late for meetings?'
- Leading questions to test the coach's assumptions: 'It sounds as if you're more worried than excited about the promotion. Is that accurate?'

Even though I've stressed the importance of Socratic questioning, it's incumbent on coaches not to get stuck in Socratic mode because some clients will require direct explanations of RE-CBC concepts and problem-solving methods as this is how they prefer to learn. For example, directly teaching the thought-feeling link—different people having different emotional reactions to the same event based on their idiosyncratic appraisals of this event—is the preference of some clients while others want to work it out for themselves aided by Socratic questions.

Examining a client's self-limiting thoughts and developing self-enhancing alternatives has benefits in terms of neuroplasticity: the lifelong ability of the brain to reorganize neural pathways: 'The mere act of considering an alternative interpretation of a well-worn automatic negative thought [e.g. 'I'll never learn how to do it'] can, over time, help reduce the power of that thought by reducing the strength of its representation in cognitive neural networks' (Treadway, 2015: 95).

Psychological problems pop up

While no assumption is made that psychological problems are lurking in the background and an early start is made on developing goal-focused action plans,

such problems will very often appear for the simple reason that coaching clients, no matter how highly functioning they are, are not exempt from having blind spots, vulnerabilities and weaknesses. So RE-CBC has a twin focus: goal achievement and psychological blocks.

When psychological blocks appear (e.g. low self-esteem), RE-CB therapists who have moved into coaching with their understanding and treatment of psychological disorders are more likely than coaches without a background in mental health to recognize and deal with psychological problems; also, they would be better at judging when it would be appropriate to refer a client for therapy. Coaches without such a background usually choose a non-psychological coaching model such as GROW (**G**oals, **R**eality, **O**ptions and **W**ays forward), a popular behavioural model. GROW coaching may proceed to a successful outcome but if psychological difficulties intrude, the coach may be out of his depth in dealing with them and a referral to a coaching psychology approach is probably indicated.

When psychological blocks interfere with goal-striving, clients can be shown the ABC model (Ellis, 1962) to pinpoint these blocks:

A = activating event or adversity
B = beliefs about A
C = emotional, behavioural and physiological consequences of these beliefs

For example, a client said the issue was 'being gripped by granularity' (i.e. bogged down in levels of detail) and thought that some training in task and time management skills would be the solution to loosen this grip. On further investigation he said he would be anxious (C) about reducing the time spent on absorbing detail (A) because 'I must be able to answer every question comprehensively in order not to be exposed as incompetent and lose the respect of my colleagues' (B). Clients' self-defeating beliefs can be discussed (**D** is added the ABC model) along the following lines to help them improve their critical thinking skills. Just before we get to the discussion, it's important to point out that RE-CBC uses both reason and evidence to acquire knowledge in order to help clients' develop an adaptive outlook which improves their chances of goal success (**E**, effective new outlook, is the last addition to the ABCD model). The initial questions are closed ones to start the discussion and focus the client's mind. Once started, a mixture of Socratic questions and direct explanations can be used to further belief examination.

Is your belief rigid or flexible?

This is the difference between a fixed outlook (a prisoner of your beliefs) and one based on personal and professional growth, e.g. 'I shouldn't make mistakes!' versus 'What can I learn from my mistakes?' Rigid thinking restricts such growth; flexible thinking promotes it.

Is your belief realistic or unrealistic?

Does the person's subjective view of the situation correspond with the facts of the situation? The further the person's viewpoint diverges from empirical reality the more likely he is to develop psychological difficulties (e.g. angry resentment because he didn't get the promotion he believed should have been his).

Is your belief helpful or unhelpful?

This looks at the practical consequences of holding on to a belief. Are there more costs or benefits from the belief? More costs experienced usually motivate the client to initiate belief change.

Would you teach your belief to others?

If a person thinks her belief, 'Failing means you're a failure', is reasonable—it makes good sense to her—would she teach it to others such as family, friends or colleagues? The answer is invariably 'No'. Then why does she continue to teach this belief to herself? If a client did say 'Yes', then what might be the implications for these others of internalizing this belief?

It's important not to call clients' beliefs 'irrational' because 'to dismiss others as irrational [or their beliefs] is to attempt a kind of excommunication from the community of reason when what we should do is keep as many as possible within it' (Baggini, 2016: 239).

Extra-Session Tasks

The coaching session is usually a poor arena for assessing change because of its removal from a client's everyday experience. Tasks carried out in the situations where their difficulties occur allow clients to deepen their conviction in the helpfulness of their adaptive beliefs and behaviours. Carrying out these tasks is central to the success of RE-CBC as it teaches clients to become their own coach, i.e. independent problem solver. It's important that clients see how the task has arisen from discussion in the session and is another step towards achieving their goals: session→task→goal. Tasks are negotiated, not imposed by the coach though she may suggest some in the early sessions if the client can't think of any appropriate ones. Tasks include behavioural experiments (testing beliefs); reading self-help literature and listening to digital voice recordings (DVRs) of sessions, both to deepen understanding of RE-CBC concepts and practices; writing assignments, e.g. a perfectionist agrees to write an essay entitled 'Perfection is pitiless: my self-inflicted torments' (some perfectionists will think this is a price worth paying, but no longer for this particular client).

Review of Extra-Session Tasks

This is usually the first item on the session agenda**.** Tompkins (2004) suggests 5 Cs for reviewing these tasks.

1. Be consistent—discuss in every session.
2. Be curious—adopt an open-minded, non-judgemental approach particularly if the client hasn't completed his agreed task.

3. Be complimentary—no matter how small the effort expended in attempting to carry it out.
4. Be careful—don't reinforce task non-compliance by pretending it doesn't matter. Instead, examine the factors that prevented task completion.
5. Consider changing or repeating the task depending on the information that's emerged from the review.

Task review provides the opportunity for valuable lessons to be learnt and strengthened, e.g. the coach concludes the review: 'Each week you're increasing your threshold for tackling unpleasant activities. Previously, you said you couldn't bear doing them but you've learnt you can bear it if it's in your interests to do so in order to achieve your goals.'

Coaching Case Example: Being Business Focused, Not Self-Focused

Sonya (not her real name) contacted me for some coaching and we agreed on an initial six sessions, at which point progress would be reviewed and a decision made on whether to add further sessions. She had her own marketing company advising businesses how best to promote their goods and services. She described herself as very focused, hard-working, resilient, tough-minded (she'd taken two clients to court who didn't pay their bills and won both cases) 'and it takes a hell of a lot to get me down'.

However, (there's usually a 'however' to darken the initially bright picture presented by the client) when she failed to secure a contract after giving a presentation to a company, she would try to reassure herself: 'Win some, lose some. Just move on. It's no failure to experience failure. Successful companies like mine have their share of failures.' Also, she was reluctant to do any cold calling (making unsolicited phone calls to businesses) because she would turn it into a hot (emotionally charged) issue if they weren't interested in her services, so she delegated the task to an employee who she said wasn't very convincing in this role.

Her mantras didn't help her to cope with failure or setbacks because she didn't believe the philosophy underpinning them: failure in life is normal, inevitable but the important point is to distil constructive lessons from these experiences to guide future behaviour. Even though she won more contracts than she lost, she was unable to shrug off the loss because, as she said emphatically, 'They didn't want ME!' proving her worthlessness. She was linking her business performance to her personal worth—'I'm not good enough'. Performance is an aspect of your behaviour which is judged, but it's not a judgement on your worth as a human being. Sonya knew she was doing this but didn't know how to stop herself from engaging in self-depreciation.

Sonya: When I give a presentation it's like facing a row of judges. I have to get the contract because then I have their approval.

Michael: And if you don't get the contract?

Sonya: Then I'll feel rejected. I go home or back to the office in a bad mood. I feel hurt and angry. I need some help with all this. It's been going on for a long time and I can't seem to find it within myself to deal with it.

Michael: Well, we could do self-development coaching where we tackle this vulnerability by learning how to absorb business setbacks without becoming so upset over them that you brood for several days over the perceived unfairness. You can learn to feel disappointed, not disturbed about losing a contract.

Sonya: That sounds good. I want to be business focused, not feeling sorry-for-myself focused. As I said earlier, I am resilient but obviously not with this issue.

From a cognitive behavioural theory perspective, the match between a person's specific cognitive vulnerability (Sonya's belief 'I'm not good enough proving I'm a loser') and a current situation that reflects this belief (not getting a contract) is like a key fitting into a lock to open the door to emotional distress (Beck, 1987). A between-sessions assignment was for Sonya to write an account of how the belief developed. She said her upbringing was fraught. Her mother was always playing her off against her older sister to see who would win her approval. She described her first marriage as 'ghastly': 'No matter what I did for him, it was never good enough.' Up until her early thirties, she said her life was difficult to deal with until she remarried and found real happiness for the first time. This gave her the confidence to start her own business after working for two marketing firms. We agreed to focus on several areas linked to her cognitive vulnerability.

<u>Making her self-worth</u> conditional <u>on whether she secured the contract</u>

Sonya linked getting the contract to the approval she sought throughout her life. So she was seeking two contracts: one explicit, based on increasing her business; the other implicit, based on gaining approval to validate her self-worth. I explained the importance of distinguishing between not rating oneself and only rating aspects of oneself: 'So Sonya, your performance might be poor in a particular situation, but your worth as a person stays constant, you're unrateable.' She found this concept difficult to understand (many clients do) and wanted a visual way of trying to understand it. I produced a packet of peanuts (this technique is adapted from Wessler & Wessler, 1980).

Michael: This packet contains peanuts that taste great, horrible and just okay. Is the packet great, horrible or just okay based on its contents?

Sonya: It's just a packet.

Michael: Just say all the peanuts are horrible. Would that make the packet horrible?

Sonya: No, it's still only a packet.

Michael: If the peanuts were all great, would that make the packet great?

Sonya: It's still a packet. I sound like a parrot.

Michael: What about if I tipped out the peanuts and replaced them with diamonds, pebbles and bits of chocolate? What would you say now?

Sonya: Wonderful. Give me the packet!

Michael: Does the 'wonderful' refer to the packet or its contents?

Sonya: The contents, just the diamonds, and before you ask me, it's still just a packet. I know what you're getting at: I don't have to put myself down when things go against me.

The crucial point was for Sonya to focus on the contents of the packet (aspects of the self), not on the packet (self). Some aspects of the self change over time (replacing the peanuts with diamonds, pebbles and chocolate), so it's pointless to conclude that a single global rating such as 'I'm not good enough' captures her essence or identity. She could see the sense in learning self-acceptance and would keep a packet of peanuts on her desk at work to remind her of this crucial separation to make when evaluating events in her life: 'I don't want it anymore to be about the self-pitying ME.' She said that her colleagues would sometimes joke, 'Are you ever going to eat those peanuts or just keep staring at them?' Every day she went over in her mind the benefits of internalizing self-acceptance and her conviction in it deepened.

Michael: What's your way of explaining self-acceptance?
Sonya: The other day I was doodling on a pad and I wrote down my big dramatic ME. While staring at it, I suddenly saw that ME could stand for 'many elements to me' and the focus is on the elements, the E, not on [emphasizing] ME. Rate the elements, not myself.
Michael: How will you rate the element of a business setback?
Sonya: Not through what-a-hard-life-I've-had-and-I-deserve-to-be-rewarded victim thinking. I want to see it as unfortunate, part of business life, and hope to feel disappointed, not so upset by it. I've got a big test in the next several weeks: I want to step up my business by securing contracts with larger companies and now I've got my first opportunity.
Michael: Good luck.

A way to remind her in the moment of her new outlook when she started feeling irritable or her mood lowered was to pat the packet of peanuts she kept in her pocket whenever at business meetings, making presentations or contract negotiations. This patting provided a self-correction in her attention from internal (the stirrings of self-pity when things seemed to be going wrong and consequently beginning to lose interest in what was going on around her) to external (a non-distractible focus on developing her business). She wasn't successful every time she patted the peanuts in reorienting her attention but as I pointed out earlier, acting resiliently doesn't mean you have to win every struggle you're engaged in; but it's important to demonstrate you're engaging in helpful behaviour (assets) most of the time and non-resilient behaviour (liabilities) less of the time. Sonya judged her ratio between the two was 75% assets and 25% liabilities.

Sonya was pleased to hear that resilience involves acting non-resiliently at times which helped to broaden her understanding of the concept (she thought, like many do, 'You're supposed to always bounce back from bad times, aren't you?'). She later switched from the peanuts to wearing a blue broach on the lapel of her jacket as a self-acceptance reminder. She also read a book on self-acceptance (Dryden, 1999), made notes on her reading which we discussed in the sessions.

Tackling her sense of entitlement

Sonya believed that she should win all the contracts not only because of the effort she put into preparing and giving presentations to companies but also as compensation for the hard life she experienced up to her early thirties. Would she say this to the executives she stood before? 'Of course not. I know it's ridiculous, but I will admit that sometimes when I know the presentation isn't going well I feel like telling them sob stories so they will give it to me for sentimental reasons. I feel myself slipping from tough-minded to crumble-minded when that happens.'

She realized she was playing the role of a victim and wanted to change this and set herself a goal: 'How do I want to be in my business dealings three or six months from now, if not sooner?' For Sonya, her strategic thinking meant removing all surplus meaning (i.e. thinking like a victim) from contract negotiations or presentations and focusing only on what she needed to do to make the best business case for her company to be chosen and accepting, without self-condemnation, when it wasn't.

Marked variations in her mood

Sonya's moods were related to her conditional self-acceptance based on certain 'If … then' assumptions she was holding but not clearly articulated before: 'If …' is the premise from which a conclusion is drawn (then). Sonya's mood variations were linked to the following assumptions: 'If I get the contract then this means I'm a worthwhile person' (excited and relieved) and 'If I don't get the contract, then this means I'm not good enough' (angry and hurt). Both these unhelpful assumptions kept her psychologically trapped: the supposedly positive assumption only meant she was provisionally worthwhile until the next business setback and the negative assumption confirmed and reinforced her longstanding belief. Using the strategies discussed above, deepening self-acceptance thinking and weakening victim thinking, she was able to achieve much longer periods of mood stability.

Learning from failure

Sonya had really wanted to adopt the belief that there are things to learn about failure that lead to personal and professional development, but she wasn't able to adopt it until she stopped personalizing failure. Kottler (2001) suggests the following benefits to be derived from failure.

- Promotes reflection on what you're doing and how you could do it better.
- Stimulates change by discovering new problem-solving approaches.
- Provides feedback on what went wrong.
- Encourages flexibility to think beyond your current ways of doing things.
- Improves your frustration tolerance for dealing with situations that don't turn out the way you expected.
- Teaches humility about the limitations of your knowledge and abilities, pricking the bubble of arrogant self-assurance.

Sonya had said in an earlier session that she wanted to 'step up' her business by securing contracts with bigger companies.

Michael: How did your presentation go?
Sonya: I didn't get the contract but I felt both disappointed and exhilarated.
Michael: Can you explain?

Sonya: Obviously disappointed that I didn't get it but exhilarated that I didn't feel sorry for myself. I really didn't get into that failure and victim nonsense or brooding for days about it. That's the real victory. The feedback was that my presentation was excellent but the telling factor was my lack of experience in working with larger companies but they predicted I would eventually achieve my step-up goal [this prediction proved accurate]. Learning self-acceptance has really changed my thoughts, feelings and actions about how to react when things go against me in life, not just in business. I can respond resiliently now. I didn't know what to expect when I contacted you for some coaching, maybe you were going to give me a course in positive thinking or how to sharpen up my presentational skills. I certainly never considered it would be life changing. And [laughing] I'm not going to take this off [patting the blue broach on her jacket lapel] because it acts as a constant reminder of what I learned in coaching.

Initially, six coaching sessions had been agreed but the final number was 25 spread over 8 months. As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, developmental coaching is longer term because it 'takes a more holistic view involving the creation of personal reflective space; this might deal with more fundamental personal and professional development questions' (Whybrow & Henderson, 2007: 409).

As we've seen, Sonya's self-development had a positive effect on her professional development. It's important to say that the 25 sessions didn't always run smoothly: as eager as she was to learn everything she could about self-acceptance, there were other times when she was determined to convince me that her sense of entitlement—'If you throw everything into your work, then you should be rewarded for it!'—was justified because of the hardships she'd endured earlier in her life. Also, mood shifts were evident across the sessions: moving from cheerfulness when things were going well to despondency when she encountered setbacks and thought she was wasting her time and money ('Am I deceiving myself? Can I really learn this stuff? Do I really believe it?'). A follow-up session was agreed for 6 months to monitor her progress.

RE-CBC Isn't for Everyone and How It Can Be Improved for Others

One major reason why RE-CBC doesn't work for some clients is their reluctance or, at times, downright refusal to take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and actions and, instead, blame the company culture or individuals within it. The usual response is 'If you worked there, which you don't, then you would feel the same way'. They talk as if their mind is a blank slate and the company inscribes its values and philosophy upon it thereby removing their freedom of thought about the company culture and how to respond to it.

Providing explanations that the human mind doesn't respond passively to events but is continually attaching meaning to them, and meaning changes over time (i.e.

your viewpoint alters) can fall on deaf ears. It's important for the coach not to get into a struggle over this issue by trying to make the client accept psychological responsibility; if she doesn't, he may believe he'll be diminished in some way in his own eyes as well as hers. Also, he will probably not realize that he is reinforcing her idea that she doesn't have freedom of thought in coaching either. If the client is not interested in RE-CBC, then bring it to an end instead of persisting unproductively.

Other clients might accept psychological responsibility but don't proceed to the next step of implementing an action plan for change or, if implemented, is done half-heartedly or haphazardly. They think that insight alone should be sufficient to promote change. Whatever term is used—acknowledgement, insight, understanding or awareness—relating to the crucial role our beliefs play in shaping our responses to events, it's not enough in itself to bring about change or, more precisely, deep and lasting change. Awareness of the thinking that lies behind an unproductive behaviour or unpleasant feeling appears to be the precursor to change, but several days or weeks later this awareness is not so motivating after all as the client reflects unenthusiastically on the effort required to change this behaviour or feeling.

If the client believes that insight alone will achieve his desired changes, this could be viewed as an experiment—leave coaching to see if it works; if it doesn't, he could return at a later date to restart the other kind of work he previously baulked at doing. If he does return, he needs to learn the vital importance of acting persistently and consistently in support of his productive beliefs if he hopes to realize the changes he wants.

With a few clients, it becomes evident that they have significant psychological problems which require the services of a therapist, not a coach e.g. depression with suicidal ideation though the initial presentation in coaching was a smiling 'I'm-looking-forward-to-working-with-you-and-achieving-good-things' approach.

With some clients, the emphasis is more on behaviour in RE-CBC as they find examining their thinking to be an intrusive, intimate, difficult, dull or unfamiliar activity, so they prefer to try-out different behaviours to achieve their desired outcomes. Others might see questioning specific beliefs as a kind of doubt virus that could spread through their entire belief system—a settled worldview becoming distinctly unsettled. With these clients, a few small experiments in specific areas could be conducted (as a prelude to examining more troubling beliefs) by going against an ingrained habit—'I always read my newspaper on the train to work'—to see if not doing it for a week starts tremors in her whole belief system.

In my experience, it's not usually the outright rejection of RE-CBC that's the problem but how it's presented and implemented. For example, I've supervised coaches where I've heard them say on DVRs (digital voice recordings) of sessions that 'It's all to do with your self-defeating thinking' thereby shutting down emotional expression by implying that it clutters up the coaching process, suggesting that problems are decontextualized (i.e. only created in your head and nothing to do with adverse circumstances) and creating the impression that RE-CBC is a dry-as-dust cerebral exchange of unhelpful ideas for helpful ones. Also, some coaches desperate to make a good impression, particularly on executives, convince themselves that they have to act as a fast-paced incisive questioner thereby shrinking the

client's reflective space to consider her responses. Allied to this fast-paced style, is having all the (well-rehearsed) answers to show how wise and experienced the coach is and the client's role in coaching is to be an appreciative audience of this wiseacre posturing.

Many difficulties in coaching can be minimised or avoided if the coach remembers to get frequent feedback from the client in order to make adjustments to the coaching journey and relationship. Often, assumptions made by the coach are not shared with the client thereby undermining the coach's claim that 'ideas need to be tested' and these untested assumptions can lead to wrong turnings being taken in coaching. A philosopher is supposed to assume nothing, question everything; coaches could also learn to stop assuming they know and find out.

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Workplace Stress Management Coaching

Michael E. Bernard

Rational-emotive and cognitive-behavioral (RE-CB) methods for coaching work-place stress have been described in the literature since the early 1970s when Albert Ellis penned *Executive Leadership: A Rational Approach* (Ellis, 1972). Here's an excerpt from what Ellis wrote about how rational emotive behaviour therapy could be applied to help people without mental health disorders work more efficiently using their reason and rational thinking:

> I esteem efficiency. In fact, that has probably always been, and still is, my main goal as a therapist and as a developer of one of the leading psychotherapeutic theories. I think it is incredibly inefficient for human beings to give themselves needless pain by making them-selves anxious, depressed, guilty or hostile; and I spend a great deal of my life fighting this kind of inefficiency…. I enjoy showing a man (and woman) how he can get along much better with his partner, boss, or employee just as much as I enjoy showing him how he can improve his sex-love relationship… Out of this work, which I have done with scores of executives in personal counselling sessions, have merged a good many general ideas and principles. These can be applied by virtually any organized leader, even (and maybe especially) when he has no serious emotional difficulties but merely wants to conduct his work and get along with his associates more effectively…

In 1987, the audio series *Mind Over Myth: Managing Difficult Situations in the Workplace* was released by the corporate services division of the Institute for Rational Emotive Therapy under the branding, *Rational Effectiveness Training Systems.* This training program was designed to help coach people who experienced non-clinical barriers to work success and wellbeing to manage difficult situations in the workplace, by teaching them the ABCs of emotional self-management. In 1997, Ellis and his colleagues published *Stress Counselling: A Rational Emotive Behavior Approach* with a chapter devoted to that how REBT methods can be applied to help individuals manage occupational stress. And for the past decade, articles and

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chapters have illustrated ways in which RE-CB methods can be applied in coaching to help people manage workplace stress (e.g., Gyllensten & Palmer, 2012). Over this time, research has supported the proposition that cognitive-behavioral coaching reduces work stress (e.g., Gyllensten & Palmer, 2005), increases resilience and goal attainment (e.g., Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009).

RE-CB coaching provides coachees with an awareness of the role of their stress-creating beliefs (irrational, rigid, extreme, not factual) and stress-managing beliefs (rational, flexible, non-extreme, evidence-based) as well as ways to restructure those beliefs that are creating excessive stress. Coach-coachee collaborative discussions on rational beliefs (e.g., self-acceptance, other-acceptance and high frustration tolerance) help strengthen a coachee's adaptive view of themselves, others and their world of work including the meanings they attribute to potentially stressful events. RE-CB coaches may help the client acquire/improve their coping skills (e.g., time management, assertion, mindfulness) and healthy lifestyle behaviors (e.g., exercise, diet). Additionally, RE-CB coachees can use problem-solving methods in order to enable coachees to develop action plans for modifying stress-creating situations/external stressors.

The first part of this chapter will present a case study that illustrates the RE-CB coaching process in action. I think doing so first up rather than leaving the case study until the end, is a good advance organizer making the remainder of the chapter more meaningful.

The second part of this chapter will review important background knowledge for those coachees wishing to apply or extend RE-CBC coaching to workplace stress management including:

- What is stress?
- Workplace stress
- The transactional model of stress
- Resilience: The psychological strength for managing stress in the workplace
- The neuroscience of RE-CB stress management coaching

The third part contains essential information that RE-CB coaches share with coachees at various points of the coaching process with specific reference to the role of thinking in workplace stress including:

- Emotional stress reactions
- 'Things are neither good nor bad but thinking makes them so'—Shakespeare
- Catastrophizing
- The battle between irrational and rational beliefs

The final part of the chapter will review RE-CB coaching stress management methods including a 4-step RE-CB coaching for reducing workplace stress:

- Step 1. Take stock of work stressors
- Step 2. Plan for taking control of emotional stress
- Step 3. Plan for taking action to modify situation/work stressors
- Step 4. Evaluation

My experience as a RE-CB coach focussed on work stress is varied. Over the years, I have taught stress management workshops to professional groups as a form of workplace stress prevention. As well, in my role as a sport psychologist to one of an Australian Rules Football teams, I worked as a mental skills coach with individual athletes who were experiencing both performance issues as well as extreme stress. I have many years of experience coaching individual teachers and school principals who experience high levels of work stress. Additionally, I have used the RE-CB framework and methods to coach individuals and small groups of executives, managers and employees, some of whom were experiencing severe work-related stress.

Case Study

I coached Helen, a school librarian, who approached me because of stress she was experiencing which was getting so great she didn't feel like coming to school on Mondays and was considering retiring from the profession.

Coaching Session 1

In gathering information from Helen, I used the transactional model of work stress (see part 2 of this chapter) to guide my questioning. Initially, I asked Helen whether she could pinpoint any challenges, demands, and threats. She readily identified one particular grade 9 class who at 9.40 am when they appeared at the library door she experienced high stress. A shortened coach-coachee conversation is reproduced.

Michael: Can you say what aspect of their presence was most stressful?

Helen: Most classes of students enter the library are a little noisy but when I appear and hold my finger to my lips, they quiet down. There is one boy, George, a very big boy, much taller than me who refuses to pay any attention to me. He simply goes where he wants to go, talks in a loud voice, and when I am teaching laughs and interrupts. That's when I get really stressed.

Michael: Tell me about your stress.

Helen: Well, I get very tense, I can feel my temples pounding, I flush and feel light headed, like I might feint.

Michael: How do you usually feel at these times?

Helen: Very worried and inadequate—and I am feeling very tired on Mondays when I should be my peppiest.

Michael: I can imagine how that must feel—bad. How does that effect your behavior, what you say to the class and to George?

Helen: I feel like I want to get the hell out of there. Sometimes I yell at George to pay attention but my voice sounds very weak—at other times, I guess I just ignore him or send him out. His friends sometimes laugh at me.

Michael: Wow, must seem like a very bad dream. You are under a lot of stress. You said you have physical symptoms of stress, increased heart rate, tension and tiredness. Emotionally, you say you get very anxious and down—and you have described your behavior that swings from passive to aggressive.

Helen: What can I do?

Michael: Before discussing how to manage stress, I would like to ask you: 'How would you prefer to feel and behave at 9.40 am next Monday when George and his class enter the library?'

Helen: I would like to feel calmer and more confident. I would like to have a plan to settle George down without raising my voice or tossing him out of class.

Michael: OK. These will be the goals of our coaching sessions. Let's see if we can come up with a plan that achieves these goals. OK?

In this first coaching session, I made a point to discover Helen's strengths as a librarian as well as talents, hobbies and interests outside of her work. With some coaxing, I was able to establish that Helen loved to sing in the choir, had two great kids, volunteered on weekends on various community projects and, not surprisingly, was a spelling champion when she was in third grade. This information I used when it came time to challenge her negative view of herself that was making her feel so inadequate.

I also asked about aspects of her lifestyle including what she did for fun and recreation, any exercise routine and her diet. I indicated that a good life style can help make people stronger and less tired in dealing with constant and unrelenting demands such as excessive time-workload pressures and dealing constantly with people who display difficult behaviour like George. I summarized the Selye three-stages of physiological stress (see part 2 of this chapter) and suggested that her tiredness might derive from her inability to turn her arousal system off in order to re-charge. This she agreed with and thought that it would be a good idea to wake up 30 min earlier to walk, to eat breakfast every school day and to reach out to more friends in order socialize and have fun.

Coaching Session 2

Helen indicated she had followed through on making improvements to her recreation, diet and exercise and, yes, she didn't feel so exhausted. However, George was still creating havoc in her class and she was still feeling very anxious and down. I introduced the idea of having a resilient mindset, provided Helen with a definition (see definition appearing later in chapter) and indicated that in this session we could be explore some stress-managing ways to think as well as some coping kills for lowering her emotional stress and strengthening her resilience. At the end of the

session, Helen would select some aspects of resilience to put into practice before coaching session 3.

Michael: One of the things that plays a big role in how much stress people experience when faced with a stressful event is their thinking. Shakespeare wrote that "Things are neither good nor bad but thinking makes them so." I'd like to hear what you are thinking when George enters the library and you start to feel worried and inadequate.

Helen: I think 'There he goes again and if I can't get him to stop everyone will see I'm hopeless. This is horrible."

Michael: Ever think: "I can't cope with this, I can't stand it?"

Helen: Yes, a lot lately.

Michael: The type of thinking people have when extremely stressed is often not all that sensible or true; they can take things personally, blow things out of proportion and under-estimate their ability to cope. Let's look at this way of thinking you have, 'I'm hopeless,' when you've had a bad day with George. If a friend of yours had this thought that she was hopeless because she wasn't managing a difficult student's behavior, would you agree with her thinking, would it be sensible or true?

Helen: Not, I guess not. I see, she's feeling worse about herself and more stressed because she has been putting herself down forgetting about her good points.

Michael: Exactly! Last week you shared many of your good points with me that you said you were proud of and made you, you. Given that we all have our fallibilities or imperfections as well as strengths we are proud of, does it make sense to judge your overall value based on aspects of your behavior at work that may not be optimal?

Helen: I guess not, it would be better to think 'I accept who I am and will not judge my overall worth based on how well I do at work –or what others think of me.'

I also employed Socratic questioning and the Catastrophe Scale (see part 3 of chapter) so that Helen could consider whether George's behavior was really the worst thing in the world that could happen, or merely bad (she agreed "Bad, but things could be a lot worse"). I also asked Helen to consider what the phrase 'I can't stand it' means (e.g., I cannot live with it, it will kill me) and to search for evidence in her past for whether or not she has coped with things far more unpleasant than confronting George (she found lots of evidence). She agreed to employ the following three examples of stress-managing self-talk to use in anticipation of, during and after an encounter with George: 'I accept myself no matter what,' 'This is bad but could be much worse,' and 'I can stand this.'

In this session, we also discussed coping skills Helen could call on to strengthen her resilience and emotional regulation including finding social support and relaxation. She agreed to practice mindfulness as something she could do to refocus her attention away from George and on to other more important things. She agreed to apply her takeaways before our next session.

Coaching Session 3

At the beginning of the session, Helen appeared calmer in discussing her week at school, her interaction with George, with tension no longer being etched in her forehead. She indicated that she had written the three stress-managing phrases on a slip of paper, lodged them under her pillow and practiced them before getting out of bed in the morning. She said she was continuing to improve her life style and practiced mindfulness four times during the week, which she was getting the hang of.

This coaching session was devoted to coming up with a plan of action to try to solve the problem of George's uncooperative and disrespectful behaviour. Helen had until this point completed *Step 1. Taking Stock* and *Step 2. Taking Control*. It was now on to *Step 3. Taking Action*.

Michael: Now that you are less stressed about George's stressful behaviour, it's time to do some problem solving to see what can be done to modify George's behavior. Let's see if you can come up with some different courses of action, weigh up their consequences, likelihood of success and pick one.

Helen: I could contact his parents for support. I could provide him with some competing activity to engage in as he comes in, such as distribute materials for the class. I guess I could ask the PE teacher to have a chat and maybe prohibit his attendance at after-school sporting events like training. Maybe I could design a project involving library resources that George knows a lot about and involve him as a leader. Weighing up the pros and cons of each possibility, I think I'll go with designing a project around his interests.

Michael: Great. Let's keep in mind the following four behavioural strengths—ways of carrying out the plan that can maximize the success of the plan: confidence, persistence, organization and getting along. Which will be useful for you to apply in this case?

Helen: I need to try this with confidence- trust that with persistence it will succeed. Obviously, getting myself organized in finding out more about George's interests and planning an interesting project is important. And I'll need my getting along strength so I speak calmly and positively to him concerning this project.

Helen put together a plan of action based on her reflection of what might work best for George to solve the problem. Discussing the behavioural strengths needed to maximize the effectiveness of the plan is part of the educational role I assume in part of the RE-CB coaching process.

Coaching Sessions 4 and 5

These last two coaching sessions were spaced 2 and 3 weeks after each other. During these sessions (*Step 4. Evaluation*), Helen described her successes in applying her new resilient mindset to lessen her stress and solve the problem. Helen reported a

great improvement in each area and although she sometimes became flustered and emotionally stressed around George, overall as a result of continuous self-reflection, modifying her self-talk, continuing to practice coping skills and seeing the success of her action plan to involve George in more positive ways in a library project, Helen deemed the coaching sessions a great success.

Workplace Stress

To understand what workplace stress is, it is important to start with a key concept discovered by the founding father in the area of stress inquiry and research, Hans Selye (1956, 1974). Selye, a world-renowned biological scientist, made the point that stress is not something, which can be avoided and, moreover, is not something you would wish to avoid. In the face of both positive and negative demands and threats, our bodies experiences an increase in physiological activity (which Selye refers to as 'stress') which provides the fuel to our physical and intellectual machinery to enable us to deal with the many and varied demands we encounter on a daily basis. However, when the outside demands reach extremely high levels of intensity—which can vary along a continuum from over-stimulation to complete boredom—stress can become distress and damage to our physiological system can occur.

Simply stated, Selye has shown that stress can either be life sustaining, beneficial and enjoyable ('positive stress') or detrimental and life destroying ('negative stress' or 'distress'). The goal of stress management coaching is not trying to do away with stress altogether. Stress is the way we react and adapt to demands and threats encountered.

In this simple definition, demands refer to those many and varied activities, which we are required to perform on a daily basis, while threats refer to the actions of others which can harm us either physically, physiologically or, more commonly, psychologically. Our stress level can also be influenced by our psychological strengths, including our attitudes towards ourself, other people, the organization we work for, our coping skill repertoire (e.g., assertiveness, time management) and our lifestyle (e.g., exercise, diet, recreation) and life style (exercise, recreation, diet).

Our physiological and psychological stress reactions, which result from the combined interaction between inside and outside worlds, determine in the short run whether our behavioral reactions successfully manage the outside stressors or whether we mismanage the outside stressor through self-defeating behaviors such as avoidance or aggression. Adaptive behavior will neutralize, modify or remove the demand or threat, thereby reducing the stress, while un-adaptive behavior prolongs and often intensifies the stress. Over the long haul, our typical physiological and psychological reaction to demands and threats will determine our state of physical and mental health including—in extreme cases—burnout and breakdown.

Stress Reactions: Physiological, Psychological and Behavioral

Over the years, researchers have studied how demands and threats in the environment, which call for a response or adaptation, result in both physiological and psychological reactions. We have learned that physiological and psychological processes work together in reacting to demands and threats in the outside world.

Let's first examine how the body reacts to stressors.

Physiological Stress Reactions: Three-Stage Adaptation Syndrome

The sympathetic nervous system, that part of your autonomic nervous system responsible for arousing ourselves initially for 'flight' or 'fight'. There are also the endocrine glands, which help support the arousal efforts of your sympathetic nervous system and which carry out the important function of supplying you with the energy needed for action. The main endocrine glands involved in your physiological stress reactions are the adrenal glands, located near your kidneys.

Selye has identified a three-stage physiological response system to threats and demands, which he termed the 'general adaptation syndrome' (GAS). It is called a general syndrome because his research has shown that our body responds in a similar way to all demands and threats regardless of the specific identity of the stressor. Our body 'turns on' when our brain interprets a situation as threatening regardless of whether you are faced with a wild animal, not achieving a performance target or being spoken to disrespectfully by your immediate superior.

Indeed, even in the face of pleasant stimulation, when we feel excited and curious, our body reacts in precisely the same way as it does when faced with noxious stimuli. The three stages reveal when we are most vulnerable to stress-related physical symptoms and problems.

During the alarm reaction (stage 1), the hypothalamus, that portion of our brain responsible both for much of our emotion and motivation, as well as for activating our central nervous system and endocrine system, receives a signal from our brain's cortex that a situation is physically demanding or psychologically threatening. Our sympathetic nervous system reacts rapidly to the threat or demand by sharpening the alertness of our body to 'flight' or 'fight' in the form of changes to our senses (hearing, vision), heart rate, respiratory and digestive systems and increased muscle tension. In order to maintain our body's alertness and preparedness, our sympathetic nervous system also directly stimulates your adrenal medulla, the interior part of the adrenal gland, which produces adrenaline, a hormone responsible for mobilizing extra energy in the form of glucose. Adrenaline provides us with a burst of energy but this response tends to be rather short-lived. The other part of the adrenal gland involved in the stress response is the adrenal cortex located on the exterior part of your adrenal gland. The adrenal cortex is also activated by our hypothalamus but through a different route. The hypothalamus activates the pituitary gland, located within the deep recesses of our brain, which sends many hormones throughout our

body. For example, the pituitary gland stimulates the thyroid gland, which raises our level of metabolic functioning at times of stress. The pituitary also produces a hormone called ACTH (adrenocorticotrophic hormone), which in turn stimulates the adrenal cortex to product a wide range of chemicals.

Selye believed that ACTH was the most important hormone for studying our physiological stress reaction. The adrenal cortex produces cortisol or cortisone, which helps our body in the short term to ward off pain and the invasion of foreign substances. (In the long term, elevated cortisone levels reduce you body's resistance to cancer, infection and illness.) Mineral corticoids also produced by the adrenal cortex influences the mineral balance of your body and, in particular, converting food into energy.

If we have been unable to neutralize or remove the outside stressor, the general adaptation syndrome will advance to resistance (stage 2). During this phase, the alarm bells of the initial stage have ceased ringing and our body runs at a higher rate, in an effort to cope with the stressor. In particular, our endocrine system supplies increased minerals and chemical hormones needed to maintain the extra energy and effort. Until fairly recently we dealt with (or they dealt with us) outside stressors relatively quickly. We did not spend a great deal of time in the resistance stage and we generally resolved the outside stressor.

When we are able to successfully deal with the outside stress, our physiological systems begin shutting down as our body returns to a previous level of rest and equilibrium. Our parasympathetic nervous system takes over from the sympathetic system and helps restore your organs and yourself to a relatively stress-free state.

Exhaustion (stage 3) occurs when we have been unable to deal with the stressors in our world and we do not have the energy to put into resisting any longer. It is during stage 3 that we are most vulnerable to stress-related physical and mental illnesses. While our body's chemical-hormonal and central nervous system response to an outside stressor is seen as being very necessary and useful, the prolonged 'turn on' of our arousal system without it being able to restore itself is when damage occurs. In a nutshell, our communication system is telling us that we are still in danger, but our arousal and energy-producing physiological system is on empty. And worse still, we have a much reduced immunity system. Our bodily organs are at risk of injury due, in part, to elevated cortisone levels, and we are extremely vulnerable to the invasion of noxious foreign substances which bring with them illness and disease. At worst, if we do not respond to our body's signals, which suggest that we are physiologically spent, physical (and nervous) breakdown may be imminent. At best, we will begin to manifest a variety of physical and psychological stress-related symptoms. The following somatic symptoms are commonly found in people with high levels of stress: abdominal pain, difficulty in breathing, eczema, hives, tinnitus, occupational injuries, bowel difficulties, and tearfulness. Several illness and chronic conditions also have been related to stress, including high blood pressure, kidney or bladder trouble, arthritis, lung or breathing problems, gall bladder disorders, cardiovascular disorders, insomnia, gastritis, stomach ulcers, anemia, asthma and colitis.

Psychological Stress Reactions (Cognitive, Emotional)

'Psychological stress' most commonly refers emotional reactions to the outside stressors; in particular, feelings of anxiety (and panic), anger and rage), and depression. Included within emotional reactions are feelings of apathy and alienation, feeling out of control, emotional exhaustion, and lack of self-confidence, excessive guilt and moodiness. 'Psychological stress reactions' may also include disturbances in our ability to think clearly. We may lose concentration easily, fail to remember important details, be mentally confused and indecisive, and lose our capacity to solve problems easily.

Human beings have a tendency—especially when confronted with stressors which threaten their ego as well as excessively demanding—to engage in irrational thinking. They are apt to magnify events out of proportion, selectively focus on the negative aspects of the situation, make predictions and draw conclusions in the absence of hard or contradictory evidence, and irrationally evaluate the significance of certain stressful events in ways that create more intense and negative emotional reactions than the situation warrants.

Behavioral Stress Reactions

When confronted with stressors, people typically react with one of two behaviors: 'direct action' and 'inactive' methods. Direct action methods involve them doing something actively to modify the stressors or in dealing with their own emotional stress reaction. An example of direct action methods would be using coping skills (e.g., assertion) to modify the stressor. Direct action methods for managing emotional stress reactions include seeking support, relaxation, mindfulness, and exercise.

Inactive methods signifies doing very little to take control of the situation or emotional reactions. Commonly, a person might simply ignore the situation and resort to alcohol or food to combat bad feelings. Research pointing to direct action as the method which can minimize the effects of the stressor as well as helping us maintain good physical and mental health (e.g., Landon-Fox & Cooper, 2011).

The Tsunami of Workplace Stress

Work-related stress can be defined as the negative reaction that occurs when demands at work exceed an individual's ability to cope. It can be caused by different external demands and challenges including but not limited to having to accomplish very difficult tasks, time-workload pressure, difficult relationships, change, poor performance reviews and 'unproductive' organizational practices.

Numerous studies show that job stress is far and away the major source of stress for American adults and that it has escalated progressively over the past few decades (American Institute of Stress, 2017).

Everyone who has ever held a job has, at some point, felt the pressure of work-related stress. Any job can have stressful elements, even if you love what you do. In the short-term, you may experience pressure to meet a deadline or to fulfil a challenging obligation. But when work stress becomes chronic, it can be overwhelming—and harmful to both physical and emotional health. Unfortunately such long-term stress is all too common. In 2012, 65% of Americans cited work as a top source of stress, according to the American Psychological Association's (APA) annual Stress in America Survey (2017). Only 37% of Americans surveyed said they were doing an excellent or very good job managing stress.

A 2013 survey by APA's Center for Organizational Excellence (http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2013/03/employee-needs.aspx) also found that job-related stress is a serious issue. More than one-third of working Americans reported experiencing chronic work stress and just 36% said their organizations provide sufficient resources to help them manage that stress.

In Great Britain, the incidence of work stress is plateauing at very high levels. The latest estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show (http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress/stress.pdf?pdf=stress):

- The total number of cases of work related stress, depression or anxiety in 2015/16 was 488,000 cases, a prevalence rate of 1510 per 100,000 workers.
- The number of new cases was 224,000, an incidence rate of 690 per 100,000 workers. The estimated number and rate have remained broadly flat for more than a decade.
- The total number of working days lost due to this condition in 2015/16 was 11.7 million days. This equated to an average of 23.9 days lost per case. Working days lost per worker showed a generally downward trend up to around 2009/10, since then the rate has been broadly flat.
- In 2015/16 stress accounted for 37% of all work related ill health cases and 45% of all working days lost due to ill health.
- Stress is more prevalent in public service industries, such as education; health and social care; and public administration and defence.
- By occupation, jobs that are common across public service industries (such as healthcare workers; teaching professionals; business, media and public service professionals) show higher levels of stress as compared to all jobs.
- The main work factors cited by respondents as causing work related stress, depression or anxiety (LFS) were workload pressures, including tight deadlines and too much responsibility and a lack of managerial support

In Australia, stress in the workplace is a growing concern for employees and employers (http://www.medibank.com.au/client/documents/pdfs/the-cost-of-workplace-stress.pdf). Figures show that while compensation claims made by Australian employees fell significantly between 1996 and 2004, the number of stress related claims almost doubled. In Australia, data shows that mentally healthy workplaces are important to employees. Across all industries and locations, employees do not consider their workplace as mentally healthy as they would like it to be. This research shows that employees and leaders agree on the importance of mentally

healthy workplaces (91% employees, 89% leaders). However, employees do not necessarily believe their leaders place as much importance on mental health as they do (56% of employees believe their most senior leaders consider mental health in the workplace important). Across all states/territories and industry sectors, there is a significant gap between the importance employees place on a mentally healthy workplace ('importance'), and how mentally healthy they believe their workplace actually is ('performance'). (https://www.headsup.org.au/docs/default-source/resources/bl1270-report---tns-the-state-of-mental-health-in-australian-work-places-hr.pdf?sfvrsn=8).

It can be of some small comfort for coachees to learn the full extent of work stress and that they are certainly not alone in experiencing the deleterious effects of excessive work stress.

Transactional Model of Work Stress

It is useful for a coach using RE-CB methods to have a framework to understand work stress. The transactional model for workplace stress is one such framework I have developed and used over the years because it is consistent with both the literature on the causes and effects of workplace stress as well as a rational-emotive, cognitive-behavioral conception. The framework can be shared with coachees during the stress management coaching process (Fig. 1).

The transactional model of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) emphasizes that while stress is a response to external demands and threats (external world), it is not a direct result but rather is influenced by people's perception of and attitudes towards the stressor and their own coping skill resources for overcoming it—sometimes referred to as psychological factors (internal world).

EXTERNAL WORLD (STRESSORS)
general life
'unproductive'
organizational
practies
work demands
workload
change
difficult
relationships
sub-standard work
performance
_____
lack of support

INTERNAL WORLD
attitudes
coping skills
lifestyle

STRESS REACTIONS
physiological
psychological
behavioural
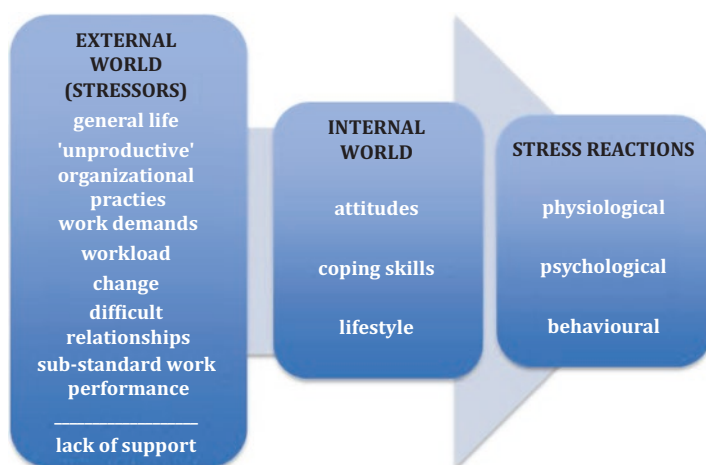
Fig. 1 Transactional model of work stress

Sources of external stressors that go hand-in-hand with work-related stress include:

- Low salaries.
- Excessive workloads.
- Few opportunities for growth or advancement.
- Work that isn't engaging or challenging.
- Lack of social support.
- Not having enough control over job-related decisions.
- Conflicting demands or unclear performance expectations.

- http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/work-stress.aspx

Gyllensten and Palmer (2012) divided work stressors into six categories: (a) demands (e.g., workload), (b) control (employee has over work), (c) support (received from management and colleagues), (d) relationships (how conflict is handled), f. role (covers role conflicts and poorly defined roles) and g. change (how it is communicated and dealt with in organization).

The list of external stressors that appear in the transactional model summarize many of the common workplace stressors and includes *general life stress* as a potential contributor to workplace stress (see Bernard, 2016a, 2016b).

When coaching, this model can help coaches to determine which aspects of their workplace stress are most problematic: external world, internal world and stress reactions. Goals can be formulated around coachee perceptions and appraisals.

Resilience: Psychological Strength for Managing Stress

In recent years, as a stress management coach and when offering stress management classes, I identify *resilience* as the internal strength people require to manage stressful work conditions. I define resilience for those I coach and teach as follows:

> **Resilience** means…when faced with challenging situations including change as well as when confronted with difficult situations and people, (1) being aware of your negative emotions (anxiety, anger, down) including your degree of upset, (2) being able to prevent yourself from getting extremely upset, (3) when you get extremely upset, being able to control your behaviour so that you do not behave aggressive or withdraw from others at inappropriate times, and (4) when you are very upset, knowing how to think and what to do to calm down within a reasonable period of time, and (5) bouncing back to work and being with others. By helping you maintain control of your negative emotions, resilience helps you to think, feel and behave in positive ways in order to overcome difficulty and move on.

Furthermore, I explain that resilience as a personal strength involves use of reason, flexible and objective thinking/self-talk and a variety of coping skills that help people to regulate the intensity of their emotional response to adverse events. Resilient thinking (e.g. not blowing things out of proportion, switching from negative thought to positive thoughts, not taking the situation personally) focuses on ways to stay calm, calm down and be in control of emotions when faced with adversity. Coping skills (e.g. assertion, time management, relaxation, finding someone to talk to) can

also help people to stay calm as well as eliminate the adversity (e.g. oppositional student, someone asking you to join another committee). And changes in lifestyle (exercise, rest, diet) can contribute to resilience. Resilience also involves problem solving using the personal capabilities of confidence, persistence, organisation and getting along to take positive actions when confronted with challenging and difficult situations and people.

Resilience Self-Survey

I find it can be useful to use the following survey I developed to enhance a coachee's self-awareness of the extent they have developed the strength of resilience—the tool needed for self-management of stress.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate how often in demanding and challenging situations and when working with difficult people you behave in the following ways at work.

		Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1.	I am aware of my feelings when I am confronted with a tough situation, (significant criticism, my sub-standard performance, incompetent or unfair behaviour of others).	1	2	3	4
2.	I can be very intolerant and judgmental of someone who does the wrong thing including not doing things the way they should be done.	4	3	2	1
3.	I stay calm when I am faced with extremely challenging work with tough deadlines, when interacting with difficult people, or having to make sudden, unexpected adjustments to meet changing priorities.	1	2	3	4
4.	I tend to blow things out of proportion.	4	3	2	1
5.	When I notice that my emotional level is too high, I am able to make adjustments so that I become calmer and in control.	1	2	3	4
6.	I find myself thinking, "I can't stand this situation or person's behaviour."	4	3	2	1
7.	I take charge of my life style (exercise, diet, relaxation) to ensure I am as healthy, strong and positive as I can be.	1	2	3	4
8.	I am someone who takes things very personally.	4	3	2	1
9.	When I get extremely stressed, I bounce back quickly.	1	2	3	4
10.	I use one or more coping skills to stay calm (breathing – muscle relaxation, assertion, sense of humour, distraction, mindfulness, gratitude, find someone to talk to).	1	2	3	4
	Total Score				

My Resilience is:

under-developed	moderately developed	developed	well-developed	gold standard
10–17	18–23	24–29	30–35	36–40

The Neuroscience of RE-CB Stress Management Coaching

The prefrontal cortex of the brain is far and away the single most important structure of the brain for supporting resilience; it is considered by some neuropsychologists to be an 'evolutionary masterpiece' (e.g., Siegel, 2007) (Fig. 2).

The executive functions carried out by the prefrontal cortex area helps us to:

- Set vision and future goals
- Focus attention
- Monitor aspects of your work performance
- Solve problems
- Be creative
- Maintain a positive self-image
- Generate positive emotions

The prefrontal cortex is also in charge of regulating our negative emotions and behaviours when faced with challenging work situations and difficult people. We call this function, *resilience.* Now, to strengthen a resilient mindset, the prefrontal

Fig. 2 The pre-frontal cortex

cortex needs to be stimulated. By helping coachees to become more self-aware of their resilience (rational vs. irrational thinking; how to modify stress-creating beliefs; coping skills) and developing a plan for strengthening elements of resilience, it appears from research with clinical populations cited in the next paragraph that the pre-frontal cortex and other parts of the brain involved in emotional arousal and regulation are being activated.

Neuroscience has developed several methods (e.g., neuro-imaging techniques) to analyze cognitive function and increase the understanding of mental functioning. As a result, we now know that cognitive-behavioral interventions modify the neural circuits involved in the regulation of negative emotions (Porto et al., 2009). Researchers have found that in people prone to anxiety, brain volume and activity in the amygdala decrease as a result of cognitive-behavior therapy (Boraxbekk, 2016). Researchers have found changes in pre-frontal cortex activity in depressed individuals as a result of cognitive-behavior therapy (Goldapple, Segal & Garson, 2004).

A question that has no immediate research-based answer for RE-CB coachees is the type of communication such as Socratic questioning, goal setting, challenging and changing rigid thinking that produces a significant and sustainable change in brain structures and circuitry responsible for emotional regulation.

The following stress-related information is introduced to coachees at various stages of the RE-CB coaching process.

Stress and Its Management: The 'Big' Picture

Emotional Stress Reactions

We have learned that there are three main negative, emotional stress reactions that all people experience at various times when they are faced with adverse events at work: anger, anxiety and feeling down (emotional vocabulary). It is quite normal and healthy to experience these negative emotions as they often can help motivate you to eliminate the adversity.

We have also learned that the same emotion can vary in intensity from strong to weak as illustrated by the Emotional Thermometer. For example, if your direct report (senior leader) is unfairly critical of you, you may experience various degrees of anger from mild annoyance (temperature rating of 1 or 2) to extreme rage (temperature rating of 9 or 10). It is when your emotions become extreme that your behaviour often becomes erratic and self-defeating as when we act aggressively or withdraw (Fig. 3).

A goal for coachees to set for themselves when they are faced with negative, adverse events at work is to not become extremely upset but rather, using the Emotional Thermometer as a guide, to stay calm—within the middle range of emotional upset (temperature rating between 4 and 7).
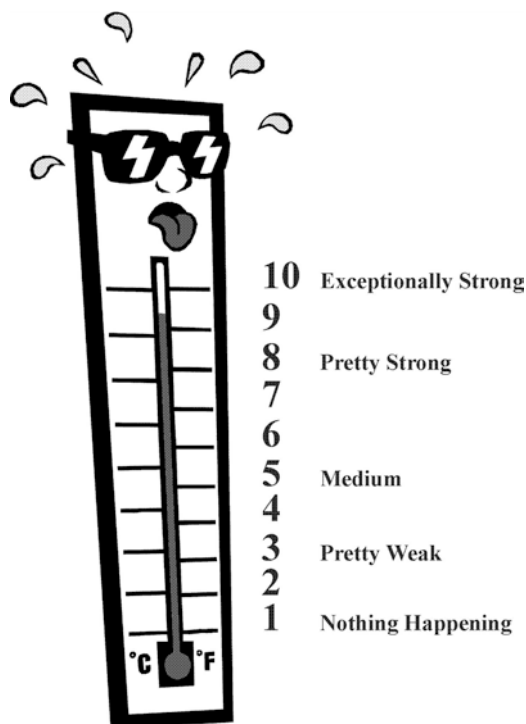
Fig. 3 The emotional thermometer

"Things Are Neither Good nor Bad but Thinking Makes Them So."—Shakespeare

We now understand that the greatest influence over the extent to which you are emotionally calm and in control when faced with adverse situations is your thinking rather than the situation itself. Take, for example, an employee whose manager is highly critical and non-supportive. You can see from the accompanying diagrams that one large factor that determines how stressed the employee becomes is the way s/he thinks about the manager's behavior (Table 1).

Catastrophizing

Over the past few decades, I have written about an aspect of our thinking that contributes a great deal to work stress and poor resilience. This tendency is referred to by Albert Ellis as *catastrophizing*. Simply stated, catastrophizing means the tendency to blow the badness of events out of proportion.

What we have learned is that when people become extremely emotionally stressed, they do so because they are most likely thinking to themselves that what has happened or is about to happen is not only bad, but is the worst thing that could

Table 1 Examples of different emotional reactions to the same adverse work situation: Thinking makes it so

Happening ⟶		Thinking ⟶	Feeling ⟶	Behavior
Anger				
Manager provides little support and criticizes employee	**Employee A**	My manager should be fair and supportive. This is awful and terrible. I can't stand it. My manager is a real _____.	Extreme anger out of control	Negative attitude passive-aggressive
	Employee B	I prefer my manager to fair and supportive. I can deal with it she's not. I don't like this behavior. My manager is fallible and is making a mistake.	Annoyed in control	Talks respectfully
Down				
Manager provides little support and criticizes employee	**Employee A**	I should have been successful. Others will judge me badly. This is awful. I can't stand it. I am hopeless.	Extremely down	Lack of engagement, withdrawal
	Employee B	I prefer to be successful and have my work approved of by others. When I am not, it's bad, but not the end of the world. I can cope. I'll try to figure out if there is anything I can do.	Disappointed	Constructive action

happen. We use particular words and phrases, which are semantically imprecise when, we catastrophize such as: "This is terrible." "This is horrible." "This is really the worst thing." We use these words and phrases not only when referring to events that <u>are</u> catastrophic such as war, terrorism, natural disasters but to events that are bad but not catastrophic such as when we make mistakes, fail or when people are thinking critically of what we have done or said.

Consider the Emotional Thermometer. As indicated, it can be used to measure the intensity of how strongly someone feels. Now, when something happens to us that we perceive to be bad such as making a mistake or being rejected, it is normal to feel in the middle of the Emotional Thermometer. We might feel somewhat or medium down, or worried or angry. However, when we catastrophize, that is, blow

the event out of proportion, our emotional temperature moves way up the thermometer and we feel very down, panicked or furious.

An important key to staying relatively calm or being in the middle of the Emotional Thermometer when faced with something that is bad but not awful, terrible and catastrophic is keeping the badness of the event in perspective. Again, our thinking at these times will sound something like: "While this is bad. It's not that bad. It could be a lot worse."

The Catastrophe Scale can help you to help coachees to not blow bad things out of proportion and of the importance of keeping things in perspective. The Catastrophe scale, which I developed for use with for all people including children and young people presents to a scale for measuring how bad things are. Extremely high ratings (90–100), which can be considered as catastrophes, the "worst" things in the world, are represented by an erupting volcano, a meteor hits the earth, being eaten by a shark and being physically assaulted. Things that are "very bad" include a very serious car accident, being arrested and thrown in jail. Things that are "bad" include being at the dentist, your computer crashes, falling off your bike and receiving a bad mark in school. Finally, things that fall into the "a bit bad" include being stung by a little mosquito, having a pimple, your ice cream falls on the ground or a dog eats your hotdog. Where you place an event on the Catastrophe Scale determines how strong your emotions are on the Emotional Thermometer (Fig. 4).

Battle Between Rational (Stress-Managing) and Irrational Beliefs (Stress-Creating)

We now know that all humans are all born with two opposing ways of thinking—ways of interpreting and evaluating experiences including themselves and others; (1) Rational (reason, flexible, evidence-based), and (2) Irrational (rigid, not logical, not evidence-based). The degree to which we become emotionally stressed when adverse events happen is governed largely by whether we are viewing and interpreting the event through a rational, stress-managing or irrational, stress-creating lens. The accompanying survey will provide a coachee information as to whether s/he holds any of the major irrational beliefs that lead to poor resilience and high stress. Keep in mind that all of us to greater or lesser extents harbor irrational beliefs. Fortunately, by helping a coachee become aware of those beliefs s/he holds, s/he has an opportunity to replace them.

The *Check-up from your Neck-up Survey* can be completed by coachees to aid self-awareness of six major stress-creating beliefs that research indicates are associated with stress (e.g., Bernard, 2016a, 2016b).

The impact of the different beliefs on emotional stress reactions when faced with adversity is represented below and can be shared with coachees:

- **Self-Downing—p**rone to feeling down and inadequate.
- **Need for Approval—**prone to social anxiety.
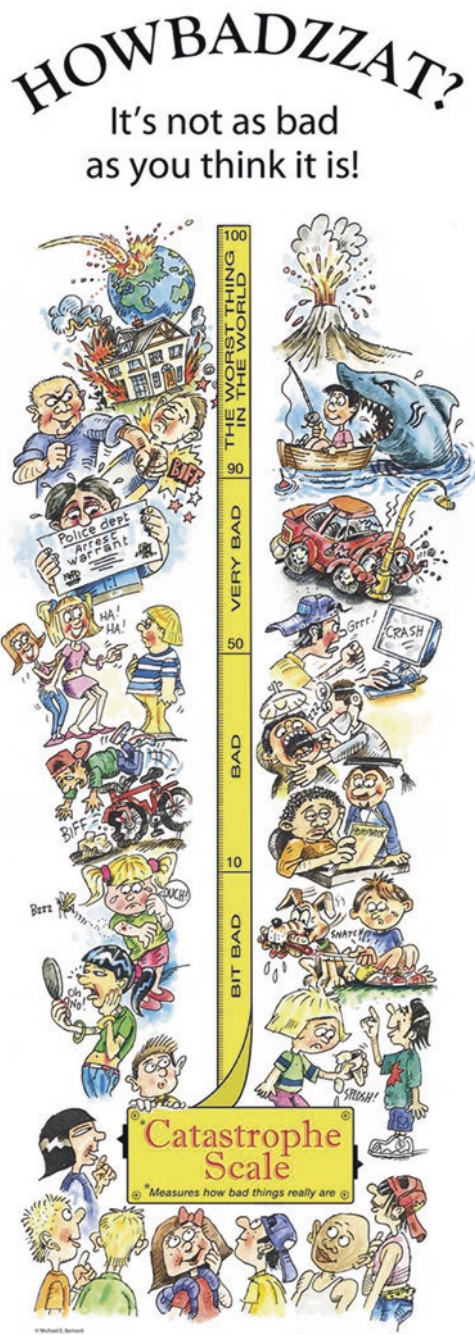
Fig. 4 The Catastrophe Scale

- **Need for Achievement (Perfectionism)—**prone to performance anxiety.
- **I Can't Do It!—**prone to getting down and feeling helpless and hopeless.
- **I Can't Be Bothered—**prone to anger when faced with being required to do unpleasant tasks; you may tend to procrastinate in these areas.
- **Intolerance of Others—**prone to anger with people you perceive as doing the wrong thing.

Your Check Up from the Neck Up Survey

Instructions: Place a check mark in the box that indicates which type of thinking is most characteristic of you when faced with adversity at work.

☐ **Self-Downing**	When things go badly and I make mistakes or people are critical of me, I tend to put myself down and think of myself as a failure or a loser.
vs.	
☐ **Accepting Myself**	When things go badly and I make mistakes or people are critical of me, I accept myself and do not put myself down at these times.
☐ **Need for Approval**	I seem to be someone who is overly concerned with what others think of me, and I think it is terrible to be criticised or thought badly of.
vs.	
☐ **Non-Approval Seeking**	While I like to be approved of, I don't need the approval of others.
☐ **Need for Achievement (Perfectionism)**	I seem to be someone who needs to be highly successful. It is horrible for me to make mistakes.
vs.	
☐ **Responsible Risk Taking**	While I like to be successful, I don't need to be all the time. I try new things even though there is a high likelihood that I might not be successful at first.
☐ **I Can't Do It**	I am a pessimist believing things will turn out for the worse.
vs.	
☐ **I Can Do It**	I generally believe I will be successful and things will turn out for the best.
☐ **I Can't Be Bothered**	I really can't stand it when I have too much work to do and not enough time to do it. Things shouldn't be so hard and unpleasant.
vs.	
☐ **Working Tough**	While I prefer that things go comfortably and easily, I accept that in order to achieve pleasant results in the long term, I sometimes have to do unpleasant things in the short term.
☐ **Intolerance of Others**	People should always act fairly, considerately, and respectfully. I can't stand it when they do not. People who act unfairly are "louses" who deserve to be punished.
or	
☐ **Tolerance of Others**	People are fallible and sometimes make mistakes. While I strongly prefer others to act fairly and considerately, I can stand it when they do not. I try hard not to condemn them for their actions.

Stress Management: RE-CB Coaching

In my role as a coach, I wear two hats. One, I provide support to enable coachees to identify specific work stressors and to formulate goals related to reductions in the symptoms of stress as well as improvements in aspects of their work performance that may be contributing to their stress. Two, when helping coachees become aware of and overcome stress reactions, I function as a psycho-educator sharing what I know about the important role a person's thinking plays in their stress and how by using cognitive re-structuring and coping skills, the coachee can lessen their stress.

Stress management coaching sessions are much shorter and focused in comparison with the typical number of sessions for individuals undergoing RE-CB therapy for mental health problems. In stress management coaching, it is quite common to address one or two work stressors being experienced by the coaches with the goal of developing attitudes and skills to manage those stressors. It is useful to keep in mind that it has been estimated that whereas 25% of coachees seeking coaching for stress-related issues suffer mental health issues, 75% do not (Neenan & Palmer, 2012). Coaches who are not psychologists as well as those who are need the expertise to identify coachees who are experiencing mental health issues concomitant with stress and make suitable recommendations and referral for management.

What follows is the RE-CB sequence of coaching for work stress that I engage in with individuals and groups. Coaching sessions are interspersed with coach-initiated informal presentations and discussion of:

- important background information on stress
- the role of thinking in feelings and behaviour
- a three-step action plan that individuals implement
- evaluation that focuses on the work stressors they find most problematic

Formally, there is a progression of steps (see below) that govern the stress coaching process. However, more often than not, the process is less formal that it appears below with the coachee being guided by the coachee's concerns, needs and goals (for illustration, see Case Study at the beginning of this chapter).

4-Step RE-CB Coaching for Reducing Workplace Stress

Step 1: Take Stock of Work Stressors

(a) Coachee identifies several stressors at work that are leading to very strong stress reactions; selects one for the development of an initial action plan.
(b) Coachee describes his/her stress reactions: emotional, cognitive, behavioural, physical
(c) Coachee specifies goals for how s/he wants to: (1) feel, think and behave the next time s/he encounters work stressor, (2) Change the frequency and intensity of work stressor and (3) Improvements in work performance.

Step 2: Plan for Taking Control of Stress Reactions

(a) Through Socratic questioning by coach, coachee becomes aware of stress-creating beliefs and self-talk, in collaboration challenges and changes those that are creating stress and describes the stress-managing beliefs and self-talk s/he will employ when next faced with work stressor (coachee may complete *Check-up from Neck-up Survey* to identify stress-creating beliefs; coachee may complete the *Resilience: Self-Survey*).
(b) Coachee describes coping skills for staying calm/calming down before/during/after confrontation with specific work stressor
(c) Coachee describes any life style changes that would help to lessen emotional stress
(d) Coachee decides on actions s/he will action before the next coaching session aimed at modifying stress reactions including self-talk, coping skills and life style.

Step 3: Plan for Taking Action to Modify Work Stressor

(a) Coach presents problem solving method/steps (e.g., problem definition, alternative solution generation, consequential thinking, action, evaluation) as well as behavioural strengths (confidence, persistence, organization, getting along) that could help coachee influence and eliminate the presenting stressor. As a result, the coachee decides on which actions (what to say; what to do) to reduce the intensity and frequency of the stressor.

Step 4: Evaluation

(a) On a regular basis, coachee reflects on impact of emotional stress management (Step 2) as well as problem solving plan (Step 3) on goals of coaching session (Step 1).
(b) Coachee modifies emotional stress management and problem solving plans until goals of coaching session have been achieved.
(c) Coachee may complete the Check-up from the Neck-up Surveys to determine changes in their beliefs that create stress as well as the *Resilience: Self-Survey* to gain a sense of their progress in developing a general resilient mindset.

In order to strengthen a coachee's resilient mindset, the above steps are iteratively applied to different work stressors.

Conclusion

The style of RE-CB coaching combines collaboration of coach and coachee on problems and goals with coach directed discussion of insights discussed in this chapter on the ABCs of stress and its management. One of the greatest insights into stress RE-CB coaches can share with coachees is contained in the ABC model popularized by Albert Ellis; namely,

A = activating event (stressor)
B = beliefs (stress-creating/irrational self-talk vs. stress-managing/rational self-talk)
C = consequence (emotional, behavioral).

No matter how powerful the insights, the flow of coaching sessions needs to be directed and contextualized around coachee's issues, needs and goals. Coachee insights found in the rational-emotive and cognitive-behavioral perspective are revealed when a coachee displays a motivation to change and help answer the question of many coachees: 'How do I feel less stressed and get the problem to go away?'

It is important for RE-CB coaches to be accountable by ensuring that the goals for a client are front and center of every coaching session – and as much as possible defined concretely and are observable. The general goals of stress management coaching are:

1. reducing stress
2. eliminating the external stressors
3. improving work performance

These goals need to be spelled out behaviorally early on and the coach needs to check in with the coachee at the beginning of each session asking about coachee progress between coaching sessions.

There is little doubt that by strengthening coachees' capacity for reason brings about dramatic emotional and behavioural changes needed for the strengthening of resilience and the management of workplace stress.

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Coaching High Workplace Performance

Michael E. Bernard

The scholarly context for the work to be reported on here is the coaching literature that attests to the positive impact coaching has on executive and management work performance (e.g., Theeboom, Beersma, & van Vianen, 2013) as well as the beneficial effect that rational-emotive and cognitive-behavior (RE-CB) coaching has on executive performance (e.g., Bozer & Sarros, 2012) and managerial skills (e.g., Ratiu, David, & Baban, 2017). Studies also demonstrate that RE-CB coaching leads to less work stress and higher levels of well-being (e.g., Gyllensten & Palmer, 2005; Turner & Barker, 2015) and increases resilience and goal attainment (e.g., Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009). Additionally, important background is the finding from the positive psychology literature that strengthening psychological capital of individuals (resilience, optimism, self-efficacy, perseverance) (e.g., Luthans, Avey, Avolio, & Peterson, 2010; Newman, Ucbarsaran, & Hirst, 2014) enhances work performance.

This chapter describes a form of RE-CB coaching practice, *high performance mindset* (HPM) coaching that includes emotional and practical, problem solving methods as well as strengths building sourced from the field of positive psychology. RE-CB coaching can be employed with coachees who are struggling with performance issues, high work stress or who want to go from good to great. As a distinctive approach and in a nutshell, high performance mindset coaching helps coachees reflect on a research-based framework representing the range of psychological capacities of top performers. Coachees identify strengths and opportunities for growth leading to the formulation, enactment and evaluation of an action plan in terms of the extent to which work goals of the coachee are accomplished as well as elements of their high performance mindset strengthened. During this process, coaches often employ rational-emotive and cognitive behavior methods to

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help coachees identify and overcome internal work performance blockers such as anxiety, anger, feeling down and procrastination. The overall aim of this type of coaching is to strengthen the capacity of coachees for reasoning, scientific thinking and semantic precision in the way they describe and evaluate experience. Change in neural structures (e.g., pre-frontal cortex) and neural circuitry needed for higher-order self-determination (e.g., goal setting, attentional focus) and emotional self-regulation (e.g., calming of amygdala) is seen as the neurological outcome of the high performance mindset coaching process.

The first part of this chapter will review necessary background information for the coach while the second will describe the high performance mindset coaching steps. An assumption underpinning this form of practice of RE-CB coaching is that coaches have a suitable background and training in how rational-emotive and cognitive-behavior theory conceptualizes psychological barriers to work performance. Coaches using this approach need to be skilful in Socratic questioning of coachees' beliefs and the meanings they provide for events (e.g., "Where is the evidence this is the worst thing in the world that could happen?"). As well, coaches help coachees appreciate whether or not their thinking about an event is sensible and evidence based. Finally, a coach needs to be able to support coachees to formulate thinking that is reasonable and evidence-based. It is recommended that a RE-CB coach read Windy Dryden's (2011) *First Steps in Using REBT in Life Coaching* as well as *The Practitioner's Guide to Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy* (DiGiuseppe, Doyle, Dryden, & Backx, 2013)*. Material that follows has been excerpted from the guide I have written, *Coaching the High Performance Mindset at Work* (2013a, 2013b).

The High Performance Mindset at Work: What A Coach Needs To Know

In order to be effective as a HPM coach, it is important to know something about the following topics, which will be reviewed before HPM coaching is described:

1. What is a High Performance Mindset?
2. The *Enhanced* Work Performance Cycle
3. 'Tough Work Situations' and the 'Zone of Vulnerability'
4. Performance Blockers
5. Behavioural Strengths
6. Challenging and Changing Self-Talk
7. The Catastrophe Scale
8. Individual Action Plan: Strengthening a High Performance Mindset
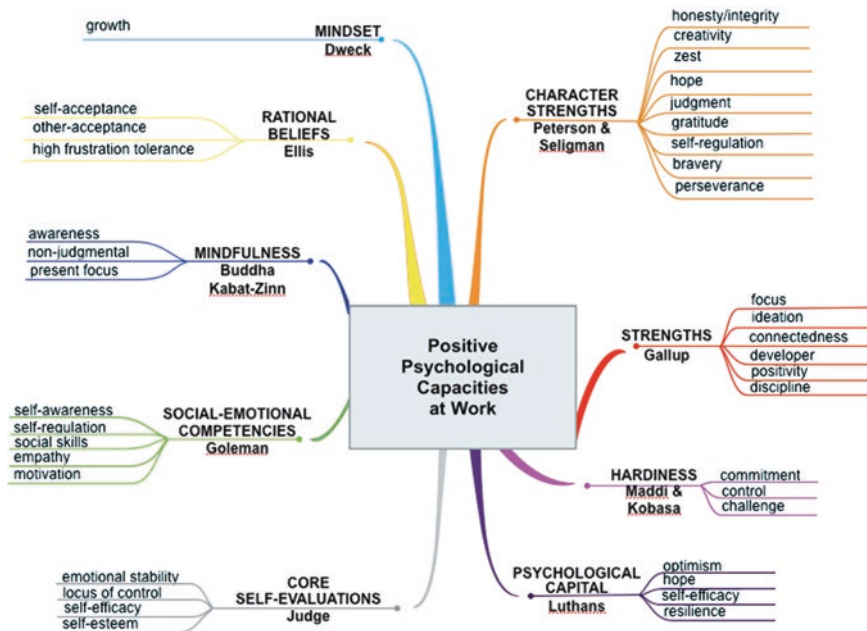
Fig. 1 Positive psychological capacities for High Work Performance

What Is a High Performance Mindset?

Within the past several decades, researchers (e.g., Goleman, 1998; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Judge, 2009) studying positive organisational behaviour in the workplace have discovered a range of positive psychological capacities that contribute to higher levels of productivity, engagement, innovation, leadership and the quality of life that I have summarised elsewhere (e.g., Bernard, 2013a, 2013b, 2016). These psychological capacities develop across one's life span through experience and from educational and professional development programs.

Some of the major contributors to our understanding of the mindset of high performance include (see Fig. 1):

- Maddi and Kobasa (1984) discovered that as a group, top performers display *hardiness* (commitment, control, challenge).
- Goleman (1998) found strong relationships between *social and emotional competence* (emotional intelligence) and work performance.
- Luthans and Youssef (2004) discovered that well-developed *psychological capital* (optimism, hope, self-efficacy, resilience) contributes to a variety of positive work outcomes (work satisfaction, productivity, engagement).
- Judge (2009) found top performers to have positive *core self-evaluations* (emotional stability, high self-esteem, self-efficacy, internal locus of control).

- Peterson and Seligman (2004) described different, universal character traits (e.g. integrity, creativity, zest, good judgment, gratitude, and bravery) that contribute to happiness, accomplishment, and other indicators of flourishing.
- The Gallup Organization (Clifton & Harter, 2003) uncovered through extensive interviews *leadership strengths* such as focus, ideation, connectedness, positivity, and discipline.
- Kabat-Zinn (2005) revealed the benefits of *mindfulness* to health and coping with the stresses of modern-day living.
- Ellis (1962) identified rational beliefs (high frustration tolerance, acceptance of others, and self-acceptance) as the cornerstone of work effectiveness and efficiency.
- Dweck (2006) illuminated what she calls a *growth mindset* that allows for and drives continued learning and success.

Additional research has identified aspects of the mental make-up of high performers and leaders including: authenticity, goal setting (Locke & Latham, 2006), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), confidence (Kase, 2009), optimism (Youssef & Luthans, 2007), positive self-regard (Rogers, 1961), creativity (Pink, 2005), respect (Katzenbach & Smith, 2003), support (Randall, Cropananzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999), providing performance feedback (Jordan & Audia, 2012), positivity versus negativity bias (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001), and organisation/time management.

Whether presented in a list or in a diagram, the different types and number of positive psychological capabilities appear overwhelming and difficult to keep track of. That being the case, I categorised these psychological capabilities into a *high performance capability framework* or what I have referred to as the *architecture of the high performance mindset* (Bernard, 2016) that appears as a self-survey that coachees can complete during the reflection stage of HPM coaching (see Fig. 2).

Category 1 'Commitments' are deeply ingrained, habitual attitudes that represent what high performers stand for and believe in. My synthesis of research dealing with positive psychological capacities (see above) reveals that today's high performer has three paramount commitments or foundational purposes in life:

- Commitment to Success—single-minded purpose to be extremely successful; focused concentration on what has to be done to achieve positive outcomes; optimism about achieving both short-term and long-term goals; responsible risk taking knowing that through mistakes and failures, one develops one's talents and abilities; intense determination to make the personal sacrifices including short-term fun and the high tolerance of frustration in order to bring about long-term success.
- Commitment to Others—respecting people and making people feel valued including the tasks they perform; caring about and being empathic towards people experiencing difficulties; respecting the differences of opinion and behaviour of people including those from diverse backgrounds; not judging people by their behaviour and seeing retaliation for perceived injustice or unfairness as unnecessary and, oftentimes, counter-productive.

Instructions:

Rate the extent of development of each element of your mindset.

SELF-MANAGEMENT	PERSISTENCE	ORGANISATION	CONFIDENCE	GETTING ALONG
When faced with tough situations, being aware of your emotions, staying calm, when upset controlling one's behaviour, calming down and bouncing back.	Finishing tasks and activities that are frustrating, time consuming and/or boring with extra effort.	Having a goal to be your best at work and knowing what to do to achieve it. Managing your time, energy and systems effectively.	Not being afraid to try something and not being worried about what others think. Speaking clearly with a confident voice.	Working well with others, treating others with respect, acceptance and resolve disagreements effectively.

BEHAVIOURAL STRENGTHS

COMMITMENT SUCCESS — **COMMITMENT OTHERS** — **COMMITMENT SELF**

3

= highly developed very frequently reflected in my behaviour

2

= somewhat developed sometimes reflected in my behaviour

1

= needs further development infrequently reflected in my behaviour

BELIEFS

SELF DIRECTION
Appreciating the importance of setting big goals at work; believing in the importance of confronting obstacles and solving problems without delay.

OPTIMISM
Anticipating success; seeing bad events as temporary and good outcomes as being due to your ability.

GROWTH
Believing that your ability and competence continues to develop from experience and ongoing learning.

CREATIVITY
Believing in the importance of generating new solutions, ideas, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems.

HIGH FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE
Being prepared to endure frustration and difficulty in short-term in order to be successful in the long-term.

BELIEFS

ACCEPTANCE OF OTHERS
Accepting that all people are fallible, mistake makers some of the time and not judging them by their behaviour.

EMPATHY
Appreciating the importance of seeing the world from the eyes of another and being able to listen and tune into the feelings of others.

RESPECT
Valuing others and appreciating the importance of treating people with consideration and care.

SUPPORT
Valuing doing things that help others to be successful.

FEEDBACK
Knowing the importance of providing others with information about how they have been performing their job for the purpose of improving individual and team performance.

BELIEFS

SELF ACCEPTANCE
Accepting yourself as someone who is imperfect; not using your work performance or other's opinions to base your judgment of self-worth.

POSITIVE SELF REGARD
Appreciating your strengths of character, personality, skills and ability as well as valuing positive aspects of your family, culture and religion.

AUTHENTICITY
Believing in the importance of behaving consistently with your values and not having to go along with the group when their opinion differs from yours.

POSITIVE FOCUS
Appreciating the positive rather than focusing on negative events and being grateful for what you have.

HEALTHY LIVING
Believing in the importance of a healthy life style including rest, recreation, relaxation and a balanced diet.

Architecture of the High Performance Mindset

Fig. 2 The architecture of the high performance mindset

- Commitment to Self—being positive, authentic and self-accepting with high levels of positive self-regard, taking full responsibility for one's own feelings and actions no matter the situation and refusing to blame others; having a positive focus on situations and one's daily encounters and accomplishments as well as expressing gratitude towards others for what they have contributed to your life;

dedication to a healthy life style that includes rest, recreation, relaxation, healthy diet and spending quality time with family and friends.

These three commitments do not always develop at the same time. For some people, the commitment to success emerges first, while later in life commitments to others and to self become more important.

Are all of the commitments and supporting beliefs equally and fully developed as part of the mindset of high performers? Without question, possessing all three commitments and each set of the five beliefs is optimum. However, even in the group of our highest performers, we have observed that their mindsets do differ. Some top performers are late in coming to the realisation that a strong commitment to others is as important to their success and well-being as possessing a strong commitment to success. At the level of individual beliefs, some of our very best, well-rounded top performers are not very self-accepting, a key belief supporting the commitment to self. High performers also differ somewhat from each other in their self-management of their emotional and behavioral responses to demanding work tasks and difficult people. Some high performers are aware of the central role their thinking plays in their negative (and positive) response to a situation. Other high performers blame the organisation or person for how they respond and behave rather than taking personal responsibility for their reactions.

Category 2 'Behavioural Strengths' are well-developed, habitual, anticipatory patterns of behaviour that high performers stand ready to apply when faced with challenging tasks and demanding people. They are:

- Self-Management—in highly demanding situations and with difficult people, self-awareness of emotions and availability of a range of coping skills and repertoire of sensible and evidence-based thinking and self-talk for staying calm and calming down
- Confidence—prepared to attempt very difficult tasks without fear of failure or criticism by others in order to learn from experience and improve
- Persistence—appreciates the importance of engaging with highly frustrating and time-consuming work activities in order to be successful
- Organisation—continuously sets and reviews big, long-term goals, realistic short-term goals, specific daily goals; conscious of need for system to keep track of information; prioritises time management and task analysis skills
- Getting Along—preparedness to work supportively and collaboratively with others; openness to form relationships and to network; desire to resolve conflict peacefully and to relate positively to difficult people

The Enhanced *Work Performance Cycle*

Top performers demonstrate what can be described as an '*Enhanced* Work Performance Cycle' (see Fig. 3). Because of strong commitments and behavioral strengths, they respond more quickly and positively to *tough situations* in their *zone*
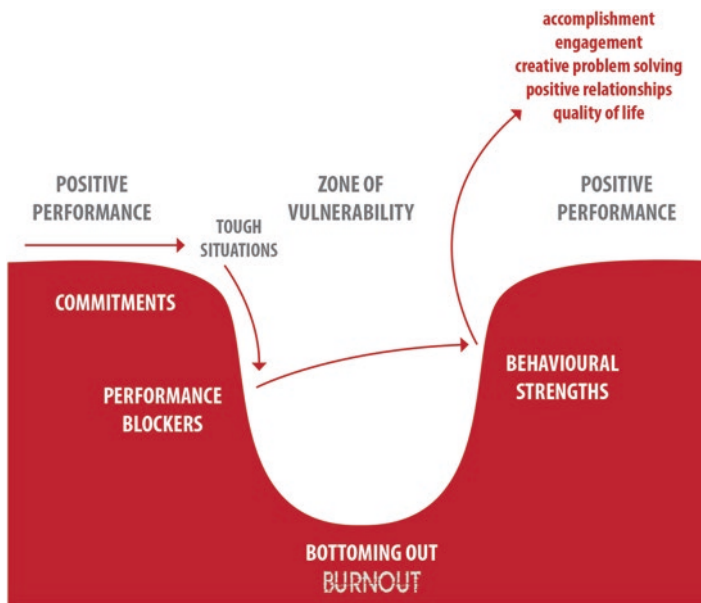
Fig. 3 The *enhanced* work performance cycle

of vulnerability (defined in following section) avoiding a significant negative downward spiral of work performance, bottoming out and burnout. They are more aware of internal *performance blockers* they experience in tough situations and through the deployment of self-management, they gain control with significant reduction in the *bottoming out* effect and the likelihood of *burnout*. Using their behavioural strengths, they are much more adept in managing the tough situation and creative problem solving leading to going one better and a host of positive work performance outcomes.

Research (e.g., Fredrickson, 2001) suggests that shifting negative emotions to a higher positive-to-negative emotional ratio, is not only essential to high levels of wellbeing but enables access to personal competencies and increases an individual's capacity to use social, cognitive and affective resources, vital skills particularly for twenty-first century leaders.[2] It will be important to refer to the work performance cycle when discussing with coachees the elements of the high performance mindset and how each contributes to high performance outcomes.

'Tough Work Situations' and the 'Zone of Vulnerability'

The term *tough situations* is used to refer to situations that people experience at work that interrupt their positive work performance because they experience one or more internal performance blockers (procrastination, anger, worry and feeling

down). Oftentimes, people can devote an enormous amount of mental and emotional time and energy focused on a negative aspect of work rather than moving on to solve the problem or make the best of it.

Tough work situations are identifiable by: (1) commencement of a downward spiral in the individual's work performance and (2) the emergence of one or more internal performance blockers.

Those work situations that lead to a downward trend in work performance and that are accompanied by one or more performance blockers that within what I have called an individual's *zone of vulnerability*. People differ as to what types of tough situations are in their zone of vulnerability. For example, for one person, public speaking and negative feedback on work performance are two situations that fall within his/her zone whereas for another person, neither of these events occupies the zone but people who are negative and lack of communication may.

While high performers do experience work situations that are accompanied by negative work responses, the downward trajectory in their work performance is less steep (less time is spent in negative behaviour), they experience fewer and less intense internal performance blockers and they recover more quickly to positive behaviour that addresses the tough work situation.

Here are five categories of tough work situations people may encounter at work.

1. Challenging work demands are those work tasks where a coachee perceives that s/he may lack the skill to be successful, work tasks where they s/he make mistakes and/or where other people will judge his/her work performance poorly.
2. Relationship difficulties may be experienced with a boss, colleague or client. Oftentimes, the person with whom a coachee works with appears to have issues with the coachee and his/her and work performance. As well, the coachee may be working with a DP (difficult person) whose personality is dominated by egotism, self-centeredness, power and control of others.
3. There may be aspects of the way the coachee's organisation operates that s/he perceives to be unfair or un-productive. Common examples include not being consulted about things that directly involve him/her, lack of transparency and the failure to communicate in a timely fashion.
4. There is little question that too much change in too short a time frame can lead to negative work performance. Change may involve rapid re-structuring, modification to the team of people a coachee works with and to the people s/he reports to.
5. Work performance issues include those situations where a coachee's work performance is being negatively evaluated. The occasion might be during a regular performance review where his/her superior provides negative feedback. Other situations include times when s/he receives criticism from a colleague or client or when in his/her own eyes s/he simply hasn't performed well on a task.

Through completing the *Inventory of Tough Situations* (employee; manager) (Bernard, 2013a, b), many individuals being coached will have identified those tough work situations in their zone of vulnerability. Table 1 presents examples of suggestions coaches can provide to help coachees to improve the way they go about handling different types of tough situations.

Table 1 Coaching Suggestions for Handling Tough Work Situations

Tough Situation 1. Speaking in public on something the coachee doesn't know a lot about or has not spoken on before.
Coaching Suggestion: Prepare yourself by being relaxed (self-management) and confident. Be optimistic that your talk will go OK; don't worry about making a mistake—just continue on- it doesn't have to be perfect.
Tough Situation 2. Coachee makes significant mistakes (e.g. underestimating budget).
Coaching Suggestion: Don't take it personally. It's bad but not the worst thing that could happen. I'm sure you have learned something from the experience so that it won't happen again.
Tough Situation 3. Coachee has multiple phone and email messages from different clients. Some are hers; some are clients of other team members. They all need a response within 24 h.
Coaching Suggestion: Get organised. First, prioritise the most important messages. And in a nice assertive way, ask other team members if they can handle a few of the messages. Keep persisting until you've done as much as you can.
Tough Situation 4. There are complaints about the coachee from someone outside his organisation he works with.
Coaching Suggestion: I understand that you would be upset. However, what I've learned is not to take complaints personally. I remind myself that while I prefer people to think well of me, I don't need them always to be positive and that it's not the end of the world to be criticised. In fact, it's quite normal and expected. I try to see what I can learn from what they are saying to improve my job performance.
Tough Situation 5. Coachee has overlapping projects and multiple deadlines that she may not be able to meet.
Coaching Suggestion: Get organised. Write down each project and when the project is due. Then, work out what steps you will need to take to complete the project and how long each step will take. See if you can get an extension—also, see if someone is around that can give you a hand.
Tough Situation 6. Coachee has too much work to do and not enough time to do it.
Coaching Suggestion: Prioritise the most to least important things that have to get done. Write down a workflow of what you have to do each day. And try not to stress—take a few minutes to relieve pressure—self-management here.
Tough Situation 7. A client is continually negative towards the coachee and is unfairly critical.
Coaching Suggestion: Expect that some people will be that way. Don't take it personally. Be confident. Use getting along skills to see if you can get them on your side. Be assertive in expressing what you think without being defensive or aggressive.
Tough Situation 8. A team member has not performed in a way that meets the coachee's expectations.
Coaching Suggestion: In a relaxed moment, communicate to your team member what you are thinking, feeling and wanting. Indicate how their work behaviour impacts you and what you are trying to do. Begin the conversation offering some praise about what the team member has done well. Finish the conversation with a positive comment about how things will improve in the future.

Performance Blockers

Tough situations are by definition those times at work when positive performance drops off and, instead, one's approach becomes negative. At these times, what can interrupt positive performance and creates a downward negative trend is one or

more internal performance blockers are experienced at high levels of intensity, duration and frequency. Oftentimes, a coachee may not be aware that s/he is experiencing these blockers. As such, it can be useful for a coach to help the individual become more self-aware of what s/he experiences when faced with a tough situation that may be impairing his/her behaviour to handle the situation effectively. There are four common *internal performance blockers* that everyone experiences from time to time:

anger, worry, feeling down and procrastination. Coaches working on work performance issues should be well-versed on the irrational self-talk that accompanies each as well as have strategies and tips for supporting a coachee to overcome one of more of these blockers.

There are differences between 'external' and 'internal' blockers to positive work performance. *External performance blockers* are outside-the-person obstacles at work that makes it harder to deal successfully with a challenging and demanding tough work situation. For example, a last minute change in work assignment or priority would be an external performance blocker to finishing up work on a proposal. Other external blockers include: time workload pressures, unclear responsibilities, unreasonable clients, etc.

As a rule, high performers experience fewer blockers and at lower levels of intensity. And when they become aware of experiencing a blocker, they work as quickly as possible to get the blocker out of the road in order to tackle the situation more positively and effectively. This is illustrated in the *Enhanced* Work Performance Cycle. You will see that the downward spiral of negative work performance is interrupted with the high performing individual overcoming internal performance blockers and using behavioural strengths to get back on top and go one better.

Behavioral Strengths

People vary quite a bit in terms of the development of the behavioural strengths of self-management, confidence, persistence, organisation and getting along. For example, some people have well-developed confidence while others lack strong confidence but have well-developed persistence and organisation.

Here are some brief case studies to review that illustrate the consequence of not having fully developed behavioral strengths.

Case Study: John (Who Lacks Confidence)

John is a graduate trainee with a State Government agency. He has been working in the human resources unit for three months with a number of mature-age and very experienced personnel managers. Although generally talkative and socially friendly, he seems reluctant to actively participate in staff meetings and makes comments in interviews he has attended. He doesn't want to appear to be asking silly questions

so generally remains silent. Recently, he was given the task of constructing a psychological profile proforma for new employees but feels like he doesn't know enough about this area and doesn't want to seek help so early in his tenure.

Case Study: Fred (Who Lacks Persistence)

Fred has recently been promoted to a middle management position after 10 years as a key shop floor operative. Although he actively sought out this position he now finds himself dealing with and being responsible for a whole new range of issues. This includes mundane paperwork and 'administrivia', which he finds unsatisfying. He is missing report date deadlines and spending more and more time back on the shop floor where he feels more comfortable. Although his new position is more prestigious with better pay and more benefits, Fred feels he needs to return to the shop floor after only two months in his new position.

Case Study: Andrea (Who Lacks Organisation)

Andrea was recently hired as a receptionist at a busy dental practice. Having previously worked as a personal assistant to a dentist at a small practice, she had good experience. However, she has found that working for a single dentist is a lot different to working for four! She finds it difficult to organise appointments across the practice and to meet the needs of the dentists who each seem to believe she is their own personal assistant. She is keen to make a positive contribution to the practice but finds most of her time seems to be spent on changing appointments, running personal errands and apologising to patients who have to wait longer than they expected. She is getting little sleep and consequently often arrives late, which is adding to the chaos.

Case Study: Max (Who Lacks Getting Along Skills)

Max is an experienced mail clerk in a large office and has worked in the same position for 15 years. He genuinely enjoys his job and seems keen to continue improving. Although Max appears outwardly friendly, he has difficulty relating to the others in his department. He has seen managers come and go, new processes introduced and discarded, and sees himself as the only one who can complete a task to his standards. Max has little tolerance for mistakes and he will voice his displeasure and often will bring up the situation long after the fact. Managers are all incompetent in his eyes, junior employees are not worth the trouble and people who have difficulty speaking English or communicating in words he cannot understand shouldn't be employed at all.

Challenging and Changing Self-Talk

An advanced RE-CB coaching skill involves helping coachees change their irrational beliefs (unreasonable and rigid interpretations and evaluations) into rational beliefs (reasonable, evidence-based ways of thinking about tough situations).

(Given that some people have an aversion to having their ways of interpreting a situation as being 'irrational,' it is often advisable to substitute the words 'not reasonable' or 'rigid' for irrational thinking and 'reasonable' and 'flexible' as substitutes for rational.)

You will want to listen for and at times ask a coachee about their beliefs (faulty predictions, conclusions, evaluations) surrounding different work events that we know contributing to one or more internal performance blockers. For example, 'awfulising' (blowing the badness of events out of proportion) often accompanies anxiety while 'I can't-stand-it-it is' (believing that you cannot stand events and people at work you perceive as highly frustrating including unfairness and disrespect contributes to anger. When you become aware that the self-talk (thinking) of someone you are coaching seems to be not sensible, not true nor helpful, you can help the coachee through Socratic questioning appreciate while his/her thinking is not reasonable and evidence-based and, then, to make a conscious shift in his/her thinking so that it becomes so.

Socratic questions can be used to help coachees to see that some of their thinking is neither sensible nor based on fact and to correct cognitive errors. Some examples include:

- "I appreciate that you would very much like to be highly successful and/or receive approval for what you have achieved, but does that mean it has to occur every time and when it doesn't, it is the end of the world and you are a total failure?"
- "Is there evidence to support your idea that your manager is a total SOB because at times he acts poorly towards you and others?"
- "Is your prediction that you will never get a promotion likely to be true?"
- "Where is the evidence that you cannot stand having to listen to your colleague's negativity?"
- "Does it make sense to say because of what has happened (mistakes, criticism, failure), you are totally hopeless?"

Other questions can help coachees consider the actual language they use to describe and explain experience.

- "*Awful* means – the worst thing in the world. Is it true that being laughed at in a meeting by a colleague is awful, the worst thing in the world that could happen?"
- "*I am hopeless* means – hopeless at everything you do. Are you hopeless at everything you do?"
- "You are saying that you will *never* make the sale. Do you think *never* is the best word you could use or would another be more suitable?"

The answers coachees provide to these questions (see Table 2) will often be more sensible, evidence-based and semantically precise re-statements of their original thinking.

Table 2 Challenging and changing irrational self-talk

Example 1. 'I can't stand having to do this paperwork.'
This thinking is clearly irrational because it is not true. The evidence is that you CAN stand doing paperwork even though you don't like it. In fact, you can stand just about anything that happens at work. Change to sensible, evidence-based self-talk: 'I don't like paperwork, but I can stand it.'
Example 2. 'It would be awful and horrible if I said something stupid or people laughed. I'll just keep quiet.'
This thinking is clearly irrational because it is not sensible, true nor helpful. 'Awful' and 'horrible' mean the worst things in the world. Obviously, most tough situations at work that go the wrong way can be seen to be objectively bad, but never catastrophic. Things that are awful include serious illness, natural disasters, terrorism and the like. Change to sensible, evidence-based self-talk: 'It would be bad to be laughed at but it would not be the end of the world.'
Example 3. 'When I have made mistakes or performed imperfectly, that shows I am hopeless, a loser, a failure.'
Ouch. This type of thinking, which is quite common, is irrational largely because it is not sensible. Non-achievement in one or more areas of work never equates to being a total non-achiever or failure in all areas of your life. It is also not true (no evidence) to justify the conclusion that you are totally hopeless. Change to sensible, evidence-based self-talk: 'I am a fallible human being who will inevitably make mistakes. While I strive to do my best, I will not always be successful and when I'm not, I know I am still capable and possess many fine qualities.'
Example 4. 'He (or she) should act more fairly and considerately towards me. Because he (or she) has not, that shows what a total 'arse' he (or she) is.'
This self-talk is irrational because while it is preferable that people you work with are considerate and fair, and treat you as nicely as you treat them, occasionally for different reasons they will not. It doesn't make sense to think of them at these times as totally bad people. Don't judge people by their sins. Everyone makes mistakes and has fallibilities; they also have their good sides. Change to sensible, evidence-based self-talk: 'I prefer people to act decently, but when they don't, they don't. Tough. I won't condemn them as people, I'll just focus on seeing if I can get them to change their behaviour and if I cannot, I can move on.'

The Catastrophe Scale

The Catastrophe Scale is one of the most powerful tools coaches can use with individuals being coached who are experiencing very strong, negative reactions surrounding a tough situation at work. The Catastrophe Scale illustrates the powerful influence of people's thinking on their ability to manage their emotions, behaviours and to remain positive. Its use is to help people not blow bad things out of proportion and the importance of keeping things in perspective.

The Catastrophe Scale developed for use with people of all ages including young people, presents events that can occur in the world grouped in terms of their degree of badness. Events that fall in the 90–100 area of the scale are those things that occur in the world that can be considered as real catastrophes, the 'worst' things in the world, and are represented by an erupting volcano, a meteor hits the earth, being eaten by a shark and being physically assaulted. Things that are 'very bad' include

a very serious car accident, being arrested and thrown in jail. Things that are 'bad' include being at the dentist, your computer crashes, falling off your bike and getting a poor result. Finally, things that fall into the 'a bit bad' category include being stung by a little mosquito, having a blemish and your ice cream falls on the ground.

Here's what we've learned about the emotional reaction people have to tough situations at work. When people feel extremely upset about an event at work, they are likely not only thinking the event is bad, they are also thinking 'This is awful and terrible, the worst thing that could happen'. This way of thinking *causes* people to experience overly intense levels of emotionality that create stress and often lead to negative work behaviour.

As a coach, it can be very helpful to discuss with the coachee the relative 'badness' of the tough situation at work that is an issue. The point that you will want to stress with the coachee is that there are many tough situations at work that are bad, including: being unfairly criticized, making a serious mistake, being bullied, rapid change, not being involved in decisions that affect you, not receiving a promotion that is deserved etc. While these events are 'bad', they are not awful and terrible, the worst things that could happen. The goal, here, is to help a coachee develop a new way of thinking about the bad work situation so that the coachee does not blow the badness of the event out of proportion. Rational, positive self-talk to combat the tendency to exaggerate the badness of an event includes rational thoughts such as: 'This is bad, but it could be worse. It's not the end of the world, I can cope.' With this positive self-talk in mind, the next time the coachee is faced with the tough situations, he/she will have much greater self-management and be far more able to manage and cope.

Individual Action Plan: Strengthening a High Performance Mindset

The following plan (see Table 3) with an example is organised to help a coachee to strengthen one or more aspects of his/her high performance mindset. For example, s/he may choose to focus on strengthening one or more of the three commitments (Part 1) that constitute the foundations of the mindset of high performers. S/he may also believe there is benefit in examining the manner in specific tough situations are tackled with a focus on five behavioral strengths that high performers use to solve problems and go one better.

Some people like the structure of a plan; others do not. Either way, the content of the following plan provides a coachee with an organised way to try out new ways of approaching work including tough situations. By evaluating the impact of putting ideas in practice, s/he will be a good judge of whether there are benefits to the effort.

Table 3 Individual Action Plan

I.   Strengthening Commitments of a High Performance Mindset

a. Which commitment do you wish to focus on and develop over the next few weeks? Which of the following beliefs will you put into practice on a regular basis to develop the commitment?

❑ Commitment to Success	☑ Commitment to Others	☑ Commitment to Self
❑ Self-Direction	☑ Acceptance of Others	❑ Authenticity
❑ Optimism	☑ Empathy	❑ Self-Acceptance
❑ Growth	❑ Respect	☑ Positive Focus
❑ High Frustration Tolerance	❑ Support	❑ Positive Self-Regard
	☑ Feedback	❑ Healthy Living
❑ Creativity		

b.   What are the actions you will take at work to put the belief(s) into practice?

positive focus + feedback:	Record three positive behaviours of others on my team and express appreciation
empathy:	Listen without interrupting or expressing my opinion
acceptance of others:	Not being so hard on team members who do the wrong thing – focus on their behaviour, watch my negative non-verbals

c.   Record in the space below any observations about how well you were able to act on the belief(s) at work. Did you observe any benefit? What changes will you need to make to more effectively or regularly action the belief(s)?

positive focus + feedback:	Good, feel better about my leadership and our team
empathy:	Easier to do than I thought
acceptance of others:	Still intolerant and I show it

II.   Problem Solving in Tough Work Situations

What follows is a three-step model that you can use to plan positive and effective ways to tackle tough situations.

Step 1: Take Stock

Step 1 is designed to help you to focus on a specific situation, your personal reactions that make it harder to perform positively and to enable you to set a goal for the way in which you would like to manage the situation the next time it occurs.

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

a. Write down with some concrete detail (who, what happened, when, where) a 'significant' tough situation at work where you experience one or more of the four performance blockers at high intensity and where your work performance suffers. You can review the results of your Inventory of Tough Situations.

Tough Situation: My GM is very negative and unsupportive of me at meetings

The work situation is an example of which of the following types?

- ☐ Challenging work demand
- ☑ Relationship difficulty
- ☐ Unproductive organisational practice
- ☐ Change
- ☐ Receiving negative work evaluation

Other:

b. Which performance blockers (negative emotional and behavioural responses) do you need to eliminate?

- ☑ Strong anger towards another
- ☑ Excessive worry about the future, my performance, what others think
- ☐ Feeling very down about my work performance and/or what someone thinks
- ☐ Procrastination at doing things I know are important to do

Other:

c. Goal setting. Select from the following list the positive ways you would like to feel and behave the next time you are confronted with the tough situation.

- ☑ Calm
- ☑ Relaxed
- ☑ Confident
- ☑ Positive
- ☑ Hopeful
- ☐ Assertive
- ☑ Energetic
- ☐ Determined

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Step 2. Take Control

In Step 2, you will have an opportunity to use and further develop your behavioural strength of Self-Management to stay calm or calm down <u>before</u> you tackle the situation at hand.

a. What examples of rational, positive self-talk can you use to be self-managing of your emotional reactions?

        ☑ 'This situation is bad but not awful.'

        ☑ 'I've done hard things like this before, I can do this.'

        ☑ 'I can stand this situation even though I don't like it.'

        ☑ 'I won't judge this person by his/her behaviour.'

        ☑ 'I accept myself no matter what.'

        ❑ 'I'll do the best I can.'

Other examples of rational, positive self-talk you can use:

Getting pissed off only makes things worse – better figure out another way to make her less negative.

b. Which coping skills will you use to self-manage in order to stay calm or calm down?

        ☑ Find someone to talk to

        ☑ Relax

        ❑ Find something fun to do

        ❑ Exercise

        ☑ Figure out how to solve the problem

        ❑ Be assertive

        ❑ Be grateful

Other coping skills you will use to self-manage emotions:

    Stop obsessing

Step 3. Take Action

In Step 3, you will want to decide which behavioural strengths you can use to tackle the situation and go one better including writing down the specific actions you will take.

a. List one or more ways to handle the situation. Consider positive and negative consequences of each and select one with the greatest likelihood of success.

    Talk with GM seeking feedback

    Wait it out before reacting

    Identify what triggers his negativity towards me and avoid these triggers

Table 3 (continued)

b.   Which behavioural strength(s) will you use the next time the tough situation arises to
        solve the problem and go one better??

        ☑ Confidence

        ☑ Persistence

        ☑ Organisation

        ☑ Getting along

c.   Concretely describe how you will behave the next time you are faced with the tough
        situation.

        Calmly say how the decision not to support a new project in my department is effecting long -term
        growth and profitability – say in a polite way can she re-consider and, maybe, we can work on this
        together to find a way to do this.

d.   Reflective comments on how you approached the situation, the success of your plan and
        any further changes you will need to make in your approach to the tough situation.

        GM seems more receptive but still I'm finding it hard going; I am calmer – maybe go for lunch?

High Performance Mindset Coaching

Broadly speaking, the two hats you will wear at different times of the coaching ses-
sions are: (1) relationship hat—supportive, caring and (2) task hat—coach, educator
in the use and benefits of the high performance mindset to improve aspects of work
performance including management of stress.

The flow and sequence of coaching can best be described using the four-step,
Grape Model.

Step 1: GOALS
Step 2: REFLECTION
Step 3: ACTION PLANNING
Step 4. EVALUATION

The content and focus of each of these steps as well as suggested coaching ques-
tions are provided below. While all steps should be followed, specific questions and
activities can be selected that suit the context and idiosyncrasies of the individual
being coached and the priorities of the organisation he or she way work for.

Step One: GOALS—Coachee Identifies Professional Work Goals for Coaching Sessions

A goal can be considered a brief, one sentence description of what an individual being coached wants to achieve by a certain date. In the initial session, after a discussion with an individual about the nature of high performance mindset coaching, the coach can through questioning assist the individual to identify one or more goals he/she would like to achieve as a consequence of coaching. For example, goals could include higher performance (income, promotion, positive work evaluations), improved quality of life (less stress, better work-life balance) and/or positive interpersonal relations.

Goal Questions

- 'What do you want to achieve from our coaching sessions?'
- 'What individual performance goals would you like to be achieving?'
- 'What organisational goals do you need to be achieving that you find most challenging or demanding?'
- 'In the next period of time, what kind of changes do you feel you would like to make?'
- 'In the next period of time, are there any job demands and difficult people you would like to be better at managing and mastering?'
- 'Can you state in one or two short sentences, what you would like to achieve?'
- 'What aspects of the high performance mindset do you think can assist you to achieve your goals?'

Step Two: REFLECTION—Coachee Takes Stock of Present Approach to Work

Through questions and your coachee completing the *High Performance Mindset at Work Survey* (see Fig. 2), you can assist individuals to reflect different areas of their current approach to their work.

1. Commitments. This reflection has the coachee reflect on the three commitments (success, other, self) to determine which need strengthening as well as one or more beliefs that support the development of commitments with an eye to those that the individual feels he/she needs to action on a regular basis.

Reflection Coaching Questions

- 'Do you have any thoughts on the relative importance of having all three commitments of the high performance mindset?'

- The following two questions can involve referring the individual being coached to the results of the *Survey of the High Performance Mindset at Work.*
- 'In reflecting on the three commitments, were there any that you wanted to strengthen? Why?'
- 'Having a look at the five beliefs that support the commitment you want to strengthen, are there any of the beliefs you feel you need to action on a more regular basis?'
- 'What are those times, circumstances and situations where you think you could apply the belief?'

2. Behavioral Strengths. Here, the coachee is prompted to reflect on each of the five behavioral strengths of the high performance mindset (self-management, confidence, persistence, organization, getting along) to determine those that are well developed and which represent opportunities for further development.

Reflective Coaching Questions

- "Which of the behavioral strengths do you believe are most important to have highly developed for someone in your position?"
- "Are there any that you feel you want to learn more about?"
- "What would be the impact on your work performance if you used these behavioral strengths on a more regular basis?"

3. Tough Work Situations and Performance Blockers. Another area to fully explore in *Step 2. Reflection*s are those tough situations including specific difficult-to-achieve individual or organisational objectives the coachee encounters that lead to negative work performance. The coach illuminates four common work performance blockers (anxiety, feeling down, anger, procrastination) and invites the coachee to consider any he/she experiences when faced with a tough work situation. Once identified, the coach asks questions about ways in which the coachee thinks, feels and behaves.

Exploration should involve questions concerning the negative impact of the individual's negative thinking, emotions and behaviours on the resolution of the problem, situation or issue previously specified by the coachee. Time should be spent helping the individual articulate a short-term goal for a more positive emotional and behavioural response the next time the same or similar tough situation occurs.

Reflection Coaching Questions

- 'Are there any difficult situations you confront at work which interfere with your work performance you want you want to discuss (challenging demands, relationship difficulties, unproductive organizational practices, change, not achieving performance goals?)'
- 'Are there any goals/priorities that you have or your organisation has set that appear extremely challenging or difficult to achieve?'
- 'Tell me about the last time that a situation happened at work that you felt unhappy about the way you handled it. Can you give me the details about what was said and done?'

- 'Can you tell me how you were feeling in that situation?' 'How aware were you of how you were feeling?'
- 'Of the four most common negative emotional responses people typically feel – anger, worried, down and procrastination- which one best characterizes your strongest emotional response to the tough situation?' 'Where any other strong emotional responses present?'
- 'How did you behave during (and after) the situation? Were you at all aggressive in what you said or tone of voice?' 'If so, did your aggressive behaviour help resolve the situation?' 'Where there any negative consequences for you for getting angry and aggressive?' 'Did you withdraw or sulk?' 'Did you procrastinate as a result?'
- 'The next time the same or similar situation arises, how would you like to feel and behave? (e.g. calmer, with more confidence, assertive).'

Step Three: ACTION PLANNING—Coachee Develops Plan(s) of Action

Basically, coaches help coachees develop a plan of action (see Table 3) that can focus on the following two areas: I. Strengthening Commitments of a High Performance Mindset, and II. Problem Solving in Tough Work Situations.

Strengthening Commitments of a High Performance Mindset

Here, the coachee is encouraged to consider the coachee's reflection on commitments and associated supporting beliefs that need strengthening. Work situations including people and work tasks where the coachee can apply different beliefs are identified and an action plan is constructed.

- Using questions, have coachee identify work situations and ways in which the various beliefs previously identified to strengthen a commitment can be applied on a more regular basis.
- Discuss specifically how the coachee would need to behave in order to put the beliefs into practice in work situations.

  Action Planning Coaching Questions

- 'Can you describe exactly what your plan of action is for putting into action the beliefs you have chosen to strengthen a commitment?
- 'What will you say and how will you say it?'
- 'Can you describe exactly what your plan of action is for putting into action the beliefs you have chosen to strengthen a commitment? What will you say and how will you say it?'

- 'In terms of one of the more immediate, short-term goals you wanted to achieve at work you discussed, which work beliefs could you use? What are some things you will think and do to help you to achieve the goal?'

Problem Solving in Tough Work Situations

Step 1. Take Stock. Step 1 is designed to help a coachee to focus on a specific situation, his/her personal reactions that make it harder to perform positively and to enable you to set a goal for the way in which you would like to manage the situation the next time it occurs.

   Action Planning Questions

"Describe to me a time when the tough situation is likely to occur again in the next period of time."

"Can you identify one tough work situations at work where you experiences one or more of the four performance blockers at high intensity and where your work performance suffers."

"Which of the four work performance blockers we discussed do you tend to experience in that work situation?"

"How would you like to feel and behave the next time you are confronted with the tough situation?"

Step 2. Take Control. Here, the coachee is helped to explore different ways to be self-managing in specific tough situations with an eye on discussing the importance of emotional calmness and regulation as a behavioral strength. The focus here is on helping a coachee re-structure self-talk from rigid and extreme (identified in stage 2) to more flexible, evidence-based self-talk. The coach shares also shares different coping skills a coachee can use to stay calm.

   Action Planning Coaching Questions

- 'Based on our discussion of the four work performance blockers, are there any you want to work on? "
- "What ideas do you have and which tips can you employ to eliminate the internal obstacles to handling the situation?"
- 'Reflecting on the self-talk you said you would typically have in that tough situation, what alternative flexible and sensible thinking based on the facts of the situation could you use to stay calm?'
- 'Are there coping skills will you use to stay calm?
- 'What are some things you can do to stay calm, cool and collected when faced with the same or similar situation at work?'

Step 3. Take Action. Here, through questioning the coach helps the coachee (a) identify best problem solving actions for dealing with tough situation, (b) use one or more behavioural strengths (confidence, persistence, organisation, getting along) to respond to a tough situation in a positive fashion the next time it occurs and (c) identify specific actions that coachee will take.

Action Planning Coaching Questions

- 'Are there any external obstacles that might make it harder for you to deal more effectively with the situation the next time it occurs? How could you eliminate them?
- 'Let's come up with three different solutions for handling the situation.'
- 'Let's explore the different positive and negative consequences of each plan. Which one is most likely to achieve the results you want?"
- 'In terms of the different behavioral strengths you can use for dealing with the work situation, which ones could you use?
- Describe how you plan to act confidently and persistently? What are the things you will say and do to use your getting along skills with the person should he/she be difficult?' 'How will you organise yourself to be prepared?'
- What advice would you give someone else for handling the situation?'
- 'What will you do by when?'
- 'How motivated are you to putting this plan into action?'
- 'What is the realistic timetable? Are there any other obstacles you need to address before putting your plan into effect?'

Step Four: EVALUATION—Coachee Evaluates and Revises Action Plan

Finally, the coach meets with the individual after the coachee has had a chance to put his/her plan into action. Through questioning, the coach helps the individual reflect on his/her success in responding more positively to the situation including staying calm and using one or more of the other behavioural strengths. This discussion offers the coachee an opportunity to modify and refine actions he/she has executed in order to continue the process of change.

Evaluation Coaching Questions

- 'How did you go this past week?'
- 'Did the situation we discussed arise?'
- 'How did you respond? Where you happy with your response?'
- 'Was your goal achieved? How was your work performance effected by the plan you used?'
- 'Were you able to put into action what we discussed?'
- 'What went well, what did not?'
- 'How did you feel within yourself after you applied your plan?'
- 'Are there any changes you think are necessary to make your plan more effective?'
- 'Are there any other options for handling the situations that you think might be even better?'
- 'We don't expect things to change overnight. Do you think that if you applied yourself again using your plan, the result might be more positive?'

Case Study of HPMW Coaching: Manager Faces a Difficult General Manager

The following interchange took place after a manager, Peter. In the first two coaching sessions, time was spent on discussing Peter's Commitment to Self, an area where Peter showed relative weakness as revealed in his personal profile obtained from completing the *Survey of the High Performance Mindset at Work* (see Fig. 2).

Peter indicated that he wanted to work on strengthening *self-acceptance* and having a *positive focus*. *Empathy* was also a belief the Peter identified as requiring some further development. During the first sessions, time was spent discussing tough situations that arose where Peter wished to be more self-accepting with examples of self-accepting, self-talk being reviewed and Peter reminding himself not to put himself down when members of his team seemed apathetic or dismissive of his ideas.

In terms of developing a more positive focus, I suggested Peter keep a record at the end of each day of three things that occurred during the day that he appreciated, that may have helped him, and which he was grateful for ('Gratitude Record').

Peter decided he needed to increase his empathy as part of developing his Commitment to Others. He agreed to do a lot more listening and a lot less advice giving to those on his team.

At the beginning of coaching session three, Peter arrived wanting to discuss a problem he was having with his General Manager.

Coach: So how's your week been?

Peter: Generally speaking, pretty good. I'm paying more attention to what is going well during my day—rather than what isn't. In meetings with my team, I start off by what we discussed last week—shedding light on what's right and being more public in my recognition and appreciation of individual's performance.

Coach: So increased positivity is paying off?

Peter: I feel more upbeat about dealing with things—and there seems to be a lot more talking and energy at our meetings.

Coach: Any situations come up that you'd like to discuss?

Peter: There is an issue with one of our General Managers, Jane, that's pissing me off.

Coach: So I understand, what's her position and relationship to you?

Peter: Sure. I'm manager of the creative division of our company. She has the first and final say over whether new projects I propose get support and funded.

Coach: I see. Can you describe what happened the last time you were pissed off?

Peter: OK. This is fairly typical. At our last meeting, when we discussed forward planning, I put forward the view that we should move somewhat beyond our target market and develop something for a younger population that I thought I could adapt from some of the very successful IP I developed two years ago.

Coach: What did she say?

Peter: She shut it down. She said that the younger population was not our core business and that we couldn't be successful in marketing this new product. Furthermore—and this really got me angry—she made up a story as far as I can tell

that she overheard a conversation at a recent sale's conference between two people who work for our competitor who said that they had lost a lot of money in their latest efforts to diversify into the younger market with a similar product I wanted to develop. Jane has a habit of inventing stories to support her positions.

Coach: So, how did you respond to that tough situation?

Peter: I got into an argument telling her the reasons why my idea was a good one. She really didn't listen to me. Bad tone of mine I guess. Then, I didn't really say anything. I just fumed and have stayed well away from her. I haven't spoken to her since the meeting.

Coach: Just to make sure I've got the picture, when you put forward a proposal to develop a new product for a new market, your manager shut it down and appeared to make up a story to justify the reason for her negative response. You got very angry and since then you have not communicated with her.

Peter: That's about it.

Coach: I can imagine that her behaviour affected you this way, I would be very frustrated, too, if the situation happened to me.

Peter: This is not the first time this has happened. She seems to be on a power trip and if she hasn't thought of the idea, or if the idea puts her outside her comfort zone, like having to do more work—or if the idea originates with me—she just says 'No'. Basically, I've written her off and will have nothing to do with her.

Coach: We should probably look at that way you have been responding to Jane's negativity and see if it is helping you get what you want.

Peter: How do you mean?

Coach: For a minute, let's put aside her clearly negative behaviour towards you when you discuss new projects. Let's consider whether your anger and avoidance of her is helping you to achieve what you want.

Peter: Well, it isn't really. Jane rarely offers me any support for anything I do and doesn't pass on emails that she used to that have importance to me. We definitely have a conflicted relationship you might say.

Coach: OK. Again, setting her behaviour aside, what would the impact on her attitude towards you if you be were calmer when she responded negatively towards you—and if, at other times, you use your well-developed getting along skills to see if can get her on your side?

Peter: Why would I want to do that? She's at fault, not me—why should I have to change?

Coach: You don't. But you've just said that your conflicted relationship with her is making life worse for you as she is less supportive and doesn't share important information with you.

Peter: I can see what you are saying. Maybe I need to change my thinking and behaviour without expecting her to change first.

Coach: Makes sense. When is your next meeting?

Peter: This coming Tuesday I think.

Coach: Why not set a goal for how you could respond more positively if at Tuesday's meeting she is, again, negative to your ideas. How would you like to feel and respond if she makes a negative comment?

Peter: I'd like to feel less angry, calmer and be more confident and assertive without being hostile in the way I respond.

Coach: Sounds OK to me. To prepare for the meeting, is there any realistic self-talk you could use to prepare you for the meeting and you can use if she makes a negative comment?

Peter: Positive self-talk? I could think: 'I don't have to let her get me angry. I am the boss over the way I feel even when she behaves so negatively. Negative comments are bad but not the end of the world and I can cope with them.'

Coach: Are you sure you can stand her negative behaviour?

Peter: I guess.

Coach: I guess reminding yourself that you can stand just about anything that life dishes out to you by making up your mind to do so.

Peter: Yeah, I get that.

Coach: Any coping skills that can help you stay calm if you are being provoked?

Peter: I can relax more—take a few breaths.

Coach: If you consider using your behavioural strengths, are there any one's that you need to bring to play to see if you can tip the relationship back to at least a neutral one?

Peter: Yeah, getting along. I can find some times when she seems relaxed to discuss things other than work—and throw her a few compliments wouldn't hurt.

Coach: Wouldn't hurt you?

Peter: Wouldn't hurt anyone.

While there is no guarantee that the plan Peter constructed with my coaching support will result in an immediate improvement or change in his General Manager's behaviour, it was the case that the Peter was highly successful in becoming much more self-managing in staying calm when dealing with his GM. He also displayed much more positive behaviour that is now having the effect of returning peace to the relationship—at least for the moment.

Impact of High Performance Mindset Learning and Development

The high performance mindset at work program has been evaluated with positive results replicated (Bernard, 2014, 2016). Representative sets of findings for a blended learning leadership development program are reproduced here.

The goals of the program, *Increasing the Capability and Effectiveness of School Leaders: Impact of the High Performance Mindset at Work Leadership Program,* were three-fold:

1. Increased psychological capability by developing the work commitments, beliefs and behavioural strengths that characterise the mindset of top performers as well as overcoming internal work performance blockers (e.g. procrastination, anxiety)

2. Greater frequency and effectiveness in use of 'high impact' leadership behaviour identified in research as influencing school organisational effectiveness and student learning (e.g. principal participates in formal and informal staff learning and development; principal sets and communicates targets for improving organisational performance)

3. Reduced stress and increased effectiveness in responding to tough work situations (e.g. having to give feedback to a staff member whose teaching or discipline methods are unsatisfactory; dealing with a parent who is very critical).

An eight-week high HPMW course was presented to 28 school leaders working in 28 public schools:

- 16 principals, 7 assistant principals, 5 expert teachers
- 5 males, 23 females
- Years of experience: 1–10 years (1), 11–20 years (11), 21years+ (16)
- Type of school: secondary (8), primary (16), special (4)

The eight-week HPMW course offered consisted of:

- Three-hour face-to-face orientation session attended by all participants, which included completion of pre-course surveys and an introduction to the high performance mindset
- Six weekly eLearning sessions (www.workmindset.com) which included a variety of activities and self-surveys on different elements of a high performing mindset, which participants completed in their own time and space designed to increase their self-awareness and apply elements of a high performance mindset at their work setting
- Six weekly, group, one-hour webinar, Blackboard Collaborate sessions where participants discussed with each other and engaged in activities that supported application of course material to their work setting
- Three-hour face-to-face consolidation session attended by all participants, which included completion of post-course surveys and a review of key points and discussion of benefits of the HPMW course

Project findings were obtained through quantitative and qualitative analyses (written comments by participants). Surveys used to evaluate the impact of the HPMW course included:

- Checklist of 'High Impact' School Leadership Behaviour
- Inventory of Tough Situations: School Leaders
- HPMW Course Evaluation Survey (post course only)

Benefits of the HPMW course included a significant and immediate impact of the HPMW course on participants' capacity and effectiveness. Findings included:

- Strengthening of psychological capability including greater self-awareness/self-reflection, positivity, confidence/self-efficacy and calmness in tough work situations

- Comments by colleagues of participants reveal changes in leadership behaviour include greater calmness, confidence, positivity, warmth, decisiveness and ability to lead teams
- Higher frequency and effectiveness in use of 'high impact' leadership behaviours.
- Reduction in stress and increase in effectiveness when responding to tough work situations
- Positive evaluative comments were written by participants on the content and delivery of the HPMW course and is benefits on their capacity to lead
- Specific findings based on self-report of participants to questions from the HPMW Course Evaluation Survey were:

"Participation in the course has increased my…"

- effectiveness as a school leader: 89% (a lot/a great deal)
- overall confidence to lead: 89% (agree)
- my ability to provide individual teachers with constructive feedback and an evaluation of their teaching performance: 95% (agree)
- my ability to communicate a clear vision for the school's future: 84% (agree)
- my ability to set and communicate goals for improving student learning: 79% (agree)
- my ability to make decisions and communicate how to utilise resources systematically: 79% (agree)

Conclusion: Benefits

There are a variety of outcomes HPM coaching produces. Coachees' degree of self-awareness and self-reflection, frequently seen as a foundation for growth and change, increases significantly. Coachees report greater positivity, confidence and calmness in tough work situations. Coachees have indicated they like the simplicity and thoroughness of the *Architecture of the High Performance Mindset* that lists the range of positive psychological capabilities associated with high workplace performance and leadership. They also report changes in their commitments—especially to others and self- many but not all hold a strong commitment to success—as well as their self-management. Procrastination, anxiety and self-doubt lessen. And reports from others who work with coachees indicate greater effectiveness as leaders (e.g., authenticity, agility, positivity) as a result. And finally, coachees uniformly report changes for the better in dealing with the work performance issues they presented with on commencement of coaching sessions.

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Managerial Coaching and Rational Leadership

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Oana A. David and Alina Cîmpean

Nowadays managers are not only expected to function exceptionally in managing their organizations, they must also excel in an increasingly competitive and demanding work context and use all the resources available to them. There are thus increasing expectations from managers regarding the roles that they need to endorse, besides the managing one. Organizations are interested in having managers that can be effective both as leaders and also as coaches for their subordinates.

Managerial coaching is considered the process by which a supervisor/manager facilitates the learning and development processes of his/her subordinates, by activating their resources, such as behaviors and professional skills (Beattie, 2002; Ellinger & Bostrom, 1999). There is no agreement of what managerial coaching is, and multiple definitions have been provided, that emphasize different processes as essential: a day-to-day process of helping employees *recognize opportunities* for performance improvement or development (Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfari, 1987); a process of *empowering employees* to exceed their actual levels of performance (Burdett, 1998); or a process of *providing guidance, encouragement, and support* (Redshaw, 2000). Since managers are in charge for their team's performance, managerial coaching often becomes an ongoing informal activity based on dialogues between the managers and subordinates (Ellinger, Beattie, & Hamlin, 2010). Thus, managerial coaching is considered a powerful developmental intervention for facilitating employee learning and improving employee performance.

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Benefits of Managerial Coaching

There are many benefits that come from the manager effectively assuming a coaching role, both for the organization and the individuals (Kim, Egan, Kim, & Kim, 2013; Lawrence, 2017), such as role clarity, satisfaction with work, career commitment, organizational commitment, and job performance. Several authors underlie the importance of the manager's role on maximizing employee performance through effective communication or equipping people to develop themselves (Gilley, Gilley, & Kouider, 2010; Peterson & Hicks, 1996), with important implications on goal achievement, results, recognition, involvement in decision making, self-esteem, self-efficacy and creativity (Hunt & Weintraub, 2002; Stone, 1999). Organizations that benefit from improved communication skills, effective manager-employee relationships, and employee performance, have increased organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and performance (Gilley & Gilley, 2007).

Managerial Coaching Based on the Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behavioral Coaching approach

Rational Emotive Behavioral Coaching (REBC) is a form of cognitive-behavioral coaching (CBC) having its roots in the philosophy of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT; Ellis, 1962). Both cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and REBT posit that an individual's emotional and behavioral reactions are determined mainly by his or her interpretations of events, and not by the events themselves (the ABC model; Ellis, 1994). However, according to the REBT theory, interpretations shape behavioral responses and these interpretations are determined by the individual's beliefs (David, Szentagotai, Lupu, & Cosman, 2008). Therefore, behavior is a result of the individual's belief system, represented by irrational and rational beliefs as core cognitive structures. Ellis (1994) argued that this belief system is universally shaped both by internal drives toward irrationality and rationality. Ellis (1994) stated that there are four irrational or rational processes: (1) demandingness vs. flexible and motivational preferences; (2) awfulizing/catastrophizing vs. nuanced evaluation of badness; (3) frustration intolerance vs. frustration tolerance; and (4) global evaluation vs. unconditional acceptance (of self, others, or life) (see for details David, 2003; David et al., 2008; Dryden, David, & Ellis, 2010).

REBC is a positive, directive, short-term, psycho-educational, problem-solving and solution-focused approach to coaching, that facilitate client's capacity for rational, critical, and psychologically sophisticated reasoning (Ellis, 1994). Thereby, its strategies are appropriate both for the managerial coaching and the organizational environment, allowing the manager to challenge and replace any unrealistic expectations that have negative influence on employee performance (Kilburg, 1996).

Rational Leadership and Managerial Coaching

Rational leadership and rational coaching are both rooted in REBT and propose a set of behaviors and competences derived from a rational mindset, that the manager needs to internalize in their patterns of thinking and behavior to be effective in his/her leadership and coaching roles.

The Rational Leadership Mindset and Competencies

Ellis (1972) stated that the leader is a born revolutionist, and that he is essentially logical and rational. Although he might be emotive, driving, and behavior oriented in important ways, he is strong on thinking, imagining, planning, scheming, and theorizing. Moreover, while some individuals powerfully think, some heavily emote and some profoundly act, the executive has the ability to engage in all of these behaviors. The typical executive may seem, on the surface, to be cold and driving but behind his coldness lie some of the strongest emotional urges.

Acquiring a *rational leadership mindset* refers to leaders being able to set up valid hypotheses about themselves and others, to check these hypotheses and replace them according to the data collected. This corresponds to what Ellis (1972) has called *rational sensitivity*. The dysfunctional emotions that managers might face in organizations are the following: indecisiveness/over decisiveness, or hostility, short-term hedonism, feelings of inadequacy, feelings of worthlessness, and perfectionism. We will describe in the following section the most important competences for rational leadership.

Decisiveness is considered an important characteristic of the rational leadership mindset, defined as the ability to take responsibility for own actions. Indecisiveness, on the other hand, is usually generated by the strong need for approval. For developing this competence, the rational manager needs to address the dysfunctional emotional consequences of his/her own irrational thoughts and disputing them might bring organizational and individual advantages on the long term. Therefore, the executive should focus on disputing its own need for approval and the associated awfulizing, demandingness, global evaluations and the unconditional self/others acceptance to overcome indecisiveness. Also, over-decisiveness is a dysfunctional consequence generated by low frustration tolerance, self-downing, global evaluation and demandingness. Disputing these irrational thoughts will bring out a different philosophy toward situations with similar challenges. By accepting the limitations of human being and the understanding of the disadvantages on long run of over reacting, will diminish the involvement in overemotional decisions and will increase decisiveness on the basis of the advantages over the organization.

Achieving self-discipline is an essential competence of the rational leadership. This is acquired through the training to give up on present pleasures for future gains and is important for executives due to their task requirements and their own high

expectancies. A general belief that undermines the attainment of self-discipline is that it is easier to avoid difficulties than to undertake the rewarding from self-discipline. As a form of disputing these beliefs, Ellis (1972) suggested prioritizing the truly necessary activities of life and perform them; investing forced action on the goal; setting expectations regarding the difficulties that appear when facing inertia; organizing the tasks into sub goals; and avoid rigid evaluation of rules. At this point, disputing irrational beliefs in order to reduce indiscipline will focus on awfulizing the difficult tasks, demandingness for pleasurable activities and acceptance of sacrifice for future gains.

Self-acceptance is considered the most valuable characteristic of the rational leadership mindset, given the decisions and tasks that this position requests. It means that the individual fully accepts himself, his existence, his being without any conditions and requirements. Feelings of worthlessness and perfectionism might be activated by self-downing and global evaluation of self. By disputing these thoughts and by evaluating one's self in terms of traits and accepting the limitations of human beings would lead to more functional feelings. Therefore, that global self-ratings should be changed with behavior ratings (Ellis, 1980, p. 102) in order to promote both change and psychological well-being.

Rational leadership is facilitated by the development of specific competencies in managers which might enhance performance, coping and resilience in stressful situations, such as:

- *self-awareness,* which is developed by exploring problems, by examining the evidence that exist in support of their current perspective on a situation and by providing alternative perspectives on it;
- *thinking skills*, the ability to decide whether an idea of belief is logical, helpful, realistic or empirically correct; it is enhanced by teaching employees to recognize self-imposed demands or rules and to replace them with preferences (Ellis & Blum, 1967; McMahon, 2012);

Rational leadership focuses on the following general objectives: flexibility and strengthening the client's self-acceptance; improving the client's social and psychological awareness, competencies and effectiveness; increasing the client's tolerance and range of emotional responses; increasing the manager's behavioral range. Using the principles and techniques that derived from this perspective, the goals and tasks of REBC are: to guide the manager to achieve their realistic goals, to facilitate self-awareness of underlying cognitive and emotional barriers to goal attainment; to equip the individual with more effective thinking and behavioral skills; to build internal resources, stability and self-acceptance, and to enable the client to become their own self-coach. Also, by changing irrational thoughts and beliefs, performance in relation with others, in achieving self-discipline, or in overcoming dysfunctional emotions will improve.

The ABC Model and Rational Leadership

Albert Ellis (1972) describe the executives with immense likes for leading others and running organizations, desires for efficiency and success, lungs for the attainment of certain organizational goals, lusts for various kinds of power and determination to get where they want to. They perceive others as imperfect and believe that they could be improved radically. Also, they are extremely focused on organizational and human advancement and growth. In this context, the organizational environment might act as an important trigger (A) for dysfunctional emotions and behaviors (C), in order to place the (B) thoughts and urges at their own disposal and to help them control their own emotions and actions (Cs; i.e., lack of concentration, discipline, perfectionism, ineffective communication or relationships).

Specifically, the rational leader will need to work to identify and dispute his unreasonable expectations that negatively impact his performance. This is done using the ABCDE model of individual change (Ellis, 1993; Neenan & Dryden, 2000). *A* refers to the activating event, that is, the external event to which the client is responding. *B* represents the client's internal belief or expectation ("Deadlines have to be met no matter what") that is triggered by the activating event (A). This belief (B) is what leads to both emotional and behavioral consequences, and *C.* When the expectation or belief is unreasonable or unrealistic, the consequences tend to be unhealthy and maladaptive. When the belief is realistic or reasonable, resulting emotional responses may be negative (e.g., anger) but not necessarily unhealthy (e.g., depression), and the consequential behaviors (C; e.g., assertion) will not be maladaptive (e.g., reactivity).

The rational leadership philosophy can be internalized based on comprehensive programs (e.g. the Rational Managerial Coaching Program) or executive coaching sessions. As part of the collaborative and psycho-educational nature of REBC, it is important that this relationship is made explicit to the client. Once the relationship is understood and accepted, the coach can begin to work with the client to change those beliefs that they have identified as unreasonable and problematic by challenging and disputing them (*D*)—unreasonable expectations are replaced by reasonable expectations. When successful, this process results in an effective outlook, or *E,* wherein a client's emotional and behavioral consequences are the result of rational beliefs about activating events and thus are adaptive. According to REBT theory, this new system of identifying and disputing unreasonable expectations becomes internalized and thus provides a means for continuous improvement; it enables the client to monitor and disable irrational beliefs independently while at the same time developing and strengthening his or her rational beliefs (Ellis, 1994; Kirby, 1993). The modification of irrational or unhelpful thoughts (e.g. demands; awfulizing, low frustration tolerance, and depreciation of self, others or life) will lead to enhanced performance and reduced stress (Ellis, 1972).

Rational Managerial Coaching: Attitudes, Skills and Behaviors of the Managers

As we previously stated, managerial coaching refers to a manager or a supervisor serving as a coach or a facilitator of learning in the workplace setting, in order to promote the understanding of the employee strengths and weaknesses (Ellinger et al., 2010) and their development. The main tools of managerial coaching are encouraging self-awareness, guiding the problem-solving process, and providing feedback, which in turn are expected to influence the interpersonal relationships and work behaviors of the employees.

The role of the rational manager as coach is based on a set of *attitudes* of the manager, aiming at empowering employees and facilitating goal attainment. The following *rational managerial coaching mindset* characteristics are necessary for the manager in order to be effective in the coach role:

Efficient relations with others is an important characteristic of the rational managerial coaching mindset, heavily contributing to the success and usage of managerial coaching (Anderson, 2013; Lawrence, 2017). Mutual respect and trust between the coach and the coaches are critical to the effectiveness of managerial coaching. In the absence of a trusting, supportive and collaborative relationship with the collaborators, any managerial coaching model or techniques are meant to fail. Building relations with others based on trust, collaboration, fairness and kindness is however oftentimes blocked by dysfunctional feelings, such as inadequacy or hostility. By disputing self-downing and global evaluation of self, other downing beliefs, awfulizing, and demandingness will reduce the feelings of inadequacy and inefficiency that tend to accompany them and will lead to more efficient behaviors in relation with others.

Efficient concentration, or sticking to a goal the manager is committed to while helping the employees to attain aligned goals and deriving performance indicators, is a characteristic of the rational managerial coaching mindset (Ellis, 1972). When this competence lacks it is mainly due to low frustration tolerance or short term hedonism. The manager needs to dispute these beliefs by focusing on the *shoulds* and *musts,* and directing attention on the long-term advantages. Also, disputing the thoughts that produce a sense of false integrity (what you want right now vs. what you want most), will lead to a more realistic approach of the circumstances.

Efficient communication is a very important managerial coaching skill which refers to clearly setting goals, performance expectations, asking perspective changing questions, and giving constructive feedback. Since effective communication is a main skill of any coaching and helping professional, managers need to master also this skill. The objectives set need to be understood by their employees and also their performance indicators. Managers taking the coach role need to be able to ask effective questions in order to help employees adopt new perspectives. The most important communication capacity of the manager acting as coach is giving effective, timely and constant feedback and also making sure that they also give positive feedback in order to motivate employees for performance. There are irrational beliefs

that can work as obstacles for effective communication, such as demandingness for approval or other downing, which can have negative consequences on providing adequate and frequent feedback.

Nowadays, a coaching leadership style engenders a balance between directive and participatory behaviors in interactions with subordinates (Ratiu, David, & Baban, 2017). DiMattia (1990) proposed a set of principles of rationality in organizations that would need to be internalized by the rational manager in order to be effective as a coach, such as:

- Self-knowledge: being aware of own strengths and limitations
- Flexibility: anticipate and adapt to rapid workplace changes
- Realism and reality acceptance: cultivate critical thinking and perspective taking, and react according to the magnitude of the situation
- Unconditional self-acceptance and self-confidence: avoiding global evaluations and having confidence in own resources
- Respect for self and others: collaboration and involving others in decisions
- Discomfort and frustration tolerance: accepting critiques and feedback
- Aiming at long term benefits: overcoming tendencies for targeting short run goals
- Taking calculated risks: assuming decisions in light of best evidences available
- Being balanced: taking breaks and having an optimal life-work balance
- Taking responsibility for own emotions and behaviors: avoiding other-blame for own failures
- Self-directiveness and involvement: initiating change and having supportive relationships with colleagues.

The following managerial coaching behaviors (Ellinger & Bostrom, 1999) can be derived from the rational managerial coaching mindset:

- using question framing to encourage employees to think through issues and holding back from providing the answers; being challenging and inviting in inclusive decision making
- being a resource in removing obstacles, being supportive transferring ownership to employees;
- assessing, giving and receiving feedback on performance;
- stepping into other to shift perspectives; broadening employees' perspectives;
- developing others, guiding and engaging others to facilitate learning, sharing knowledge and empowering others;
- communication and clearly setting expectations, planning and preparation;
- developing others, guiding.

Based on the rational leadership mindset, managers who act as coach, might act as facilitators of understanding the employee's own ineffective behaviors and making them understand how their own thoughts lead to ineffective behaviors in ways that they are normally unaware of (Schwarz, 2002, p. 12). In the context of managerial coaching, the term *irrational belief* is reframed so to avoid the potential negative connotation it may evoke (Miller & Yeager, 1993). The concept of irrational beliefs

may indeed be communicated more effectively to clients by referring to such beliefs as "unreasonable" or "unrealistic" expectations employees may hold for themselves or others (Miller & Yeager, 1993).

Attitudes able to support a coaching mentality for the rational manger are related to the domains of valuing people over the results (while valuing highly both people and results!), accepting ambiguity within the workplace, and appreciating team work (Park, McLean, & Yang, 2008).

The Process of Rational Managerial Coaching

Managerial coaching based on REBC involves a series of steps, based on the problem solving or solution focused models. Managing irrational beliefs during the process of problem solving can increase the effectiveness of this approach, while irrational beliefs about goals or about own's ability in achieving them can interfere along the process (see Ellis, 1972). There are few models that can be used to teach managers the process of REBC managerial coaching. The PRACTICE model can be used for remedial managerial coaching, and it integrates also the ABC model for addressing the emotional difficulties that interfere with the goal. The GRAPE and GROW models can be used in managerial coaching for performance development purposes.

Models of Managerial Coaching

The PRACTICE model of coaching was developed by Palmer (2008) based on the problem-solving theory and is integrating the ABC model. The PRACTICE problem-solving frameworks includes the following steps: **P**roblem identification, **R**ealistic, relevant goal development, **A**lternative potential solutions generated, **C**onsequences of potential solutions considered, **T**argeting most feasible potential solution, **I**mplementing the chosen solution, **C**onsolidation of the chosen solution, and **E**valuation.

The four-step *Grape Model* (Bernard, 2013) is a solution focused model that can be used as a process when managers are working with their subordinates in guiding them to reach their performance goals.

Step 1: **G**OALS—in which the coachee is assisted in identifying professional work goals for coaching sessions;

Step 2: **R**EFLECTION—in which the coachee is assisted in reflecting on different areas of their current approach to their work;

Step 3: **A**CTION **P**LANNING—in which the coachee is assisted to develop an action plan to activate beliefs to strengthen commitments, use behavioural strengths, and remove work performance blockers;

Step 4: EVALUATION—in which the coachee is assisted to evaluate and revise the action plan.

While organizations are increasingly beginning to embrace a new management culture based on inclusion, involvement and participation, they more and more consider learning and development processes as essential and choose to invest in programs for developing attitudes and skills meant to build facilitative behaviors that focus on employee empowerment (Hamlin, Ellinger, & Beattie, 2006).

Programs for Developing Managerial Coaching Skills

The Rational Effectiveness Training (RET) offers the first comprehensive model for applying REBC principles in the workplace (see DiMattia, 1990). RET aims at identifying the causes of unproductive behaviors, and modifying them in order to increase performance, teamwork, communication skills, and work satisfaction. It has been conceptualized both as a development focused approach, based on the rational principles for organization (see above), and a model of emotional management, using strategies and steps for overcoming psychological blocks for performance. DiMattia (1990) presents the format of his approach as consisting four main steps, in line with current REBC process of the ABCDEFG model, that can be used both in individual or group work:

Step 1: identifying the problems faced by clients
Step 2: establishing goals for change
Step 3: addressing behavioral, emotive and cognitive obstacles that interfere with the goals
Step 4: analyzing the above mentioned three components, with the behavioral one being primarily addressed.

Subsequently, there were other developments which brought further insights in the REBC field and specify its use in the leadership development and workplace applications (Bernard, 2013; Grieger & Fralick, 2007; Kirby, 1993).

The Rational Managerial Coaching Program (rMCP) is a new comprehensive program that received consistent empirical support recently (David & Matu, 2013; Ratiu et al., 2017) for building managerial coaching skills and leadership, based on rational thinking mindset and improved emotion-regulation.

The rMCP consists of a workshop focused on discussing the bases and mindset of rational leadership and models of rational managerial coaching. Experiential exercises, case studies and role plays are used. Workshop has the following sections:

(a) understanding managerial coaching and a solution-focused model for managerial coaching,
(b) efficient communication and feedback skills,
(c) motivating and empowering employees, and
(d) rational leadership and emotional management.

Each participant formulates individually their short-term, medium-term and long-term development goals. Also, action plans are created at this point on the specific steps in order to achieve their goals.

Two or three individual coaching sessions are following up the implementation of the rational leadership and managerial coaching skills. The individual executive coaching sessions are aimed to facilitate the application of the skills gained from the first group session. Each session addresses the progress in achieving one's goals, identifying resources, as well as obstacles faced during the process.

Individual executive coaching sessions last 50 min and have the following format:

- establishing the connection with the previous session
- collaboratively establishing the agenda
- discussing the agenda
- establishing the between sessions action plan
- feedback and summarization.

Among the individual coaching sessions, there is a shadowing session consisting of observing a typical coaching interaction between the manager and a subordinate related to a current issue. For the rest of the session, feedback is provided regarding the interaction and regarding other concerns related to the implementation of the learned skills. Afterwards, they receive feedback for improvements and another step in the action plan is followed.

The final session has a group coaching format and lasts an hour and half. The aim of this session is for participants to share experiences regarding the skills that were practiced over the course of the coaching program, as well as difficulties they meat. Also, post-intervention assessments were conducted to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the coaching program (see for details David, Ionicioiu, Imbăruş, & Sava, 2016; Ratiu et al., 2017).

David et al. (2016) investigated the effectiveness of the rMCP in enhancing managerial performance and emotion regulation abilities, and the specific mechanisms of change that facilitate management of emotional distress. As an indirect consequence of better stress management, they also investigated the benefits of improving work performance of the participants. Their results showed that an executive coaching program is effective in improving the managerial soft skills and depressive mood, and marginally the total distress level. The program was effective in replacing both domain specific and global irrational beliefs with rational beliefs in the managers. As the study suggested, the domain-specific rational beliefs are the mechanism of change in the coaching program for lowering distress level at work, while general irrational beliefs are correlated with improved managerial soft-skills (through a decrease of fairness demandingness).

According to the organization's objectives, the individual goals targeted the development of managerial coaching behaviors, as they appeared following the initial assessment, and of the general aim of the intervention program.

Assessment of the Managerial Coaching and Rational Leadership Competencies

A series of instruments are currently available for the accurate assessment of rational leadership variables and managerial coaching behaviors and skills.

The Managerial Coaching Assessment System (MCAS; David & Matu, 2013). Integrating both the behavioral and the skills/attitudes models, the MCAS is a multi-rater measure, self-report, other-report and observational grid. The instrument uses a 5 point Likert response scale (from 1 = not at all, to 5 = always) for the self-report and employee-report versions of the MCAS. Both self- and other-report versions include 15 items. Managers' performance is rated on the 11 items grid using three behavioral anchors for each item. With the exception of one item, all items have anchors starting from the total lack of a certain behavior that is required by an efficient managerial coaching process until the adequate level of the managerial coaching behavior. The next anchors make reference to either an increase in frequency, quality, or both of the target behavior. The observational version was developed to be used for coding behaviors within real job-related activities, simulations or exercises that approximate job tasks as means of interaction between the manager and the employee. Initial investigations of the authors showed adequate psychometric properties for both self-report and the observational grid of the scale.

The Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Multi-Rater Assessment(**FG-PEC**; Gavita, Freeman, & Sava, 2012). FG-PEC is a multi-rater measure (self-rating, subordinate, superior, colleague and client rating) of managerial skills relevant for the prescriptive executive coaching process, based on the cognitive behavioral approach to coaching. It has 50 items based on five domains relevant to managerial competencies: behavior, emotion, thoughts, situations, and socio-cultural context. The instrument use a 6 point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (not an issue) to 5 (severe problems most of the time). The Likert points can be however reversed depending on the context in which assessment is required, remedial or proactive. In a proactive/developmental context, the scale ranges from 0 (no skills) to 5 (excellent skills most of the time). Each domain is evaluated using ten questions, two questions for each managerial area. High scores can represent problematic areas which are afterwards considered as coaching recommendations made along the same dimensions. In the developmental assessment, high scores represent important strengths and low scores represent improvement areas. The instrument has good psychometric proprieties, with high internal consistencies and concurrent validity, and predictive validity for performance.

The Manager Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale (M-RIBS; David, 2013). M-RIBS is a measure of rational and irrational beliefs that assesses managers' beliefs related to three content areas relevant for managers: (1) appreciation and performance, (2) control, and (3) comfort. Each of these content areas is assessed by 10 items, 5 rational beliefs items and 5 irrational beliefs items. Each item is answered

on a 4 points Likert format, strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). It was particularized to managers' activity, built on the basis of REBT/C theory. The instrument assesses four principal processes (bi-dimensional: rational and irrational), as follows (irrational vs. rational counterpart): Demandingness vs. Preference, Low Frustration Tolerance vs. Frustration Tolerance, Awfulizing vs. Badness, and Global Evaluation vs. Unconditional Acceptance. General evaluation and unconditional acceptance are assessed with two items each, one referring to employees (other) and one referring to the manager evaluation/acceptance (self). It has adequate reliabilities and concurrent validity. Performance was measured by one open question asking about average target attainment in the last 6 months, if this indicator was applicable for their job.

A comprehensive computerized platform that includes many of the assessment tools presented above is the ***The Prescriptive Index platform*** (PI; David, 2013). The PI platform can be used to asses managerial skills, using two measures based on the recent findings on the top-down emotion-regulation strategies. The Mood Wheel (David, 2013) and M-RIBS, described above (David, 2013). The Mood Wheel is derived from the dimensional models and binary model of emotions, using the valence, control and functionality dimensions to measure emotions, offering a variety of options: in general or at work, as momentary experience sampling mood or over a longer period of time (weekly, in general). The Mood Wheel was found to show adequate reliability for its total scores based on valence and functionality, in the case of the negative valence emotions.

Case Illustration 1: Johanna

Johanna is branch manager in the bank since the very opening of the branch and she has 12 employees in her team. The branch is one of the most well performing in the country and Johanna is very appreciated for the work that she is doing. However, her team registered during the last 2 years a high turnover of about 50% of the team members. While she is involved in the selection process of the members in her team and is initially very satisfied with her choice, she quickly becomes unhappy with their performance and attitude towards tasks. Thus, she does not trust them enough to delegate important tasks and she ends up doing them herself. She complains about the lack of motivation of her team members and the fact that she is exhausted because she has to work extra hours for finishing the tasks in order to attain the branch target. She is considered very tough by her team and many of her subordinates are complaining of her perfectionism.

Johanna received executive coaching for developing her rational leadership and managerial coaching skills, based on the rMCP. In the first step, the coach conducted a comprehensive assessment based on interview and standardized tests (the MCAS, M-RIBS, MoodWheel and FG-PEC), and offered a formulation for the presenting issues. Johanna agreed that her main strength was her motivation, cognitive and emotional abilities. Her vulnerabilities were her perfectionist rigid demands

and global evaluation beliefs, both connected with her distress, the lack of trust in others and failure to delegate and coach her team. We agreed to work on building a rational mindset to help her deal with perfectionistic beliefs and stress, and build her managerial coaching skills.

When using the ABC form to register her stress and perfectionistic beliefs, Johanna immediately realized that the consequences of being more flexible would be a better relationship with her team. She identified feeling anger most often and suppressing it and she learned how to use a rational mindset in order to better manage her anger. Then she learned practical skills for using managerial coaching in order to develop her subordinates. Johanna did not use to have formal individual coaching sessions with her employees but rather group meetings. We discussed the GROW model of coaching and how she can use it for the individual sessions. She identified a few irrational beliefs as roadblocks in implementing managerial coaching: "I am going to lose my time and be disappointed", "I will have to finish up their tasks", which we addressed using Socratic questioning.

During five sessions, we worked on strategies to implement her managerial coaching sessions effectively. Most of the difficulties she experienced were related to the planning part and the close monitoring for implementation needed by a few team members. She found concrete performance indicators and set specific timelines for monitoring and giving effective feedback. We also worked on improving her communication skills in order to be assertive, rather than jumping from passive to aggressive. Based on the final assessment, there were clear improvements which emerged in her managerial coaching skills, rational mindset, stress and satisfaction with her team.

Case Illustration 2: Victor

A multinational factory producing electronic equipment for mobile communications asks for a program in which their team managers to learn how to better work with their subordinates, to develop their performance and motivate them. Each team leader had between 15 and 20 workers in their team, hired based on leasing contracts. After interviewing and assessment, the rMCP program was recommended and they decided to implement it.

The program was implemented for 23 mid-level managers and focused on developing managerial coaching skills and rational leadership (see David & Matu, 2013; Ratiu et al., 2017). Several specific skills were targeted through the rMCP, such as: managerial coaching skills, leadership, feedback and communication skills, motivation of subordinate, and developing stress management strategies. Prior to the commencement of the program, participants were assessed and upon completion of the program, they were again assessed, using the same psychometric instruments for measuring their managerial coaching skills stress, rational attitudes, performance. The protocol of the program consisted of a 1-day training, two individual coaching sessions and a final group coaching session, as presented above.

Victor is one of the managers participating in the program. He complained about the low motivation of the workers for performance but was open to invest in their development by using new instruments. During the training session Victor learned about the basics of managerial coaching, a model of managerial coaching, how to give effective feedback and motivational strategies, and rational leadership. He participated in experiential learning activities during the workshop and learned how to give feedback; he also watched video films illustrating the managerial coaching model and sessions. At the end of the workshop, Victor established an action plan regarding the implementation of the skills, more specifically weekly managerial coaching sessions based on the coaching model, stress monitoring using the ABC monitoring form for rational mindset development. Two behavioral modification forms were used by Victor during the following 3 weeks, one focused on increasing the motivation of their team members, and one in which the managers needed to fill their use of the managerial coaching sessions.

During the first individual coaching session, Victor was monitored regarding the implementation of the skills. He made good progress and followed his action plan but encountered difficulties in terms of finding time to monitor the plans established with a few employees that needed closer feedback. During the session, the coach worked with Victor for finding solutions to overcome this obstacle. The second coaching session was a shadowing one, and Victor was followed during a coaching session with an employee and then received feedback based on the MCAS observational grid. While using very effectively the model during this session, Victor failed to establish performance indicators for each planned step that needed to be monitored. The last session had a group format and Victor together with the other managers received a task to complete together, while being assessed in terms of their managerial coaching skills. Feedback was asked at the end the results of the feedback offered subsequently by his team members and superiors were incorporated into the action plans and goals.

Significant improvements were registered based on the assessment conducted before and at the end of the program for Victor in terms of managerial coaching skills, based on self-report but also observation, stress, rational mindset, and leadership (see David & Matu, 2013; Ratiu et al., 2017).

Catering for Individual Differences

While managerial coaching is receiving more and more support for bringing positive outcomes on the teams where implemented (Lawrence, 2017), there are great variations in terms of its definitions and characteristics, like the formal or informal approach used by the managers and the lack of implementation (Hagen, 2012). Anderson (2013) found that demographic characteristics of the managers, such as their age, experience or level of management qualification are not related to their implementation of managerial coaching sessions. However, the author found that leader-team member relationships, which he called leader-member exchange, and

occupational self-efficacy were predictive of the use of managerial coaching. Also, an important role in mediating the positive effects that managerial coaching has on satisfaction with work, career commitment, performance of the employee at work has the organizational commitment for role clarity (Kim, Egan, & Moon, 2014). In other words, managers having better relationship with their team members and understanding of their role receive higher benefits from managerial coaching.

Dos and Don'ts in RE-CBC Based Managerial Coaching

Based on the theory, practice and empirical knowledge from the REBT, RE-CBC, CBC and managerial coaching fields presenting above, we are summarizing below a few recommendations in terms of the Dos in RE-CBC based managerial and leadership coaching:

– Managerial coaching needs to be used as frequent as possible by the managers and supervisors, based on a formal or informal approach, due to its positive effects on developing employees.
– Develop the competences and skills essential for managerial coaching, such as efficient relations, efficient concentration, and efficient communication; these can be promoted by strengthening a rational managerial coaching mindset, characterized by rational sensitivity, flexibility and unconditional acceptance.
– Develop a rational leadership mindset, using awareness and flexible thinking strategies based on the ABC model and the principles of the rational mindset.
– The models offered by the RE-CBC approach for managerial coaching have received scientific support, are adequate for the field and easy to be implemented; thus, these models (ABC, PRACTICE) need to be used as processes for managerial coaching.
– Use well designed and investigated programs for building managerial coaching skills and rational leadership, such as the Rational Managerial Coaching Program.

In the same vein, we are summarizing below a few recommendations in terms of the Don'ts in RE-CBC based managerial and leadership coaching:

– Do not implement techniques and models of RE-CBC managerial coaching mechanically, without making sure that essential skills have been correctly used in order to build a foundation of effective relationships, communication and effective concentration on goals.
– Do not let your irrational beliefs regarding your special circumstances or lack of confidence (i.e., "I do not have the time", "It is pointless", "I am not good at this" etc.) become obstacles for implementing frequent and effective managerial coaching sessions.
– Avoid letting yourself contaminated in your coaching practice by the use of approaches, models and tools without scientific support.

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Executive Coaching

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In every corner of the world, the engines of our sophisticated societies (e.g., health system, educational system, economy, justice, public safety, etc.) rely on organizational structures that assure our collective well-being. These structures work by specific, documented rules, and have resources at their disposal that not long ago would have seemed impossible. They are fueled by the products of our highly-evolved minds. But brilliant strategies, outstanding ideas, astonishing technologies or great resources are useless without efficient people to implement them. Therefore, having employees capable of curbing their proneness to error and their self-destructive and counterproductive patterns is as important as coming up with intelligent solutions.

Being an executive is not an easy job. It involves dealing with numerous demands that need various skills and professional commitment. Not everyone manages to reach such a key position. As a consequence, executives are likely to be intelligent and results-oriented individuals, with a strong desire to improve themselves and meet high standards. However, given the nature of their work, they are also prone to face numerous difficulties that affect not only their subjective well-being, but also, in the end, the accomplishment of the organization they work in. For example, developing flexibility is one of their biggest challenges because, as high achievers, they tend to act based on patterns reinforced by previous reward experiences (Good, Yeganeh, & Yeganeh, 2013). Other issues that are frequent among executives are relationship problems of various sorts (with colleagues, superiors, subordinates), anger management, lack of self-worth, procrastination or indecisiveness (Anderson, 2002). In addition, given the heavy workload inherent to their position, as well as the fact that they tend to be highly competitive, executives may be prone to burnout, work dissatisfaction or work-family conflict. All in all, at the core of all problems and enhancement goals stands out the need to boost behavioral change (Sherin &

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Caiger, 2004), which usually can be attained only with persistent efforts and a good strategy to follow.

One attempt to enhance both human potential and organizational performance is coaching. It is no wonder that coaching industry has flourished spectacularly. The magnitude of this phenomenon can be seen in the total global revenue gained from coaching. It reached $US 2356 billion in 2015, showing a 19% increase over the 2011 estimate (International Coach Federation, 2016). Also, more and more people tend to embark on a coaching career. According to the 2016 ICF Global Coaching Study, there were approximately 53,300 professional coaches and 10,900 managers/ leaders using coaching skills worldwide. If we analyze the evolution of the ICF global membership between 2008 and 2015, we see that the overall number of affiliates rose from approximately 16,000 members to 26,476 members (International Coach Federation, 2015). The greatest proportion of coaching clients are managers, executives, and business owners/entrepreneurs; the majority of them have their sessions paid by a third party (International Coach Federation, 2016).

In a nutshell, there is no doubt that being a coach working in organizations is a prolific business. The question that follows is "Does having a lot of clients willing to pay heavily for such services automatically mean that coaching is efficient?". The answer is a resounding 'No!'. Two main issues consistently come up, which from our point of view are to some degree intertwined: (1) there is still relatively little reliable evidence to support the efficacy or effectiveness of coaching in organizations; (2) there is much heterogeneity in coaching approaches and many coaches are also poorly trained (Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh, & Parker, 2010), making coaching seem more like an expensive Russian roulette.

Executive coaching is the term used to describe the process by which a professional trained in one or more models or types of coaching applies various methods and techniques to help an executive who occupies at least a middle management position (although sometimes the beneficiaries could be employees in junior roles, who show high potential) accomplish a set of mutually defined objectives regarding client's skills, performance or development. The knowledge gained by the client through this collaboration is expected to increase his/her work efficiency (e.g., productivity, leadership skills), well-being and, implicitly, contribute to the success of the organization (Anderson, 2002; Kilburg, 1996; Sperry, 2004; Stokes & Jolly, 2010). Other key defining features of executive coaching are as follows (Stokes & Jolly, 2010): it consists of confidential one-on-one meetings, scheduled on a regular basis; it involves the assessment of some variables associated with the current executive's performance; it seeks to tackle weaknesses, but also to consolidate strengths.

The systematic reviews and meta-analyses conducted so far have shown that coaching may bring significant benefits to organizations. For example, De Meuse, Dai, and Lee (2009), in their meta-analysis of empirical studies, found that, overall, coaching tended to improve executives' skill acquiring and performance. The same paper showed that coaching had significant effects on team performance, productivity, and employee job satisfaction. The meta-analysis conducted by Theeboom, Beersma, and van Vianen (2014) also supported the effectiveness of coaching across multiple areas (performance/skills, well-being, coping, work attitudes, and goal-directed self-

regulation). Likewise, Grover and Furnham (2016) concluded their systematic review by stating that the evidence so far suggests that coaching seems to make a difference regarding employees' self-efficacy, goal attainment, leadership and other gains that further help the organization. Also, the efficacy or effectiveness of leadership coaching has been tested in several studies. The review authored by Ely et al. (2010) comprising 49 studies revealed that self-reported changes in leadership behaviors and clients' perceptions of the effectiveness of coaching were the most commonly used methods to evaluate the effects of this particular leadership development practice. In addition, self-awareness and self-efficacy proved to be the most frequently assessed cognitive and affective learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, we find that the amount of research regarding the benefits of organizational coaching in general, and of executive coaching in particular, was low to begin with and that the studies meeting the inclusion criteria in these landmark meta-analyses and reviews made up just a small fraction of that. Moreover, the authors of such reviews and meta-analyses unanimously signaled several important issues that seemed to make empirical research lag behind coaching practice in organization: (1) methodological shortcomings that reduced the quality of research (retrospective studies, lack of longitudinal studies, questionable measurement instruments, etc.); (2) the fact that many of the people conducting these studies were practitioners with no solid knowledge in research; (3) the diversity of professionals' background and the lack of a well-established universal agreement on what constitutes good practice in coaching; (4) lack of consensus regarding the operationalization of effective coaching.

The bottom line is that increasing efforts have been made to provide evidence for organizational coaching, and the results sustaining its utility have been promising. However, more research and practice rigor is still needed to strengthen even more the field of executive coaching.

The goal of this chapter is to address this issue, by discussing how the principles and methods of Albert Ellis' rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) could be used as a guide to executive coaching. REBT is a versatile intervention that has already been successfully adapted for coaching purposes, taking the form of rational emotive behavioral coaching (REBC) (e.g., Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008). REBC is an evidence-based approach that uses a solid theory of the mechanisms behind psychological disturbance and health, in order to reduce stress and improve clients' functioning. It defines specific target variables, and further sets the stage for precise methods and techniques that could be implemented consistently across settings and by different practitioners. When REBC is applied to increase executives' performance, it is called REBEC, which stands for "rational emotive behavioral executive coaching".

We believe that promoting REBEC or another approach similar in reliability and handiness, and providing clear guidelines for its use, could help improve the credibility of coaching practice, and reduce the risk of clients investing their time and money in useless experiences. It can also enhance the quality of research, as both practitioners and researchers would have a clearly defined intervention and could work with well-established measurements.

We start the chapter by presenting briefly the theory behind REBEC, while also addressing several questions regarding the application of REBC in working with executives (i.e., "What are the particularities of executives/managers as clients?" "What are the aims that REBEC could target?"; "How to approach lack of decisiveness and resistance to change?"). Also, we provide several guidelines for structuring a typical REBEC intervention. Then, we wrap things up by providing some thoughts and final recommendations regarding what to keep in mind (what to do and what to avoid) when working as a REB executive coach.

The Features of REBEC

In the introduction of his book "Executive Leadership: A Rational Approach", Albert Ellis emphasized that one of the reasons why he chose to dedicate an entire book to executives was his passion on how to catalyze efficiency. Executives seemed to be the ideal candidates for this since they are generally highly effective in some areas, but also ineffective in others. They also tend to have a strong need to improve themselves. Furthermore, executives' overall profile (e.g., high intelligence, ambition, performance-driven behaviors, busy schedules) seems to best fit a specific type of coaching, namely one that consists of an active, transparent and short-term collaboration with a professional (Good et al., 2013). In this line of thought, an efficient coaching intervention would rely on clients being highly engaged in the process, working side by side with the coach, while also allowing the coach to challenge them in ways that facilitate fast personal and professional growth.

From this point of view, REBC seems to be a perfect match for executives, as it requires only a few sessions during which clients are actively involved in tackling own self-defeating, irrational tendencies: they are offered an explanation concerning the mechanisms underlying their problems or blockages and, after they gain the ability to operate easily with the REBC principles, they are urged to apply them every time they experience any type of issue. Moreover, considering that in REBC the key ingredient towards goal attainment is disputing unreasonable thinking, clients are challenged by the coach to ultimately learn to challenge their own irrationality in order to achieve their goals.

Although the ABCs of REBT with the focus on the mediating role of thinking in emotions and behavior sounds straightforward, the underlying REBT theory of human functioning is rather complex as it acknowledges that there could be multiple pathways to emotional arousal (DiGiuseppe, Doyle, Dryden, & Backx, 2014). In this vein, individuals are seen as biosocial creatures who act hedonistically, being primarily driven by two powerful forces—staying alive and pursuing happiness—no matter how diverse their surface goals are. Accordingly, throughout their lives they strive to satisfy their self-interests, while also keeping their social interests on the priority list by not neglecting the desires of others. But, while people are endowed with the ability to define and follow various purposes in order to survive

and find enjoyment, they also have a biological tendency to think in an irrational and self-defeating manner that hinders their goal achievement (Dryden, David, & Ellis, 2010; Ellis & Dryden, 2007).

Therefore, using terms like "rationality" versus "irrationality" to help bring people happiness and a sense of fulfillment to their lives is the cornerstone of any rational emotive behavior intervention. The core underlying assumptions of this approach are that: a) thinking more rationally is the key to personal success; and b) people have the power to reflect on their thinking and can decide to make efforts to change their irrational thoughts, which are rigid or extreme, differ from reality, defy logic, produce detrimental consequences (i.e., unhealthy emotions or maladaptive behaviors) and impede one's goal attainment (DiGiuseppe et al., 2014; Dryden & Branch, 2008; Dryden et al., 2010; Ellis & Dryden, 2007).

Executives are individuals who generally seek coaching to help them develop skills that improve different aspects of work performance (productivity, relations with co-workers, decision making, leadership, etc.) rather than to overcome some emotional disturbances or existential crises—as it happens with many therapy clients. They can reach that goal by learning new strategies of controlling more efficiently own thinking and emotions (Good et al., 2013) and acquiring rational philosophies of life. REBC philosophy taps into the mechanisms that explain human reactions across multiple situations. It is, therefore, helpful not only in getting a handle on deficits, but also in enhancing strengths. Thus, REB coaches are well-equipped to assist executives properly, regardless of the specific scope of intervention.

REBEC, the subgenre of REBC applied to executives, uses psychoeducational methods in order to teach coachees how to assess their beliefs, emotions and behaviors, differentiate between what is rational vs. irrational, healthy vs. unhealthy and adaptive vs. maladaptive, challenge their absolutistic thinking and build a more rational perspective that would help them attain their work goals. In addition, REB executive coaches often focus their intervention not only on present, but also on future, so that executives can grasp what they need to ultimately become own coaches (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008). This instructional-didactic style is what distinguishes REBEC from more traditional, non-directive coaching (e.g., the GROW model, as described in Whitmore, 2002).

In a nutshell, the REBC philosophy can be harnessed to help executives gain control over their internal processes (beliefs, emotions) and behaviors, so that they can control more effectively the external aspects that shape the success of their leadership style and job performance, and, implicitly, influence the success of organization.

Albert Ellis coined the term "rational sensitivity" to describe the effects of successfully applying the ABC framework in executive leadership. It refers to becoming more "sensitized" (not "sensitive", as synonym to "vulnerable") to one's own and others' mistakes and failures, by approaching life and pursuing own goals with acceptance, tolerance, flexibility and open-mindedness towards self and other people's weaknesses, even when the situation or outcome is not the preferable one (Ellis, 1972).

Rational sensitivity should be regarded as one of the assets of any good executive. It could be uniquely acquired through REBEC, using a three-step approach as explained in the next section.

A Case Study About Indecisiveness: Applying the ABC(DE) Executive Coaching Model to Attain Rational Sensitivity

When it comes to better understanding the applicative side of REBEC in general, and also teaching executives how to dispute and change their irrational beliefs in particular, Albert Ellis' classical book, "Executive leadership: A rational approach" (Ellis, 1972), remains a mandatory read for any coach who works with this category of clients. Thus, in this section, we describe a case study from this book in order to illustrate how the use of ABC(DE) model leads to rational sensitivity. The text between quotation marks is very close to the original one found in Ellis' book, and offers a glimpse into how Ellis applied REBC in order to tackle one of the most ardent problems that many executives face: indecision.

The case study is about Vasil, a 35-year-old sales manager at a hosiery manufacturer, who is referred to executive coaching. Although Vasil was very skilled in many aspects of his profession and successfully coordinated a department comprised of 30 employees, he could never act upon the decision to fire one of his subordinates who was not turning in any of the reports he was supposed to every Monday. Vasil argued that the reason for his strong hesitation was that he knew how difficult would that be for the man and his family, and he could not hurt him in any way.

Using the ABC model to conceptualize Vasil case, the coach can easily notice that the problem described by the client, namely the C component (consequence), is indecisiveness or weakness, while A (activating event) takes the form of client having to deal weekly with the fact that his subordinate does not accomplish his job requirements.

At the first impulse, Vasil is telling himself rationally "It would be unfortunate to fire this man because he and his family would suffer. Knowing this, it would be unpleasant for me. Worse, he would probably hate me because he knows that overall, he is not doing so badly when it comes to selling, and that it just happens when he needs to turn in reports. And I wouldn't want him to hate me like that". If Vasil remained within the borders of this rational view, he would have felt regretful, displeased, frustrated, which were all healthy and appropriate emotions given the unpleasant situation that he experienced. Rational beliefs (rB) lead to functional positive or negative consequences (C), irrespective of what the activating event (A) is.

But he goes further and builds a discourse stuffed with irrational beliefs: "How awful that I have to decide whether or not to get rid of this employee! I can't stand the thought of him hating me. How terrible would be that other people think so poorly of me knowing that his wife and children suffer because of me! On the other

hand, if I don't fire him or don't make him turn in those reports, this would counter-mand my authority and make me look like a fool! And how can I manage to live with that? What a terrible dilemma I am in!".

As a result, Vasil starts to experience several dysfunctional effects (C): he goes back and forth between writing the dismissal notification and tearing it up anx-iously, then he hates himself, the hates the subordinate for making him feel this way, etc. Furthermore, another chain of irrational beliefs comes to light, making the situ-ation even worse: "Isn't it awful that I am vacillating like this! What a fool I am! How can he treat me like that, the lousy bastard!", etc. In other words, because of his absolutistic and catastrophic thinking (iB), Vasil now has to face a chain of dis-turbing symptoms in addition to his initial indecisiveness, instead of simply having an annoying situation. At his point, disputing irrational beliefs (D) comes as a solu-tion to Vasil's problems.

The step that the REB executive coach should take now for helping Vasil reach rational sensitivity and eliminate his symptoms of indecisiveness, self-hatred and hostility, is to systematically challenge his thoughts, by asking him a series of stra-tegic questions.

First, the coach could choose to target Vasil's indecisiveness using questions such as: "Why is it awful that you have to decide whether to fire or not this employee?"; "Why can't you stand the thought of him hating you as a result of your decision to dismiss him?"; "In what way would it be terrible if his wife and children suffer, or people think poorly of you because you fired him?"; "Why will you look like a fool if you ignore the issue and don't make him turn in those reports?"; "What makes you think that the dilemma you are in is so terrible?". Creating such a dia-logue, the coach engages Vasil in a process of actively working on his indecisive-ness and ultimately defeat it.

Thus, during the REBEC sessions, Vasil would start to gradually come up with a more rational view about his problem, by formulating answers such as: "It isn't awful that I have to take this decision. It is just unpleasant. After all, decisions are part of my job."; "Clearly I can stand the thought of him hating me! It is normal not to like when he or any other person hates me. Also, it would be unfair if he hates me considering that his repeated insubordination made me apply this measure. Ok! So it would be unfair… But who says everyone should treat me with total fairness?"; "I would be quite sad if I had to fire him and his wife and children consequently suf-fered. But I am not the one who encourages their sadness… he is. And what about all the trouble he is directly and indirectly giving me, my family, and other employ-ees by not fulfilling his job duty?"; "I certainly won't like if people detest me because I presumably made his loved ones suffer. But what are they really going to do to me if they dislike me?—burn down my house? Being a manager involves being sometimes disliked by various people, for one reason or another."; "There is no evidence I will look like a fool in any situation. And if this somehow happens, it will be too bad. I won't like it, but I can make myself feel like a person who has done a foolish act, rather than a person who is a fool for doing that act"; "The dilemma I am in has no perfect solution. Whatever I do, there are negative consequences. But who said that humans, me included, should never have to deal with negativity?".

Then, the coach could continue in the same way and challenge Vasil's irrational beliefs underlying his self-hatred and hostility towards his subordinate. Several useful questions to guide further the REBEC dialogue could be: "What makes it awful for you to be vacillating like this?; Where is the evidence that you are an idiot for not making up your mind and sticking with your decision?"; "Why can't the employee treat you like that—refusing to do his reports and thus placing you in a dilemma about firing him? etc. Similarly, by systematically and diligently disputing his thoughts, Vasil should learn to produce reasonable interpretations about him, others and the issues he encounters at job (e.g., "Indecisiveness is foolish and useless, but never awful or catastrophic"; "I can easily do foolish acts, but no one has the magical powers to turn me into a fool"; "All people are fallible because this is human nature", etc.) and reduce the unhealthy emotions that he feels. Overall, at the end of the REBEC process, Vasil would become more "sensitized".

To summarize, rational sensitivity can be attained in REBEC with the aid of ABC model, in a three-step approach. The starting point is identifying C, the problematic consequence that the client wants to eliminate (e.g., indecisiveness, procrastination, incompetence, passivity, inertia etc.); the next step is defining A, namely what had happened before the onset of C, while the last step consists of tackling B (analyzing the beliefs about A; identifying all rigid demands, catastrophic thoughts, global evaluations and/or descriptors of frustration intolerance; questioning and replace them with more rational views) (Ellis, 1972).

Through mastering the art of rational sensitivity, executives become more skillful in using the problems within an organization as a trigger for growth and development. Thus, they gain the ability to properly identify weaknesses and problems, set realistic goals, find solutions and take the necessary steps to reduce the discrepancy between *what is* and *what could be* (Ellis, 1972). The rational problem solving style following REBEC, in combination with maintaining rational sensitivity towards self, employees and work experiences, enhances executive leadership.

Also, rational sensitivity helps executives gain a more scientific view of the world by allowing them to formulate reasonable hypotheses about people and situations, test them adequately using the available data and resources, and draw valid conclusions (Ellis, 1972).

In the same vein, because REBT approach consists of recognizing, disputing and replacing irrational beliefs—which is a complex effortful cognitive process—it provides executives with the opportunity to also improve their reasoning and further be able to make better decisions. This is an inestimable implicit benefit considering that making decisions from an executive position is a challenging task from various reasons. First, we, humans, have limited cognitive capacities which prevent us from grasping all possible information and alternatives in a given situation, and our minds tend to work based on heuristics, which often lead to biases (Tversky & Kahneman, 1975). Furthermore, executives, especially those working in senior government positions (but not only them), have to make many difficult decisions that involve a lot of ambiguity, uncertainty, information or even conflicts of values and interests (Kelman, Sanders, & Pandit, 2016). Also, multiple personal factors such as

job anxiety (Mannor, Wowak, Bartkus, & Gomez-Mejia, 2016) or self-evaluations (Hiller & Hambrick, 2005) could affect executives' decision-making. Thus, learning rational sensitivity and applying it, comes as a valuable resource.

Another key benefit of rational sensitivity is improving executives' personal and professional relations to others, by harmonizing social and self-related interests (Ellis, 1972).

The list of advantages promoted by rational sensitivity could go on and on. Basically, rational sensitivity is useful not only in tackling situational problems at work, but also in gaining more generalized skills (e.g., rational problem solving, effective decision-making or establishing good communication with colleagues or others). Therefore, we find that practicing REBC or blending elements of REBC, such as the ABC working framework, with other coaching approaches would be particularly useful when working with executives.

Tackling Resistance and Motivation to Change in REBEC

Before 1990, coaching was seen as an intervention aimed at fixing managers' flaws and weaknesses, which also involved increasing their motivation to change, as executives were considered rather resistant to doing things differently. By the late 1990s, the perspective on coaching had evolved to a more optimistic, proactive opinion, focusing on improving future performance by harnessing people's desire to change and grow (Peterson, 2002, as cited in Landy & Conte, 2013).

Although the latter view perfectly describes coaching today (including REB coaching), sometimes resistance to change may still occur. In some instances, it can be a case of status quo bias—the strong human tendency to preserve current condition, as a consequence of loss aversion (Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1991). For example, this may happen more frequently when the coaching intervention is requested by the organization and not by the clients themselves. At other times, the causes may rather relate to client's reactions to specific components of the coaching process. Three types of factors could trigger this type of resistance: client's irrational beliefs, the client's problem itself, and the characteristics of the intervention.

Under some circumstances, resistance to change may arise even before the coaching process starts. Executives usually have very busy schedules, a lot of responsibilities to handle under pressure, and, therefore, have little or no time to invest in extra activities. In addition, some of them, even though they tend to display high motivation to change, may be convinced that they can enhance performance on their own, which they can view as a more convenient scenario, considering their time restraints. While self-reliance is generally useful, it acts here as a deterrent to coaching. Still, a few others may think that they don't need to change, or even that change would imply costs and disadvantages. In either case, if people have to enter coaching only to comply their boss' firm suggestion, resistance is very likely to occur.

A strategy inspired by Ellis' general guidelines for working with resistant clients (Ellis, 2002) is reframing the coaching process/self-change as more of a challenge/adventure rather than as a drudgery. In this regard, for example, clients could be invited first to imagine that they do engage in a worthless endeavor and work hard with no good results. Then, clients should be asked: "Why would it be great to do it anyway?". As a result of this paradoxical approach, clients could see that trying something, even if it is perceived as being useless, is better than not having any experience at all, and may, in fact, be exciting, interesting or enjoyable. They could also see that striving to change may lead to self-knowledge or that trying something they don't agree with may reduce frustration intolerance (Ellis, 2002).

Other times, executives state clearly that they wish to engage in coaching and make efforts towards self-improvement, but during sessions they become resistant. According to the REBT framework, the cause of this stumble is likely to be the clients' thinking style. Therefore, when this happens, the coach has the task of discovering the irrational beliefs that hinder change. They must then prove to the clients the existence of such thoughts and then teach them how to dispute and replace these beliefs using the usual methods derived from the REBT approach (Ellis, 2002). Two underlying beliefs are typically involved in holding back change: (1) "Because I desire to change, I absolutely must do it well and satisfy myself, my coach, and others that I have done it as well as it is possible to do it, or else I am an inadequate individual who is really not able to change"; (2) "It's not only quite difficult to change myself, but it shouldn't be that difficult. It's awful and terrible. I can't stand all the consistent hard work that it will take to change myself!" (Ellis, 2002, p. 57).

Another factor that can enhance resistance is the problem itself and perfectionism is a representative example in this regard. A possible explanation for perfectionism being so persistent is that it may somehow yield rewarding results. Even though it consumes numerous resources (time, mental and physical energy, etc.) and may determine a failure to meet deadlines, the products of all efforts usually have high quality and tend to reinforce person's strivings to be flawless. In addition, perfectionism often arises with issues of self-worth, which in turn aggravates workplace difficulties (Anderson, 2002). A typical irrational belief that perfectionists hold sounds something like this: "I have to perform this important task perfectly, and I'm an inadequate person if I don't!". This might be replaced with "I would very much like to perform this task perfectly, but I don't have to. If I perform it poorly, I am someone who did a bad job, but I am never a bad person. Telling myself that I absolutely must perform it perfectly will encourage me to think that I am a totally incompetent person when I fail to do so. Therefore, I can want it, but I do not need it." (Ellis, 2002, p. 67).

If the coach finds that none of the REBT techniques described above is efficient in reducing resistance, and if the problem does not lay in their ability to fit the working style to a particular client, then the only remaining solution may be to refer the client to a colleague who is trained in another coaching orientation. After all, REBT, same as any other model, is impossible to suit all executive clients.

Guidelines for REBEC

Alliance

In both coaching and psychotherapy, regardless of the theoretical framework of the intervention, building an optimal client-professional relationship is a powerful active ingredient that makes the endeavor efficient (McKenna & Davis, 2009).

In this vein, one of the most important things to remember when practicing REBEC, as opposed to therapy, is to avoid referring explicitly to the client's beliefs as "irrational" (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). Although replacing irrational thoughts with their rational alternatives remains the key mechanism of change, using the label "irrational" could be viewed as inappropriate, or even pejorative by the client and this could be detrimental to the coaching alliance. Therefore, in order to secure the relationship with the client, it is preferable to use expressions such as "unreasonable or unrealistic expectations directed towards oneself or others" (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). Similarly, any language specific to mental health should be changed with non-pathologizing words. This can foster clients' comfort and boost self-enhancement and not make them feel as they are on the verge of developing a psychiatric condition.

Another detail that every practitioner should keep in mind especially in an executive coaching setting, is explaining from the onset the didactic nature of the relationship built within the REBC framework (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). The coach should explicitly inform the client about the working style specific to REBC and the fact that it comprises a strong psychoeducational component. Keep in mind though, that the client-coach interaction remains collaborative. Educating clients about the fact that some of their perspectives would be challenged as part of the coaching process protects them from feeling rejected or judged by the coach—this is important not only to maintain the alliance, but also to promote unconditional self-acceptance (Sherin & Caiger, 2004).

Assessment

Once the client understands and accepts what is about to happen during the REBEC sessions, and the relationship with the coach gets off on the right foot, the road towards change may begin. A good starting point to outline the executive coaching process is the five-step structure elaborated by Kirby (1993) and adapted by Sherin and Caiger (2004) to depict the change phase of executive coaching.

The first step consists of defining the problem. In this regard, both the activating event and its behavioral and emotional consequences are carefully identified in a collaborative fashion. This step may vary in terms of time spent, depending on the circumstances that determined the person to seek consultancy (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). An efficient technique to spot the most troubling component of a situation (the critical A), is called "inference chaining" which involves asking the client a

series of "what if" questions that are meant to gradually bring to light their opinion about what would follow if something happened (Neenan, 2008).

The second step of the REB executive coaching is detecting the unrealistic/ unreasonable beliefs that maintain the problematic behaviors and/or emotions. The coach's task here is to examine the client's communication in order to pin-point the absolutistic musts and shoulds in their thinking. This endeavor can be challenging and can require intensive work considering that the client is not aware of these beliefs (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). In this regard, a particularly useful strategy is to help the client focus on what was going to his/her mind in response to an activating event. This could almost invariably be accomplished by asking the client "And just what were you saying to yourself as you encountered this problem and in the instant before you felt the emotion or did this behavior?" (Anderson, 2002).

Change

The third step of REBEC marks the change process per se and comprises three sub-components. One, starting point, where the coach and the client must find the area where the dysfunction resides and investigate its manifestations across various situations—in this regard the client describes the maladaptive behaviors at work (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). Two, the absolutistic beliefs sustaining the dysfunctional emotions and behaviors are disputed—it is recommended to take one belief at a time. This process involves the coach demonstrating the client how such beliefs can act against client's best interests by causing disturbing emotional and behavioral manifestations and hinder long-term goal accomplishment (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). As a minimal guide to conduct the dialogue with the client, we recommend the following questions (based on Neenan, 2008): (1) Is this expectation rigid or flexible?—does the belief allow other outcomes?; (2) Is this expectation extreme or non-extreme?—does the belief reflect something excessive?; (3) Does this expectation make sense?—is the belief logical?; (4) Is this expectation realistic?—is there any evidence to support the belief?; (5) Is keeping this expectation helpful?—are the costs greater than the benefits?. Three, once the unreasonable beliefs are challenged and neutralized, the coach and the client explore functional alternatives to these beliefs, until the client manages to make the substitution (Sherin & Caiger, 2004).

Monitoring Progress

The fourth step of the REBEC process consists of tracking the progress that the client gradually makes in questioning his/her unrealistic expectations and replacing them with a more functional view of reality (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). Also, the outcomes associated with the new thinking style are monitored as they are generated in the face of activating events. In order to tackle the many forms that each

belief may take, <u>the client is assigned home-assignments and is encouraged to practice independently the methods and techniques that he/she has learned through coaching</u> (Sherin & Caiger, 2004). As a result, the process of changing unrealistic thoughts gradually becomes internalized and the coachee gains more and more independence. At this time, regular meetings are necessary to reinforce the client's progress and positive outcomes, while the coach plays a rather supportive (not directive) role (Sherin & Caiger, 2004).

Ending the Process

In the fifth and final step of the REBEC process, the coach and client assess the success of their collaboration by <u>reviewing the benefits that the client has gained</u> as a result of changing their expectations about themselves and others. Also, during this phase, other unrealistic beliefs may be revealed (Sherin & Caiger, 2004).

Useful Tools

Another feature that can improve coaching intervention besides creating an optimal coach-coachee relationship and setting an appropriate structure of the REBEC process, is the ability to measure client's cognitions, emotions and behaviors in a timely and accurate manner, since these constructs could shape the goals of the sessions and estimate the effectiveness of the program. In the field of executive coaching, we find that the following three instruments could be particularly helpful: the Freeman-Gavita Prescriptive Executive Coaching Assessment (FG-PEC; Gavita, Freeman, & Sava, 2012), the Manager Rational and Irrational Beliefs Scale (M-RIBS; David, 2013) and the Mood Wheel (David, 2013). All three are part of Prescriptive Index (David, 2013)—a platform to assess different aspects of managers' cognitions, emotions and behaviors.

FG-PEC is a multi-rater measure of managerial skills, meaning that it is generally filled out by the managers themselves (self-assessment), their supervisor, their subordinates, their peers, and their clients, thus providing a birds-eye view of the situation. It is based on the CBT framework (but it can be useful in REBEC, too) and consists of 40 items that cover five main domains: (A) environment—work climate, perceived support and acceptance from others; (B) behavior—manager's ability to fulfill tasks and have a positive influence on others; (C) cognition—manager's knowledge and cognitive skills; (D) culture—congruence between the organizational and personal values and expectations; (E) emotions—stress-related factors such as frustration tolerance, distress, excitement seeking, emotional stability, locus of control. This instrument has three potential applications: (a) assess the current status of the client in order to get a basic understanding about his/her needs and difficulties; (b) monitor client's progress during the coaching process; (c) predict client's performance (Gavita et al., 2012).

M-RIBS is a 30-item self-report tool based on REBT theory. It was designed to measure four evaluative processes (demandingness vs. preference; low frustration tolerance vs. frustration tolerance; awfulizing vs. badness; global evaluation vs. unconditional acceptance) across three content areas relevant for managers (appreciation and performance; control; comfort). The items were phrased so that to reflect five rational beliefs and five irrational beliefs for each content area. M-RIBS can be used to depict the evolution of client's thinking style, across coaching sessions (David, 2013).

The Mood Wheel is a web and mobile app created to assess 32 emotions defined on a three-dimension system: valence (positive vs. negative) x control (high vs. low) x functionality (functional vs. dysfunctional). The respondents rate on a 5-point scale the extent to which they are feeling these emotions (experience sampling version) or have felt each emotion in general/during the past few weeks/during the past week (trait/mood version) (David, 2013).

Do's and Don'ts of REBEC

REBEC is rooted in the lead evidence-based therapeutic approach (CBT paradigm) and research testing its efficacy/effectiveness has started to flourish in the last years (e.g., David, Ionicioiu, Imbăruş, & Sava, 2016). Thus, choosing to work within the REBEC framework sets from the very beginning a practice with a strong scientific flavor. However, that does not imply that REB executive coaches and even more the practitioners specialized in other executive coaching approaches who decide to inspire themselves from REBEC should feel at ease in assuring the quality of their intervention. In this line of thought, we recommend the following professional habits:

- Make continuous efforts to nurture a scientist-practitioner mindset by (based on Maddux & Riso, 2007): (1) consuming scientific literature relevant to executives' needs and goals; go beyond coaching literature—consult psychological literature too, as the two disciplines are highly interconnected; (2) keeping up with state of the art findings in executive coaching, but also in psychology; (3) approaching training and practice like a researcher, using scientific lenses (critical thinking, rigor, skepticism, formulate hypotheses, not certitudes and test them, remain open to alternative views); (4) including quantitative measures in your practice; (5) exploiting every opportunity of getting involved in research experiences.
- Don't transform practice into a "one size fits all" recipe applied mechanically to every executive and don't exaggerate in disputing irrational beliefs. REBEC, same as coaching in general or psychology, is science practiced with art. Each executive has his/her own personality, resources, values, weaknesses, experiences, needs and works in a specific environment, with different challenges and opportunities. Therefore, we argue that a personalized approach would assure an optimal coach-client relationship and be more beneficial overall. This does not contradict the importance of relying on well-established, evidence-based guidelines. We only

suggest that REB coaches should carefully adjust the coaching interface according to client's needs, without losing the scientific and theoretical underpinnings of the intervention.

- Train yourself deliberately in order to be able to notice and manipulate fine details regarding the REBEC practice. One such example is distinguishing between unreasonable demands that trigger disturbance, and conditional "musts" and "shoulds" that don't have this effect (Dryden & Branch, 2008). This is an important skill because people's speech often comprises various types of harmless "shoulds" that express recommendations, predictions about the future, ideal conditions, the idea that something is expected to happen when specific prerequisites are met, or innocuous preferences (Dryden & Branch, 2008). Confusion in any direction (believing that an absolutistic demand is neutral or vice versa) negatively affects the quality of intervention.

- Be aware of the fact that rigid beliefs are not always followed by problematic consequences (Dryden et al., 2010). For example, an executive who ardently believes that he/she must always be successful with important projects, has the confidence that he/she would do so, and actually attains this goal, won't experience any disturbance (Dryden et al., 2010). But ignoring this absolutistic demand leaves the client vulnerable to disturbance, considering that sooner or later he/she will probably fail. Thus, pay attention to all irrational beliefs, regardless of the valence of their consequences, and dispute them at the right moment—this would prepare the executive to react rationally in the face of adversity and would facilitate self-enhancement which is an important goal of coaching.

- Don't focus too much on disputing unreasonable beliefs while neglecting the importance of enhancing rational beliefs. This suggestion stems from the fact that rational and irrational beliefs coexist in uneven proportions—usually, irrational beliefs exceed rational ones and the dynamics between them is twofold: they can become active both simultaneously and alternatively (DiGiuseppe et al., 2014). Thus, sometimes executives will display rational beliefs during coaching sessions, but think irrationally at work, when faced with the activating event. In other words, an important detail that any REB coach should know is that the source of disturbance resides not only in the presence of irrational beliefs, but also in the imbalance between rational and irrational (DiGiuseppe et al., 2014).

- Encourage the clients to deal with one problem at a time, since the entire energy is focused towards one goal and positive results are more likely to happen. Some clients feel the urge to attack more problems simultaneously. Executives might be especially prone to this behavior, as they usually tend to be accustomed to detecting problems that need solving, and they yearn for efficiency. Therefore, they might be tempted to seek a quick fix for everything. But usually there is not a single, generalized solution, and pursuing too many objectives at once is counterproductive. Investing time and effort in more than one direction increases the chances of delaying the desired outcomes, and also increases the chances of utter failure, which is discouraging and demotivating. By tackling one problem at a time, the client gains more quickly a sense of progress, gets more and more confident, and so the entire intervention becomes more efficient.

To summarize, REBEC combines the science of molding people's beliefs to instill change, with the art of creating an intervention suitable for an exigent clientele. Although REBC itself provides a repertoire of tools that match executives' needs and resources, coaches still face a challenging job ahead of them as they have to: (1) understand precisely the similarities and differences between therapy, coaching and other forms of intervention; (2) master the fine nuances of various REBC techniques; (3) continuously nurture their professional skills and knowledge; and (4) earn clients' trust and create an optimal working alliance. In the end, REBEC is all about human efficiency: an evidence-based approach, applied skillfully by a well-trained professional to help executives perform better.

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Coemerata for Organizational Change

Russell Grieger

I stumbled into organizational consulting and coaching quite by accident. One day, late in the 1980s, I got an unexpected phone call from Lucy C, the Director of Corporate Services at the University of Virginia's School of Continuing Education. She requested that I teach a one-day seminar for business leaders on the topic of "Doing What You Love, Loving What You Do."

This seminar opened the floodgates. Lucy herself contacted me a few days afterwards to tell me that she had just resigned her UVA job. She explained that she had always dreamed of owning a restaurant and my presentation inspired her to take the plunge. Her request: Would I coach her through the process?

Shortly thereafter, another seminar participant, the Director of Public Works from a nearby city government, asked me to help him in building his department into a team-based culture. Then came a call from the co-owner of a four-person medical practice who asked me to help he and his partners resolve some thorny business conflicts. After that came a request to coach a number of independent family physicians though the process of deciding whether or not to partner into one large practice.

That started it all. I must admit that I found these challenges daunting, if not out-and-out intimidating. Though I knew the theory and practice of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy forwards and backwards, little, beyond REBT's ABCs, gave me much help in providing quality service to these business people. Yet, I plunged forward, spending long hours doing research, picking the brains of trusted colleagues, organizing my presentations, seminars, and workshops. I must have met with some success, though, for the requests for my services multiplied until I found myself virtually conducting two full-time practices at one and the same time—one clinical, the other consulting and coaching.

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But I soon realized that I could not do justice to my client organizations by continuing to cobble together ideas and techniques from this, that, and the other resource. Just as I had the REBT's ABC model to diagnose an individual's emotional problems, plan elegant interventions to bring about long-lasting change, and measure results, I knew I also needed such a model to guide me in my organizational work. So I set out to craft just that.

What I propose to do in this chapter, then, is to describe and illustrate how I integrate the theory and practice of REBT into my work with organizations through individual coaching, problem solving consultation, and skill development workshops and seminars. I will first describe the model of organizational personality I invented to help me diagnose an organization's problems and choose strategies to move it successfully through the change process. Second, I will illustrate how I use this model through several case studies. And, third, I will present seven practical guidelines I follow as I conduct my organizational consulting and coaching.

Organizational Personality

I conceptualize the personality of an organization as being composed of three components, going from the most general to the most specific. For diagnostic and change purposes, I find each component necessary but insufficient in and of itself, meaning that, to gain a comprehensive understanding of an organization's problems, I must go in sequence from the first to the second, then from the second to the third, before, finally, integrating all three into a workable diagnostic understanding that directs me to specific intervention strategies.

Component One: The Organizational

I adapted this first component from Stephen Covey's brilliant leadership book, *Principle-Centered Leadership* (1990). According to him, an organization contains four levels, (see Fig. 1). I find it critical to pinpoint exactly at what level or levels exists problems within the organization before I dig deeper though Components Two and Three.

- At the *personal level* are the individuals who work in the organization. They include everyone from the CEO down to frontline employees "on the floor." A breakdown can occur with anyone in one or both of two dimensions: one, a person's competence; the other, his or her character and personality. Both are critical: an employee of high skill, but with a defective character or disturbed personality, can wreak havoc in an organization; a person solid of character and personality, but deficient in skill, will cripple productivity and can eventually erode goodwill.
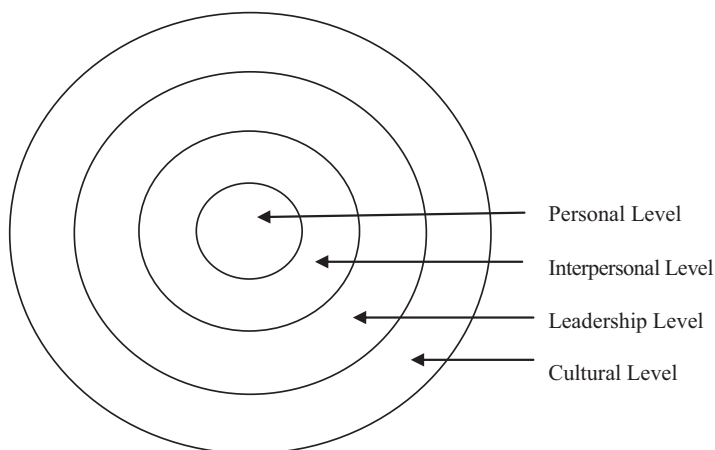
Fig. 1 The four levels of an organization

- At the *interpersonal level* are the working relationships between people. There can be trust, harmony, and cooperation, or there can be distrust, conflict, and a lack of teamwork. I have seen leaders at the top of an organization create such acrimony that they poisoned relationships all the way down to the bottom rung. Similarly, I have seen conflict between individuals, teams, and departments in organizations that make it impossible to meet anything but the lowest of expectations.
- Organizations are made or broken at the *leadership level*. I define a leader as anyone responsible for the measurable performance of another. Leaders who have a clear vision for their organization's future, who are highly skillful, both technically, personally, and interpersonally and who are solid of character and personality, engender the kind of trust that invites people to dedicate themselves to the organization's betterment. To the contrary, those who are defective or deficient in these ingredients end up leading by control, coercion, and confrontation. With such a style, trust and goodwill are destroyed, cooperation and communication plummet, and results suffer.
- At the *cultural level* are all the strategies, structures, and systems that support a culture oriented around a common, sacred purpose. When these are all aligned, extraordinary performance and results can occur. When not aligned, there is the potential for chaos, breakdown, and loss of hope and spirit.

Whenever I am invited to consult with an organization, my first challenge is to figure out at which of these four levels the core problem or need exists. I must say, though, that problems or needs at one level often spill over and stimulate problems at others as well, often requiring me to figure out their dynamic interplay and plan my intervention accordingly. Once I understand this, I'm then ready to delve into Component Two, the human component.

Component Two: People Effectiveness

At its core, every organization is made up and run by its people. They create the culture, plan and conduct the strategies, and interact interpersonally. When there is a breakdown in the organization's people, personally or interpersonally, whether they be in leadership roles or on the frontline, there will be a breakdown in performance and productivity. I thus find it necessary to diagnose the effectiveness quotient of the people who are problematic in the organization with whom I consult and coach.

With regard to the human component, I use the metaphor of a fruit tree to organize my thinking and planning (see Fig. 2). It is:

> Just as a tree must be strong at its trunk and
> healthy at its roots in order to produce its fruit, so
> too must a person be strong at his or her trunk
> (skillful) and, especially, healthy at his or her roots
> (character and personality) in order to produce his
> or her fruit (intended results).

- *Results.* The top of the tree, where the fruit grows, represents the results to be produced. For most organizations, the primary result is profit. Supporting this are any number of subsidiary results that contribute to making a profit. These include such things as exemplary customer service, teamwork, a culture of self-discipline, sales excellence, and a solid strategic plan, among others. Then, there are the results each individual employee is responsible for producing in his or her own individual job, all in support of the above.

- It has surprised me to observe how often the people in an organization are unclear about the results they are expected to produce. I remember coaching customer service to the employees of a company that provided submarine excursions to tourists. They had already absorbed the niceties of saying "good day," answering

Fig. 2 The tree of personal effectiveness

customer questions with a smile, and politely handling disgruntled customers. But, when I asked them why this was important, they were stumped. The idea of generating repeat business, stimulating word-of-mouth advertising, talking up the t-shirts and other souvenirs for sale—i.e. the relationship to acting in these ways in order to increase profit—totally escaped them.

- *Means.* Many people in organizations lack the necessary skills to produce the results they want. These skills are three in number. The first are the professional and technical ones that are industry and job specific. Think of the clinician who must be competent in the techniques of psychotherapy to be effective. The second set of skills are the personal ones (e.g. time management, creative thinking, problem-solving, the ability to manage emotions). The third are the interpersonal ones (e.g., communication, conflict resolution, empathy) that make it possible to work cooperatively with others.

- All three of these are necessary for success. I agree with Daniel Goleman (1997) who noted that the higher one goes up the corporate ladder, the more important are the personal and interpersonal skills and the less important are the technical ones. An enterprising clinician could make a fortune offering such skill training to organizational audiences throughout the world, as exemplified by one of my colleagues who developed a specialty in bringing creative thinking skills to organizational cultures.

- *Source.* I have frequently worked with employees who processed all the necessary skills, but still do not produce their intended results. Most often it's because, at their roots, they are deficient or defective in some aspect of their personality or character. I have identified six core traits that I believe are critical in order for a person to use one's skills to their utmost in order to produce extraordinary performance and results. They are:

  1. *Mental Muscle*—rational thinking, which provides a person the ability to operate free of the contaminating effects of stress, low frustration tolerance, and anger, and to thereby remain clearheaded, stay focused on personal and organizational goals, use good judgment, function cooperatively with others, and persist until results are produced;
  2. *Unconditional Personal Responsibility*—the conviction that one's commitments are sacred, such that a person habitually does what's necessary to produce promised results, despite any and all adverse circumstances;
  3. *Courage*—rational thinking that frees one to act without fear of failure, disapproval, and discomfort, so as to boldly and unabashedly strive to meet one's responsibilities and produce committed results;
  4. *Passionate Purpose*—holding a clear conceptualization of one's purpose in life, then passionately expressing that purpose through one's work, provides profound motivation to act with integrity and do one's best, persist through stress and other roadblocks, and provides fulfillment through and satisfaction with one's work;

5. *Interpersonal Intelligence*—the endorsement of those beliefs that prompt compassion, generosity, and empathy in all interpersonal relationships as a matter of course; and,
6. *Personal Vitality*—holding the conviction to keep physically, emotionally, and interpersonally refreshed and energetic.

As a second part of my organizational diagnosis and strategic planning, then, I assess what problems may exist at each of level of The Tree of Personal Effectiveness with regard to a particular employee in question, an entire unit within an organization, or the organization as a whole. I ask myself:

• Do the organization's people have a clear conception of the results to be produced? Do they see its relevance, appreciate it, align behind it? Does the employees see the relationship between the role he or she plays and the organization's success?
• With regard to the professional, personal, and interpersonal skills needed for the organization to succeed, what are the strengths? What skills need improvement? What skills are lacking?
• What defects or deficiencies exist within the character and personality of the people of the organization that have contributed to the problems? What strategies would be most effective in coaching and or remediating what's missing or defective?

Component Three: The Psychological

It is when the people of an organization reveal personality or character problems at the roots of their tree in Component Two that I then make full use of REBT. It is with regard to this Component Three that I delve into the ABCs of the people with whom I am to work. I first use my clinical skills to make explicit any defective or deficient emotional or behavioral reactions that may be present (the C), any activating events (the A) that may exist, and, especially, the key irrational beliefs (at B) that drive these feelings and behaviors. As we REBTers know, if there are character or personality issues in play, it is irrational thinking that most often drive these reactions.

Accordingly, some of the key questions I ask are the following. What irrational beliefs—perfectionistic self, other, or situation demanding? catastrophizing? low frustration tolerance? self-damning?—drive these character and/or personality problems? What is the best format to remediate them—seminar? workshop? individual coaching? What would be the best method to communicate the REBT process of cognitive-emotive re-education?

Armed with all this diagnostic information, I am now prepared to develop and propose a comprehensive intervention strategy to the organization's decision maker. Once given the go-ahead, I launch my action plan, which I illustrate next. Note that I almost always incorporate REBT principles into my consultation/coaching efforts.

But note also that I will sometimes not explicitly do so, and many times I will buttress it with other tools and techniques.

Organized under the four levels of an organization, what follows are examples of consulting and coaching challenges I have undertaken over the years. I hope they are instructive.

Illustrative Case Studies

A Personal Level Example

Several years ago, the general manager of a bank asked me to help him shore up his leadership team's gutter-level morale. The crisis arose when the previous owner sold the bank to an individual known in the community to be of unsavory character. The team's discouragement and dismay at the prospect of working for this individual was matched only by their apprehension and anger. These feelings not only negatively affected their performance, but seeped down to that of the frontline employees as well.

In a day-long workshop with the leadership team, I set for myself three goals: (1) to rid them of their self-defeating emotional contamination of anxiety and anger; (2) to restore their sense of pride, purpose, and enthusiasm in their jobs; and (3) to convince the general manager of the need for follow-up to keep alive the progress I hoped to make during the day.

In the morning session, I tackled goal one by coaching the team in the use of REBT to identify, challenge, and replace the irrational beliefs that caused their emotional contamination. Though in a group of approximately 20 people, this process took on the appearance of what happens in my clinical office with individual patients: (1) an explication of the team's negative feelings at C, as well as an appreciation of the deleterious effects on job performance of these emotions; (2) the teaching of REBT's ABC model, emphasizing each individual's responsibility for causing his or her own contaminated feelings; (3) the ferreting out the core irrational beliefs at B that caused their emotional contamination—in their case, predominately catastrophizing; (4) an explanation as to why their beliefs were illogical, not grounded in reality, and self-defeating, followed by practice in active disputation at D; and (5) the adoption of new, more effective beliefs at E that removed their adverse emotions.

As with my clinical clients, I met this team's initial resistance with persistence. Through individual conversations held during the lunch break, though, I could tell that this morning's hard work had resulted in a lessening of the team's discouragement and disgruntlement. But I knew this REBT work alone wasn't enough to put them back on track. I planned to accomplish goal two—to rebuild their motivation and enthusiasm to its prior level—in the afternoon session.

To start, I praised them lavishly for their good work that morning. Then I asked them the question I hoped would ignite their rebuilding process: "What is your bank?"

They looked at me with uncomprehending stares, whereupon in rapid succession I asked: "Is it the ATM machines? The safe? The deposit slips? The computers? The currency in the cash drawer? What?"

Still uncomprehending stares.

Then, as emphatically as I could, I said, "Look, people, you're the bank. The bank is you, and all the other people who work alongside you. You operate the machines, use the computers, collect and dispense money, interact with the customers. Your bank is you, the people, not anything else. You are the bank!"

After a pregnant pause, one of the participants practically shouted, "Yeah, we're the damn bank!"

"That's right," I said, as loud as he. "It doesn't matter who financially owns the bank. Its purpose for existence and how you conduct yourselves is up to you to determine, isn't it? He isn't a part of how you meet your responsibilities and act toward your customers. How about you, all of you, decide, right here and now, to reclaim ownership of that."

The room came alive with "Yeah's," "That's right's," and "Alright's."

For the rest of the afternoon I led the team through the process of creating their bank's Purpose Statement, a statement that would hopefully both inspire and excite them, one that would restore to them their pride. By the end of the afternoon, they had produced the following:

Our Sacred Purpose

> To provide extraordinary service to all of
> our customers; to act with honor and integrity at
> all times, in all places, with all people; to be a
> source of pride to our community.

Once completed, I stood next to the flipchart that displayed their Sacred Purpose. Pointing to it, I said: "Look what you've produced today. You should be proud of what you've accomplished. How can you not be honored to be associated with a business that looks like this? So, the last question I have is this: 'Will you come to work every morning, free of worry and anger, and live it?'"

With that, they stood as one and cheered.

This ended the workshop part of the day. I felt satisfied I had affected significant change at the root source of their productivity—their ability to think rationally about the change in ownership, and their endorsement of their personal and collective purpose for running the bank. But I also knew that the enthusiasm generated that day would dissipate unless there was persistent follow-up. As my final chore, I coached the general manager how to devote time and energy to keep both the rational thinking from the morning session and the Sacred Purpose from the afternoon front and center in the minds of his leadership team. That he did.

There are several things of note in this case example. One is the fact that this organization's problem existed at the personnel level, as was its solution. Second, note the significant role that REBT played in restoring the spirit of this leadership team, both directly in the morning session, and then indirectly in the afternoon through the development of the bank's Purpose Statement. And, third, note the importance of my attempt to extend the results obtained that day extended toward the organizational level, as the benefit from that day's effort would only last if supported by organizational policies and practices.

An Interpersonal Level Example

Then there was the hospital vice president who requested that I present a compassion seminar to the personnel of the Oncology Unit, the hospital unit that provided medical care to patients seriously ill with cancer.[1] It seemed that the patients and their families rated this unit very low on their quarterly satisfaction surveys. They wrote such a scathing comments as: "We are not people to you, only bodies." "You herd us in and herd us out." "You treat my disease, but not me."

I readily agreed to take on this challenge. But knew full well that compassion could not be taught in a seminar through traditional cognitive methods. I explained to the vice-president that I would instead devise a series of participatory processes designed to raise the staff's consciousness about the special experiences and needs of their patients. I told her that I hoped these would significantly increase the compassion quotient in every staff member on the unit, from the medical doctors down to the janitorial staff.

Process One served to identify whom the unit staff was hired to serve. As expected, they identified the patients and their families, but they also listed each other, other units within the hospital, and the community at large. I felt pleased that they not only earmarked the medical professional-patient relationship, but the other interpersonal ones as well.

Process Two jumped right into the heart of consciousness raising. I divided the participants into four smaller groups and charged each one with the task of brainstorming what the patients most wanted and needed from them along four dimensions: (1) their bodies, (2) their minds, (3) their hearts, and (4) their spirits. As they worked, I crossed my fingers that they'd deliver.

And they did. Each group identified a number of things the patient wanted for their bodies and minds, but the list for their hearts and spirits exceeded those at least fivefold. The unit now had visual proof that their patients wanted caring, concern, and, yes, compassion far more than they wanted pills and procedures. I thrilled when the unit manager exclaimed: "Wow, we spend ninety percent of our effort on

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[1] I previously described this consultation in my book, *Developing Unrelenting Drive, Dedication, and Determination: A Cognitive Behavior Workbook,* published by Routledge in 2017.

the mind and body, but ninety percent of what our patients want is for their hearts and spirits." Bingo!

In *Process Three*, the unit then created their Oncology Unit Purpose Statement to guide their future behavior. Though I made a point to never mention the word "compassion" at anytime throughout the day, they arrived at it entirely on their own. Here it is:

Oncology Unit Purpose Statement

We, the staff of the Oncology unit, believe that all patients have a broad range of needs, all of which must be met. These include the nurturing of the body, mind, heart and soul.

> **FOR THE BODY:** *They need comfort, safety, and competent nursing care.*
> **FOR THE MIND:** *They need specific, pertinent information communicated in terms that can be understood.*
> **FOR THE HEART:** *They need acceptance, respect, compassion, encouragement, hope, honesty, and a sense of trust in their caregivers.*
> **FOR THE SOUL:** *They may need the opportunity for spiritual and professional support in order to accept the present and prepare for the future.*

Recognizing the extent and complexity of Oncology patient needs, we acknowledge that we must combine professional **competency** *with personal* **compassion.** *We therefore commit to the following standards to guide our actions and decisions.*

> *COMPETENCY*
>
> *WE WILL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN:*

- *Accurate technical skills*
- *Oncology specific knowledge base*
- *Physical assessment skills*
- *Efficient time management*
- *Teaching skills for patients, families, and the community*
- *Consistent communications with all members of the healthcare team*

> *COMPASSION*
>
> *WE WILL PROVIDE:*

- *Empathetic support*
- *Patent/family advocacy*
- *Timely responses to patient requests*
- *Active listening without judgment*
- *Hope and encouragement*
- *Assistance in achieving optimal quality of life*
- *Honest communication with patients and their families*

Inner Quality		**Organizational Practice**
Unconditional Personal Responsibility	⟶	Building a Culture of Self-Discipline
Personal Purpose	⟶	Organizational Purpose, Vision and Strategic Planning
Courage	⟶	Building a Culture of Boldness and Risk Taking
Interpersonal Intelligence	⟶	Building Trust and Teamwork
Mental Muscle	⟶	Emotional Control and Self-Discipline
Renewal	⟶	Managing Organizational Change

Fig. 3 Leadership qualities and organizational practices

Process Four served to integrate the Oncology Unit Purpose Statement into the fabric of the unit's daily activities. I had the staff review a typical day and identify those "moments of truth" when an opportunity presented itself to act with compassion—to the patients, their family, at each other.

Process Five directed the unit to brainstorm and implement ways to maintain compassion as a by-product of the unit's culture. Here are three things they did: they put a framed copy of their Purpose in every room on the unit for constant reminder; they devoted one staff meeting a month to discussing the quality of their heart and spirit behavior; they made competence and compassion an integral part of their hiring, promotion, and annual review process.

I am happy to report that this consultation-coaching effort met with tremendous success. That unit received excellent patient marks on their next quarterly review and maintained them through the next 2 years. Of special note is the fact that I never trained the staff in interpersonal communication skills at their tree's trunk. Rather, all the work was done at the root source of extraordinary performance and results—the character and personality of those in the unit, specifically with regard to their new belief in the profound purpose their work represented.

I will add one more comment. Though this consultation did not make explicit use of the ABCs of REBT, the focus of my whole effort was to instill a new, profound belief system into the minds of the entire Oncology Unit staff. So, with my thrust being to impact the interpersonal level of this organization, the core beliefs of each individual staff member, at their roots, was always the focus of making that happen.

A Leadership Level Example

I remind the reader of the metaphor of the fruit tree presented earlier. In my opinion, leadership is much more than a series of tactical skills and practices at the tree's trunk. Rather, it is a supreme human activity emanating from deep within a person at one's roots.

Accordingly, when I coach individual leaders or consult with an organization to provide leadership training, I first teach the underlying character and personality qualities that prompt how one thinks, acts, and decides across situations, then coach them in the use of the requisite skills and tactics that emanate from these personal characteristics. Figure 3 illustrates the six core leadership traits of personality and character, each matched with a mirror organizational practice.

With regard to leadership coaching, I recall the Research Director of a Pharmaceutical Company, a chemical engineer, who was about to be fired because of his trigger-happy temper and disdainful behavior toward both peers and subordinates alike. He needed coaching in Mental Muscle. Then there was the company president who had lost the trust and goodwill of his management team because of his persistent failure to act with integrity—failing to honor his promises and commitments, playing favorites among his direct reports, shading the truth when it suited him. I coached him in the paradigm of Unconditional Personal Responsibility. Finally, let me share the story of the regional sales manager who fell into a depression because he no longer found meaning in his work. Creating and connecting with his Personal Purpose helped him regain both his emotional health and his work passion. Notice the profound cognitive-philosophical changes, al la REBT, I attempted to instill in each of these people.

With regard to leadership consulting, I think of a two-day workshop devoted to Unconditional Personal Responsibility I delivered to a management team within the United States Department of Education, a one-day Mental Muscle program for the leadership team of a federally-funded radio telescope observatory that was riddled with anger and resentment, and the six one-day workshops that provided the entire leadership package to resort hotels, manufacturing plants, and medical practices. For each of these client companies, I trained them in the inner qualities at the root source of leadership excellence and then taught the skills and practices that transfer these qualities concretely into the work setting.

An Organizational Level Example

I can think of no better example of consulting and coaching at the organizational level than the work I did with a family-owned construction company.[2] At the request of its president, I led a day-long workshop whose goal was to solve the problem of their lagging productivity.

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[2] This case study can also be found in my 2017 book, *Developing Unrelenting Drive, Dedication, and Determination: A Cognitive Behavior Workbook,* published by Routledge in 2017.

I started the process by asking them to "identify the major problems that have kept your company from being the best it can be." They came up with seven.

Then the fun began. I went down the list and, for each, asked, "How long has this problem existed?"

They chorused to each, "Forever."

My next question nailed the source of the problem. "What's wrong with this picture?"

When no one answered, I gathered myself and said: "Here's what's wrong. These problems have held you back from being as productive as you can be. You've been aware of them forever. You're the leadership team. And you've not acted to fix them."

They sat stunned.

Then I taught them an organizational problem-solving model before spending the rest of the day creating solutions to each of the seven identified barriers to their company's success. With that, I accomplished what this company hired me to do: identify and solve the problems that brought about their lagging productivity. As a bonus, they also learned a problem-solving method they could use on their own in the future.

But, more significant, this construction company revealed a weakness at the root source of their productivity: an organizational culture absent of the character trait of unconditional personal responsibility. At the end of the day, I sat down with the president and drew for him the Tree of Personal Effectiveness. I explained that we had done a good job at his company's trunk of his company's tree, but that he had a deeper, more serious problem at its roots. I went on to educate him about the importance of integrating unconditional personal responsibility into the fabric of his company's culture. "That would be profound change," I said.

Surprisingly, he immediately signed on, whereupon I spent the next several months consulting with his company to do just that. Here are the major steps I took with them on their journey.

1. I trained everyone in the organization—first the leadership team, then everyone else all the way down to the field foreman and the construction workers—in, first, REBT's ABC Model, and, second, at B, in the paradigm of Unconditional Personal Responsibility. At each workshop, the president told the employees that this new principal would guide everything done from this day forward.
2. I coached the leadership team in conducting a ruthless inventory of where unconditional personal responsibility broke down within their organization—that is, where excuses instead of results were given and tolerated. We started with the company's policies, procedures, and practices, then investigated the leadership team's behavior itself, and then the people, procedures, and practices throughout the organization. Once pockets of personal irresponsibility were identified, corrective action was taken.
3. I coached them in instituting a no excuses policy. What this meant was that, once a commitment was made to produce a result, excuses for not producing that result would not be tolerated.

4. I trained those in leadership roles to be unconditional personal responsibility coaches. When an employee failed to keep a commitment, coaching was conducted to elevate that person sense of personal responsibility. It was decided that these those who did not respond accordingly would be terminated.

5. I coached the leadership team to institute the practice of making promises. Whenever a task was assigned, the person delegating the task asked two questions: (1) "Do you understand the result to be produced?" (2) "Will you promise to produce it?" The conversation would not be completed at until a "yes" answer was obtained and a follow-up meeting was scheduled to check up on the result.

Guidelines to Organizational Consulting and Coaching

As these case examples illustrate, there are significant differences between working with clinical patients and the people in organizations. I now offer some guidelines that have helped me successfully make the transition from my therapy office to the business setting.

1. While the clinician's focus is on the emotional well-being of the patient, the organizational consultant/coach must focus on to the success of the business—its performance, productivity, and profit. While desirable on a human level, relieving emotional distress or dysfunctional behavior is only relevant with regard to helping the organization produce these outcomes. This may not seem humane, but it's true.

2. As couples in distress often do, organizations often think that the solution to their problem is skill development, such as being taught communication, conflict resolution, or diversity skills. I know, however, that in the organizational arena, as well as in the couple arena, there is likely to be underlying issues of character and personality—and irrational ways of thinking—that will need to be addressed so that people will be able to effectively use the skills taught. To say it another way, REBT plays a significant role in just about every consulting/coaching effort.

3. People in organizational settings tend to be less interested in theory, research, and philosophical concepts than straightforward, hard-hitting, results-oriented strategies and perspectives. They want actionable help. Accordingly, it is wise for the consultant or coach to talk straight-arrow, without jargon or psychobabble. Similarly, when conducting workshops, minimize lecturing and maximize participatory exercises, including role-playing, pithy demonstrations, and brainstorming sessions that lead to immediate and useful action. To sum, be hands-on, concrete, and practical.

4. I am convinced that the foundation of all successful psychotherapy is for the therapist to have and act on a clear conception of the nature of what it means to be human. The ABC model provides that for me. Similarly, it is critical for an organizational consultant or coach to likewise possess a clear conception of the core

personality of an organization. That likewise provides the basis for a clear and complete understanding of the cause of the organization's dysfunction, how a problem in one part of an organization can ripple through and create problems elsewhere, a guide to prioritize action strategies for remediation, a template to measure success, and, not to be overlooked, a basis for the hiring agent to understand the relevance and significance of what you, the consultant/coach, is doing and why.

5. A unique feature in REBT is the concept of elegant change. This has to do with correcting core irrational beliefs and paradigms that create emotional and/or behavioral problems, as opposed to inelegantly calming down aroused emotions through such palliative techniques such as deep muscle relaxation, correcting situationally-specific faulty perceptions, or fixing some troublesome life situation. The goal is to leave the patient so rationally-minded that he or she will not be disturbed in the future should similar circumstances again arise.

   The parallel in an organizational setting is when the consultant or coach is asked to resolve a specific problem or teach as specific skills, but observes that there exists some underlying problems of personality, character, or culture that, unless remediated, will continue to cause problems down the road. To underline the point, character and personality issues are almost always part and parcel of organizational dysfunction and most often must be addressed along with problem solving in order to bring about elegant organizational change.

6. I advocate that the consultant/coach be a proactive change leader, not just a reactive facilitator. As intelligent and knowledgeable as organizational clients may be about their industry, they most likely are unsophisticated in our area of expertise; that is, they don't know what they don't know, and, most often, don't even know that they don't know what they don't know. Accordingly, like with the practice of REBT, be active, directive, and authoritative in guiding your organizational clients to where they need to go.

7. A last guideline is a marketing one. Inevitably, when working within an organization, I will notice other consultative/coaching needs that they have in addition to the one I was invited in to address. As a small business owner, I make it a practice to never leave a project without meeting with the decision-maker. In addition to reviewing what I did within the organization and any feedback about the people with whom I worked (without, of course, betraying confidences), I also point out other needs and suggest how I may be of help in resolving them. I urge you to do that same.

Final Comments

I want to conclude this chapter by communicating how fortunate I have been to have integrated organizational consulting and coaching into my professional life. It has added an extra layer of intellectual stimulation to that my practice of REBT has provided, not to mention that I have almost found it impossible to spend a day

feeling professionally bored. There has always been a new and fascinating challenge to tackle, new people to meet, and new opportunities for my own growth and development.

Beyond that, my REBT perspective has provided me at least three distinct benefits in my work with organizations. First, it has made me appreciate how individuals in the workplace and even entire organizations defeat themselves by their endorsement of irrational beliefs. A second is to underscore the importance of eradicating and replacing their faulty beliefs and paradigms so as to bring about elegant, long-lasting organizational change. Third, REBT has schooled me to be active, directive, informative, fact-based, and bold in my work with organizations, qualities highly valued by the results-oriented businessperson.

Suggested Readings

I strongly urge anyone interested in providing consulting and coaching services to organizations familiarize themselves with the following resources.

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Couple Coaching

Pedro Reyes Mispireta and Rossana Bringas Putnam

This chapter will present how REBT theory can enhance your understanding of couple problems and how Rational Emotive Behavior Coaching (REBC) offers very powerful practices for helping improve the relationship of couples experiencing difficulties.

We began to explore the RECB coaching 20 years ago when we worked with many couples asking for help to improve their relationship and to avoid separation or unhappiness. It is well known that a very high percentage of marriages end up in divorce. Just in USA, 1989 research findings revealed that chances of divorce were of 50–67% (Castro-Martín & Bumpass, 1989).

Many years ago we understood that most marriages and all kind of romantic relationships, begin with high levels of expectations, but many of them will end full of bitterness and resentment; however, when relationships last, is usually because both members in the relationship have worked hard in order to maintain and recover harmony and understanding between them.

Marital problems such as continuous fighting, the feeling of marital unhappiness, the continual threats of breaking up, infidelity, family violence, lack of affection and understanding within a relationship, even the absence of the loved one for periods of time are events full of tension and are the major causes of stress (Holmes & Rahe, 1966). Despite this reality, people enter a relationship full of expectations hoping, in many cases, to live happily ever after.

We have to accept that leaving aside parenting, couple's relationships possess high levels of personal demand. What else do we expect if not something extraordinary from the love of our life? From the loved one and our couple relationship, we expect nothing more and nothing less than the best thing that life could give us. All this enthusiasm for having a stable partner for a long time, unconditional love, high doses of romance, sex, companionship, and even a valuable

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partner in our social, economic and family projects, has a high cost and a high risk, and it could not be less than that. Maybe, this is why so many people who function rationally outside of their relationships behave different with their partner; why usually friendly and peaceful people become violent and explosive; why people who are usually safe and confident become suspicious and possessive; why people who are independent become dependent. When members of a relationship invest a lot of energy in order to get mutual validation and they fail to do so, positive energy changes toward hostility, lack of trust, one or both members feel trapped in a nobody wins game. It then becomes very difficult to go back to healthy interactions. When the seeds of discord and unfilled expectations begin to flower, that is when a couple needs the professional help of a coach.

The Unique Challenges and Realities of Couple Coaching

Although it is true that human suffering is closely linked to people's expectations, beliefs, and life demands (Ellis, 1974), the expectations and beliefs about couple life are not beliefs, which are easy to renounce to or reformulate. Perhaps, when someone faces reality it makes sense to adapt to it, you can't negotiate with reality. But reality in couples means "our reality", that kind of reality that both members have to build, together. It is an open negotiation, it continues and never ends. There are various levels of negotiation, practical (How we will manage our economy?) and emotional (Do you really care?); it is about responsibilities (What is good parenting?) and recreational time (What we do this weekend?) implies sexual issues (What is good sex?) and every area of adult life, values, live style, standards in daily living. What kind of reality will a couple build? For each member to adapt to his/her partner's view of love and live, and to convince his/her partner to adapt to his/her personal view of love and live, is a real challenge, maybe the most important challenge of his/her live.

These are many of the questions that one member has to deal with, to what extent should I expect love, interest and motivation from my partner? What goals do I have to give up for the relationship? How will couples agree on priorities? If my partner is already happy with this status, should I give up aspiring to a better relationship? To a better communication, to a better quality of interaction? How and who sets the limits? When and where my expectations, my beliefs and demands are acceptable and when are they not?

A very important issue inside a relationship, is the emotional connection: How close is close enough? On the other hand, how much space does a couple need to be still connected but not suffocated? Who decides those limits? For both members of the couple, the answers to these questions demand a never end conversation and interactions, many times those interactions are very sophisticated maneuvers that imply multilevel communication, they give them a sign of how far they can love and be loved. But that can generate, and in fact generates many

misunderstandings, misinterpretations, power struggles, emotional explosions and difficult negotiations and, of course, many bitter outcomes. A couple easily falls in a nobody wins game.

Albert Ellis' View on Couple Problems

Ellis discusses that irrational beliefs, which people assume as irrefutable truths, are linked to human disturbance. In core beliefs about love and marriage, each member comes with individual differences, beliefs, preferences, and emotional and communications skills, these aspects bring different levels of resistance, but there are dyadic factors that add a new dimension to work on. Ellis wrote many articles and books about couples' relationships explaining these dyadic phenomena.

> *"In other words, the disturbed marital interaction takes places when one of the partners does not react well to the normal frustrations and the abnormal and irrational demands of the other partner, at the same time that behavior reinforces the frustration and demands, therefore the other partner also reacts deficiently to the partners rational and irrational demands, increase reduced frustration tolerance and generating rage in both partners"*
> (Ellis & Grieger, 1981)

Ellis distinguishes 'couple dissatisfaction' from 'couple disturbance.' Couple dissatisfaction comes from faulty assumptions as well as unrealised and unfulfilled wishes, desires and preferences myths, fantasies regarding love and marriage. Assumptions such as "Romantic love will sustain my relationship" or "If my partner loves me, she must know what I want without me having to tell her", or "My partner will be very patient and tolerant of my behaviors even though they may not be right" create dissatisfaction because they create discrepancies between those fantasies, assumptions and reality. Ellis points out that these dissatisfactions do not necessarily imply that partners are disturbed and they could be corrected by "constructive renegotiation of roles and responsibilities" (Ellis & Dryden, 1997).

Ellis explains how a relationship dissatisfaction becomes a relationship disturbance. This occurs when "the partners give themselves an emotional problem about the problem of dissatisfaction" (Ellis & Dryden, 1997). The way they do this according to Ellis is when they make their desires, wishes, wants and preferences they hold about their partner rigid, dogmatic and absolute demands ("Because I prefer my partner to treat me in a certain way, s/he must"). Irrational self-depreciation of one or both partners creates disturbance when s/he does not receive the love and approval perceived as being an absolute necessity.

Ellis pointed out that when one or both members, hold irrational demands and self-depreciation, then make themselves anxious, angry, hostile, hurt, depressed, jealous, guilty, and others emotional disturbances. Partners with an emotional disturbance tend to behave in dysfunctional ways, these C's become the A for the other party, who reacts with demands and other irrational beliefs to this A, therefore a negative cycle forms. Ellis uses the term "double system" (Ellis & Grieger, 1981;

Ellis & Grieger, 1990; Ellis & Dryden, 1997) to explain the approach of REBT applied to couples. According to Ellis, we must understand the interaction of emotions and cognitions as connected events, where the emotional reactions of each member become the activating event (A) of the other. Ellis insists that we see this double system as a whole system in its own right, with its own dynamic, such as rules, roles, emotional circuits and cognitive interactions, with attributions, expectations, interpretations, and core beliefs.

What Is Rational Emotive Couples Coaching?

The word 'coaching' comes from the old Latin word 'cucceta' meaning car, in other terms, a car which takes passengers to their destination. I like to explain Rational Emotive Couple's coaching as a resource that takes its members to their destination.

Rational Emotive Couples Coaching is a didactic psychoeducational approach, which is structured in goals, and focused on both members' personal development in terms of (1) emotional awareness and regulation, and (2) interpersonal skills, such as empathy, acceptance, communication, all of the above applied to couples issues.

Rational Emotive Couples Coaching and Rational Emotive Individual Coaching

RECC is not an extended application of the individual REBT therapy model of the ABC's, even though it incorporates aspects of the REBT theory and practice of emotional regulation. RECC applies specific strategies and concepts for couples which are not suitable for individual work. Specifically, RECC uses the analysis of the double system and promotes the modification of interactions; for example, building circuits of mutual gratification and reciprocal reinforcement, promoting mutual empathy and kindness, acceptance and tolerance. Coaching using rational emotive model does not determine the future of the relationship, although certain circuits that are predictor of separation or divorce may exist (Gottman, 1999). It is the couple that decides the future of the relationship.

Case Study of REBC: The Double System

Let's look at how John and Carla interact. They have been married for a couple of years and have two children: one who is 6 years old and the other one who is four. Both have been together for about 8 years: this includes the time that they have been dating each other and the time of how long they have been married. While they were dating, John and Carla were very happy, very friendly, and very loving; but during

the past 5 years, they have been discussing issues in a rougher manner and with more drama. They have even been physically separated for a period of more than 3 weeks. Carla asked John to leave the house. Both come to coaching because they have picked up their relationship again. In order to examine how they handle their agreements and disagreements, they were asked to explain a situation of what happens between the two of them.

When John observes his wife while she is interacting with their children, he is often convinced that she does not enjoy her role as a mother. She doesn't have the patience (an interpretation and an attribution) required, and she should be more dedicated and take more care in her interactions with their children (demand). His selective attention may emphasize those aspects that confirm his hypotheses. For example, he may point out, with a high pitch of annoyance (emotion) in his voice that the child is crying and that she should calm him/her down. Let's point out that given the fact that he has an irrational belief that generates expectations in him ("Women should be excellent mothers and should not make their children suffer"), he feels a lot of anger towards his wife (couple disturbance), which he will express to her in a reproachful manner.

At the same time, his wife may severely disagree with this interpretation. She may think that her husband is exaggerating and that it is he who lacks patience and is intolerant regarding the upbringing of their children: "He doesn't tolerate the slightest noise the children make" (interpretation and attribution) and he should be more patient (demandingness leading to disturbance. Unlike her husband, she thinks that being a parents and teaching children emotional regulation skills requires having to model patience and tolerate children crying believing it is good for children to eventually should calm down by themselves. She also gets very angry when he rebukes her in front of their children instead of supporting her ("He should be more respectful and supportive"—a demanding belief). Then, John berates Carla that she prefers to fix something to eat than to calm the children down, and he does so very angrily. And Carla reacts with equal or more anger scolding him that he should not admonish her in front of their children that she is not preparing something to eat for herself, but for the children. John reacts by shouting more and yelling expressions such as: "Don't pretend", "Don't fake it", "Accept the fact that you were being neglectful". After a brief exchange of complaints and shouts, they sit down to eat. Each one ruminating his/her annoyance and feeling hurt.

When John and Carla are in bed later on and he approaches her by caressing her back, she interprets that as that he wants to have sex after having argued over the children. The interpretation she makes is: "He should know better than to have sex with me tonight." Then, she "energetically" withdraws his hand according to Carla, "violently" according to John, and on his part, he thinks it was clear that he was lovingly touching her, "I'm lovingly touching her to calm things down and I get rejected" ("She should not reject me, she should be more serene and accept my affection"). John abruptly turns around and moves away from Carla. At this point in the session, John complains that they "never" have sex, Carla protests and he corrects himself and states that they do have sex but infrequently, and that Carla is always rejecting him. Carla points out that she is tired at night because John does not help with the children even though they both work.

The next morning, John tells Carla that he is going to a concert with his former university friends. She thinks: "He knows that I would like to go. Why does he prefer to be with his friends instead of with me? He's getting even with me because we didn't have sex. He should treat me better. I'll show him!". Then Carla answers back that he can do whatever he wants, that she will then go on a trip with her friends, and goes into the bathroom to take a shower. She forcibly closes the bathroom door. John gets angry and they start arguing. They both attack each other, saying very hurtful things, "I shouldn't have married you", "so divorce me then, if I am so bad for you" and so on, using that tone of voice. Carla ends up crying in the bathroom and John goes into the living room. Then Carla asks him to leave the house. John packs his suitcase and leaves. And although this time they were physically separated, they have had several previous discussions in the same tones of voice.

After a few weeks of poor communication, both agree to return to live together again and take up couples coaching. While they are searching for somebody to help them out, the tensions have returned which they cannot overcome. John points out that Carla "does not know how to educate the children as she should", that she is "she shouldn't be so interested in her work than in the couple and in the family" and that she shows little interest in him and his needs. He never knows when they will have sex. That this is very tense for him and that he is surprised that "she is not concerned about this". Carla has won some awards and recognitions at work that have motivated her and she resents the fact that her husband "prefers for her not to be successful in her workplace" and that "other people value her and congratulate her for her achievements, but that does not happen at home" (John has had some problems at work and lost his job, though he has recently found another job), that she would enjoy sex if her husband would treat her better and it would help her to feel less tired, if he would help with the caring for their children, and taking care of more domestic issues. In addition, in his own words John: "never recognizes anything she does to support the family—as he should."

If we look carefully, we will see how disagreements and dissent could be better handled in John and Carla's case, so that they can mutually comfort each other and give each other relief instead of accusing and complaining about each other, in the face of the stressful situations that they face. But as their irrational intrapersonal processes keep escalating, their interactions deteriorate.

Here are some important aspects of their dynamic system that are important to point out.

1. Carla and John's dynamics show how perception—interpretation—demand—emotion—behavior schemes escalate from a simple disagreement to a conflict that threatens the stability of the relationship. Carla and John go through stressful situations, raising children. Each partner expects (or demands) from the other a behavior more in line with his/her expectations, so that it be more in line with his/her values or in order to be more empathetic, more serene and more supportive. But which does not take place. Then there is an emotional reaction because they interpret that their spouse's attitude as unacceptable. They attack

each other in their way of being, and they feel that they are being disqualified or censored through their partner's distant or cold attitude. A negative circuit of interaction is created. In the role of mutual attributions, in John, on the one hand, his convictions that Carla is not interested in the couple's life (she's not worried about our sex life) and she is less worried about our family life (she lets the children cry without seeking to comfort them), affect both in his attention processes collecting facts that validate these observations and his complaints directly attack Carla. Carla, on the other hand, when she is accused of not being a good mother or wife, counterattacks. Let's remember that disagreements regarding the different facets of a couple's life are very normal and frequent. In the case of Carla and John it is about the upbringing. The fact that he thinks that his wife does not execute her role as a mother well is equally valid. It's possible that her interaction with her children can be improved, and it is also very reasonable for her to ask that John not admonish her in front of their children. John could have given clearer signals that he only wanted to give her affection and he could even also respond more calmly to Carla's abrupt reaction, thereby giving a more persistent message of conciliation, while Carla could be less abrupt and accept the affection that John is trying to give to her.

2. It's very evident that they are unaware of their beliefs. Each one of them presumes his/her interpretation to be fact. For example, something very different could have taken place if John had doubted his attribution during the interpretation: "Maybe Carla has some good reason for doing what she's doing. Maybe there's something I do not know about? Maybe I should ask questions before judging?" A similar situation could occur with Carla. Let's suppose she reacts by trying to calm down the circumstances. For example, "John cares about the well-being of our children. It's his way of supporting me. I understand that it may seem that I am not interested in our child's crying and that I may have to explain it to him in a calmer way". In the bedroom scene, too, Carla could have nicely pointed out, by taking John's hand, that she's tired and thus minimizing the sense of rejection. Or John, in the face of Carla's abrupt reaction, could have accepted her reaction more calmly, or he could have simply not reacted at all.

3. This way of reacting would have given each one a better option to adjust to their own emotions. Disagreements give rise to conflict when both react intensely with emotions full of rage, and rejection to demands of the following type: "His behavior is really awful, I cannot stand it" "How can it be that you do/think/feel/stop doing/do not think about this?" Neither John nor Carla set or invite circumstances to take things more calmly. And, on the contrary, each one acts "automatically", firing attacks in their defense, overlooking the emotional language with which they confront their differences. In the negative circuit of emotions, when each partner is being defensive and demands something from the other partner, each improper response to one of the partners brings a stronger response from the other one. And their attempts to remedy problems, attacking his/her partner's attitudes or characteristics can be counterproductive. Often, the biggest problem is not the problem itself, in this case the difficulties of raising children, but the way Carla and John confront the problems.

4. Just as there is no individual regulation of each partner's negative emotions, neither do the interpersonal regulators of empathy, acceptance (validation), and compassion (kindly and caringly treating each other) surface. When one goes through a negative emotion, the other person reacts negatively as well, increasing the cycle of unpleasant interactions.

Rational Emotive Couples Coaching and Rational Emotive Couples therapy

There are similarities and differences between RECC and RECT. The similarities are in the ABC double system concepts, both conceive the generation of emotions related to cognitions and interpretations, beliefs and demands. Both procedures use cognitive restructuring as an important issue to develop emotional regulation. There is a professional consensus which states that RECC is more focused on the prevention of disturbances and the resolution of marital dissatisfaction and that RECT is more focused on the emotional disturbance of the couple. Sometimes a couple who seems to be looking for coaching needs therapy and vice versa. We have to remember that marital problems are not mental health problems. Even though marital problems may be associated with mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and addictions, have their own nature. They can appear in relationships in which none of the members present mental problems. In other words, marital dissatisfaction, which include a wide range of topics such as emotional disconnection, communication troubles, power struggles, sexual dissatisfactions, values conflicts, problems in handling and overcoming disagreements, emotional explosions in hard arguments and fights, verbal abuse and violence, and more, those problems do not necessarily mean that the members of the couple has a clinical diagnosis or mental health problem.

As Ellis pointed out (Ellis & Dryden, 1997), there are two types of couples who look for help. Couples who are dissatisfied and couples who are disturbed. The difference is determined by the intensity of conflict, and individual differences. One or both members could have mental health problems that may or may not be related to the marital conflict.

REBC Skills for Professionals Who Wants to Coach Couples

Working with couples is not the same as working with individual clients. Couple work require unique skills, which may require a specific training. Some of the skills needed to work with couples are the following.

• Identify when s/he is faced with a couple problem or with an individual problem. Also to determine which aspect of the problem we should approach as individual work and which aspect to couples work.
• Generate alliance in with members. Most professionals are trained to establish an alliance with one person. However, in order to do that with two people at the

same time requires other skills such as a higher self-awareness, needed to neutralize cognitive and affective biases, as well as countertransference issues.

- Be balanced. It is very easy to lose the image of impartiality and empathy when working with couples. That is why the professional will need to have a higher level of empathy and credibility, the ability to show empathy towards two individuals' emotions and interactions at the same time. We need to stay close but impartial, fair but not distant. We need to have the ability to recover alliance. We need to understand that we are working with people who are in conflict, in stress and predisposes to aggressive reactions and demand lots of support, because they are afraid of losing allies.
- Conceptualize the case understanding either the dyadic or contextual ABC of its members and be able to explain this Double System to them, in a way that can make sense to both parties. We need to be able to see the dynamics of the relationship from a Rational Emotive Systemic perspective, understand the circuit of emotions, beliefs and interpretations, as well as the behaviors of both members.

  - Predict relapses and take advantage of them for the sake of better understanding, knowing how to awaken and maintain hope and optimism in both members.
  - Propose and manage a work plan aimed at changing the quality of the interaction. To be able to establish the goals and the different roles of each member in this plan.
  - Propose tasks and exercises that can help the couple on their way to understanding.
  - Handle crisis and re-route the process.
  - Teach the principles of the RECC in a Socratic way for both members in order to advance in self-awareness and emotional self-regulation.
  - Teach self-awareness and emotional self-regulation, their beliefs and interpretations and their behaviors, especially those that are counterproductive.
  - Teach self-acceptance, empathy, communication skills in both members.
  - Guide the couple in their mourning, when the process reaches a resolution of breakage, to be able to help these separation process be the least disturbing possible, trying to prevent the perpetuation of problems beyond separation or divorce.

Goals for Intervention

Rational emotive couples coaching looks to obtain the following general goals:

1. The development of metacognition of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes so that each member of the couple can observe their emotions and their beliefs, relativizing them as preferences and not as dogmas, and observing their reaction patterns in a very particular way, so that each party understands their deepest irrational beliefs about love and the couple's relationship.
2. Each party needs to develop a highly emotional regulation, that is, that each one becomes more conscious of emotions, and that s/he regulates these better, especially, in high conflict and tension situations.

3. The couple needs to develop a metacognition of its processes of mutual interaction, that is, how each one of them interprets, feels, and acts in an interaction situation. That is, each one needs to understand this interpersonal circularity which has been previously understood.

4. The exchange of gratifications between the two parties, in terms of gestures, actions, and attitudes generating a sense of trust, closeness, and mutual affection needs to increase.

5. Each party needs to develop a high dose of acceptance, empathy, and compassion toward their partner. Acceptance means the absence of demands (shoulds) and an open attitude to individual differences, demands have the opposite effect to that of motivating change, on the contrary, they promote change and emotional regulation. Albert Ellis repeatedly expressed the formula of unconditional acceptance as a regulatory mechanism for one's own emotions, as well as those of the other person. Empathy is one of the fundamental mechanisms which promote the development of the couple's relationship and well-being. Empathy seems to be the biggest challenge of a couple relationship. It requires the development of a great deal of self-awareness and understanding of other people's emotions, beliefs, and perspectives. This is much harder to acquire when one is much more focused on being understood in his/her own emotional needs or when one is being defensive trying to prove to his/her partner that one is not an inadequate or inappropriate person. To develop empathy, it is necessary to promote a more serene and calm atmosphere. Empathy has extremely positive effects, even for one's own emotional self-regulation and communication. When a party develops high levels of empathy, s/he can understand when s/he is entering a minefield, when his/her partner is affected, susceptible, and suspicious, and to direct interaction outside these dangerous fields or, better yet, to help with his/her understanding so that the other person can better calm down and can also lower his/her defenses. Decades of psychotherapy have shown that the therapist's empathic attitude helps regulate the emotions of the other person and lower his/her defenses (Hoffman, 2016). An important goal of couples coaching is to train both parties in empathy.

   Compassion is defined as the decision to offer kindness and friendliness to oneself and to others. In the last decades, many approaches have pointed out compassion as central factor of well-being (Gilbert, 2015; Hayes, et al., 2012). Ellis had already pointed out the importance of kindness and appreciation for a relationship to work (Ellis, 2000).

Steps and Processes

In this section, we will explain how to organize the intervention; how to put in order the evolution of the stages as of the reception of clients to the process of change; how to organize both the couple's sessions as well as the individual sessions; and the various topics related to the intervention.

1. How to build the alliance: agenda of the first interview
2. The gathering of information for goal formulation

3. Checking motivation and commitment
4. Plan preparation
5. Implementing the plan and managing difficulties regarding change
6. Taking care of the coaching process and how to prepare oneself to intervene in crises and relapses

How to Build the Alliance: Agenda of the First Interview

The first strategy of rational emotive couple coaching is to ensure that the coach is accepted by both parties as a reliable and credible participant, whom each party can rely on. In couples coaching forming a trusting relationship is a challenge and can present difficulties. When it comes to couples, the alliance with the couple presents greater challenges than in individual coaching or therapy. When requesting the initial appointment, each member of the couple expects the coach to be his/her ally who will help him/her overcome the resistance of their partner to change. This is a secret aspiration that each party has. On the other hand, there is also the fear that the coach might take the side of the other party, that s/he becomes an ally with him/her, and that the interventions become unfavorable to him/her. Therefore, the intervention for alliance re-state must start from the moment of the coaching request. Coaches needs to consider and answer the following questions: who was the first one to call for an appointment? Did he or she make the appointment by mutual agreement? Is there a reluctant party? Has one of them reluctantly accepted the process? The coach's strategy will adapt to the answers s/he finds for these questions. Each party will be very attentive to the position that the coach takes on in front of him or her. He or she will look for signals which tell them that it is safe to trust the coach.

It is suggested that, even at the time of the request for coaching, the coach should propose to talk to both partners at the same time. Ideally, the coach will prefer to have joint sessions from the outset and will seek to request that the first meeting be with both parties. If this cannot take place, then it is important to have two individual sessions, one with each party so that trust develops in each member.

The First Coaching Interview

The first personal encounter with the couple is extremely important. If the coach was careful when the request and the contact calls were made, then the coach has already started on a better foot. It is, from then on, that the coach will seek to generate empathy with them, understand their points of view, and their emotions until s/he has been accepted as a coach who understands well what each one is going through. At this point, the most important thing is to maintain an active-directive attitude and to conduct the interventions in an empathic and equitable way. It is also very important to collect crucial information for the conceptualization (wording) of the problem that the coach will offer to both parties as a general interpretation

framework that helps to generate a road map that must be followed for that particular process.

The coach should have a balanced empathy strategy and should be well aware of the impact of his/her interventions, attitudes, and emotions towards each party. S/he should never assume that s/he has already attained the necessary level of trust, as it is very fragile, and must be reinforced or rebuilt at all times.

In this sense, some recommendations are important:

- Maintain a positive and warm environment or context for both parties.
- Be permanently attentive to the emotions of each party and to observe their non-verbal language, to intervene in a compassionate and empathetic way by giving a sympathetic look and response to the manifestations and emotional expressions of both of them.
- Interpret all events from a contextual perspective and to understand the ABC of each one of them.
- Be able to give through his/her interventions, a perception of professional credibility, that the coach possesses the knowledge and s/he has enough skills to help the couple in that process.
- Regularly state that s/he is professionally allied to both of them. And, that the main idea is to generate teamwork that helps to improve the relationship.

Although the confidence necessary to generate an appropriate alliance with both parties starts when the first interview takes place, it must be sustained and increased with the passing of the sessions, which leads the coach to be very attentive to the fluctuations of trust with each party.

The Gathering of Information and Providing Interpersonal Causality

Throughout the first sessions, a significant aspect is the interpretation of the problem in contextual terms in a way that the ABC circuit of the interaction between both parties is understood. The coach's challenge is to understand how this chain of ABCs is working, and towards that goal professional interventions should be addressed. Some questions to answer will be the following ones:

1. What activating events (As) generates tension and causes problems in the couple? How do these problems evolve? Does the couple reach agreements and settlements? How long does it take for them to reach these agreements and settlements?
2. What faulty cognitions, inferences, evaluations, demands and other irrational beliefs does the coach identify in these discussions? How do these IB's (irrational beliefs) give rise to intense and disturbed emotions? What toxic patterns come out in their difficult interactions? How do these problems escalate? What steps are taken? How does each one of them deal with the most difficult emotions?

What resources does each one of them must regulate these emotions? What does the couple do to calm discussions?

3. What explanations do they have (attributions) of the behavior of the other person? How does each one of them interpret his/her problems? Can they distinguish their own interpretations and attributions from the facts? What demands do they have about their relationship?

4. When there are no problems, how is the interaction between them and how do they nurture their relationship? How do they express love, acceptance, validation, and empathy?

The coach may request real examples of problematic discussions and interactions that the couple has been through, and ask them to discuss a problematic issue in the coach's presence, in addition to using inventories and questionnaires to help collect information. Some recommendations are:

1. To neutralize emotional explosions that are too aggressive and explosive. That is, the coach will stop the partner who yells or is verbally aggressive, with empathy and tact but also in a firm manner, then, he/she will suggest new ways to interact.

2. To identify inappropriate patterns of interaction. In particular, the most toxic and dangerous ones.

3. To identify individual ABC analysis for each member and then link both ABC's in one picture so that it forms a couple's ABC. To initiate the couple's psychoeducation and help them observe their interactions with scientific curiosity, as inevitable products of interpersonal difficulties.

4. To raise, whenever possible and pertinent, an "as if …", for example, what would have happened if the interpretations that were given would have been different or what would have happened if parties would have reacted differently, this in order to observe what could have been avoided or what could have been done differently. This intervention is very important to do together in order to maintain balance.

5. Try to establish provisional goals based on this conceptualization so that they are accepted by both parties, in order to establish a working route.

Check Motivation and Commitment

It is important to explore the individual motivation and commitment levels towards the relationship of each one of them, and to help the process they are initiating, as coaching will require a dose of work and of persistence, from each of them, and, therefore, of good levels of motivation and commitment.

Exploring levels of motivation and commitment is best done in individual sessions. Many people begin consultations with ambiguous feelings towards the future of the relationship that they do not dare express in front of their partner. It is important to be able to talk in a safer environment about feelings regarding the future of the relationship, as well as the expectations of change that each party brings. Any

work process as a couple will fail if it is not possible for both parties to take on responsibility for change.

In that sense, it is important to take into account that when one of the two parties has a very dubious commitment to the future of the relationship, it will be necessary to emphasize more the work with this partner in order to understand if working as a couple will be possible or not. Just as an alliance is a continuous process that never ends, personal work in the tasks that are asked of each party never ends. It is necessary to permanently renew the motivation to that change. One has to take into account each party's pros and cons of the relationship and maintain it.

It is possible for the coach to meet a participant who is very eager to end the relationship and who does not dare express it for fear of being blamed. Helping him/her to express his/her desire to leave the relationship without being accused or blamed will be part of the process. If the coach finds him/herself to be in a situation where a participant has high doubts about the future of the relationship and s/he not sure if s/he wants to participate, it is necessary, to very carefully suspend the joint sessions and to move on to a brief individual intervention that generates a clearer response before resuming the joint process, if possible.

Presenting the Work Plan to the Couple

Once adequate levels of commitment have been verified, working on the achievements that the couple may obtain in rational emotive coaching will be considered. The coach will do very well in preparing a very tailor-made plan to the couple's specific needs and to discuss it with both parties in a joint session. This involves preparing material, in the form of exercises, tasks, readings, teaching materials (this includes all kinds of material that helps generate learning such as videos, movies, commercial film fragments, etc.).

It is important to explain to the couple that the coach's proposal is a draft to be discussed by the team made up of the coach and the couple. Both parties can contribute, and it is even important that they do. The plan should always be revised for possible improvements, consistently following the spirit of teamwork.

Some important aspects are:

1. Identify the good moments of the couple, how they interacted in those good times, analyze how they fell in love for example, and how they interacted in others special moments, translating these interactions in terms of the double ABC system, highlighting the couple's positive aspects, with special attention of cognitions, emotions and behaviors.
2. **Explain in detail the interpersonal ABC**, the crises and difficulties they are having, always in terms of ABC that is, considering their emotions, their beliefs, and their negative cycles, as well as the possible paths to take.
3. **Present individual goals to both parties at the same time and also goals of partner interaction in a consensual way**. It is not good to pressure any party to perform something that s/he is not convinced of doing. Therefore, it is necessary to extensively talk with each party to agree on the proposed goals and actions.

4. The role of the other party, in addition to his/her own development plan, should be clear in that s/he **will seek to reinforce his/her partner's progress**. This means paying attention to, pointing out, celebrating, encouraging even failed attempts in a positive way. **Each one assumes his/her responsibility even though the other one fails**.

5. To propose the practice of **unconditional acceptance of the other person, of oneself, and of the situation**. One's emotional regulation cannot be based on the infallibility of the other person. Increase tolerance, improve emotional regulation, and motivate both parties with acceptance.

6. **To increase empathy**. Helping the other half of the couple to listen better and to better understand his/her spouse is often a very useful task to improve interactions. Understanding the psychology and the ABC of the other person has a very important effect on self-serenity. This means that each one must understand the other's ABCs.

To improve the way the couple treats and interacts with each other. **The positive circuits of rewarding emotions and behaviors should be incremental.** If all these previous steps are taken, a series of exchanges of interpersonal gratifications like tenderness, joy, calmness, curiosity, shared learning, shared recreational activities, sex, cultural activities or shared values should start happening. All this is extremely important while reproducing positive circuits.

Implementation of the Plan and How to Deal with Change Difficulties

"*What I hear, I forget; what I see, I remember; what I do I learn.*"
   (Ancient Chinese proverb)

Implementing a couple's work plan involves individual and joint sessions that alternate according to how things prosper and on how difficulties show up allowing the coach to focus on what is more necessary. Joint sessions can be used to work on almost all couple issues to be developed, especially those related to issues of communication, handling of disagreements, empathy skill development, emotional management, whether acceptance and emotional awareness as well as emotional regulation, and, at the same time, cognitive issues. But many development issues are best individually advanced when the couple is ready for joint sessions, without having to fear the consequences of emotional explosions and overly aggressive discussions.

Individual Sessions, Their Need and Sequence

The strategy of change will require each party of the couple to become responsible for his/her own personal processes of self-awareness and emotional, cognitive, and behavioral self-regulation. Consequently, this implies the completion of tasks and exercises, and a daily effort of self-observation and execution of principles that the coach provides him/her. But each party comes with a strong conviction that his/her partner's behaviors are causing his/her emotions and reactions (Ellis & Crawford, 2000).

Therefore, s/he is much more interested in his/her partner's processes than in his/her own, and this a great disadvantage for the work of change, as it increases the defensive atmosphere of the environment, and, thus, for both parties it will be more difficult to become aware of their own intra personal processes.

Even if in an individual coaching session, each one is aware of his/her attributions and demands in the session, this can change much when there is a stressful event, since their "automatic" responses are usually stronger and faster, as they are more ingrained or due to defensive reactions as when they face a fight (Beck & Beck, 1995; Leahy, 2015, Epstein & Baucon, 2002; Greenberg, 2008; Johnson, 2004; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979), but, above all, when there is fear of being the only party to make a change and to be pointed out as the most irrational or guilty party. This is very visible in joint sessions where each party becomes more defensive and denies having acted, felt or had thoughts that could explain certain problems (Epstein & Baucon, 2002).

Therefore, use individual sessions to advance without having difficulties of arousing resistance to change. Even when each party chooses to focus on expressing the difficulties s/he has with his/her partner rather than on focusing on his/her own difficulties in his/her improvement, s/he will also be more willing to be open to reflect on his/her way of feeling, acting, and thinking if s/he receives the appropriate empathy.

Table 1 provides an individual workbook for intrapersonal development sessions:

In joint coaching sessions, the individual metacognition learning can be complemented and strengthened by sharing learning and encouraging each one to support his/her partner. His/her progress will be modeled and reinforced in a mutual way. In addition to complementing the development of the metacognition of each other's beliefs, emotions and behaviors, it is possible to work towards a greater

Table 1 Goals of intervention in cognitions, emotions and behavior

Cognitions	Emotions	Behaviors
Educate on the B-C connection. Increase metacognition	Educate on emotions	Identify patterns of behavior, deficits, and excesses
Identify attentional biases, attributes, and demands	Seek to increase emotional awareness. Propose daily ABCs	Train in communication, problem solving, and handling of disagreements
Weigh beliefs advantages or disadvantages	Encourage acceptance of emotions and decrease avoidance and emotional cover-up	Identify values and encourage the couple to conduct themselves according to them
Find evidence and propose new and more functional interpretations	Use new interpretations to regulate emotions. Use empathy and self-compassion	Help plan pleasurable actions
Develop new attributions that are more accepting, more empathetic, and kinder	Encourage acceptance, empathy, and compassion with your partner's emotional experience	Develop guidelines to discuss without verbal or physical violence

Table 2 Interaction negative patters and work guidance

Interaction patterns	Individual work	Couple work
Attack—Counterattack	1. Become aware of emotional reactions 2. Identify attributions and demands 3. Reformulate using empathy and acceptance 4. Appropriately express one's emotions	1. Identify detonators 2. Identify and stop scaling 3. Listen carefully, activate empathy 4. Activate de-escalation mechanisms: time out, rewording, etc.
Demand—Avoidance	1. Become aware of emotional reactions 2. Identify attributions and demands of demand and of avoidance 3. Stop the action pattern 4. Reword using empathy and acceptance	1. Identify detonators 2. Identify and stop scaling 3. Use alternate mechanisms 4. Use compassionate language
Avoidance—Avoidance	1. Become aware of emotional reactions 2. Identify attributions and demands on conflicts and disagreements 3. Express empathy and compassion 4. Invite "to be together" to solve the issue(s) together	1. Identify detonators 2. Identify and stop scaling 3. Calm the couple them down and give them peace and keep communication going

metacognition of the toxic circuits that occur in the couple, such as attack-counterattack, demand—avoidance, and avoidance—avoidance, helping the couple to be more aware and attentive to the formation of these circuits, and generating changes towards the formation of more constructive interactions in solving disagreements and problems. Couples in joint sessions often notice that the presence of the coach helps to create a safe environment that encourages communication and corrects toxic interactions.

Table 2 provides a guide to interpersonal development sessions:

Conclusions

Rational Emotive Couples Coaching requires both parties of the couples to trust each other. In order to develop this trust, the professional will need to show well balanced interventions, will need to have empathy with both members and a very good vision of interpersonal circuits of emotions and beliefs. It is important to identify the individual skills of emotional awareness and regulation of both parties as well we will also need to identify the cognitive processes such as attributions,

expectations and demands. In order for change to take place coaches will need to work on two levels: intra-personal and inter-personal. In regards to the intra-personal level the coach will need to focus on metacognition processes. He/she will help each member of the couple learn to regulate his or her emotions, will increase his/her levels of empathy, will learn to unconditionally accept his or her partner and will increase his or her communication skills. In the interpersonal level, the couple will learn to identify its toxic patterns, also they will learn to avoid those patterns and to improve their negotiations and conflict management, ensuring that their interactions develop a feeling of closeness and intimacy.

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Coaching in Schools

Check for updates

Demetris Katsikis, Stella Kassapis, Chrysoula Kostogiannis, and Michael E. Bernard

Schools have been considered as one of the main social agencies responsible for the preparation of youth for transition into adulthood. Indeed, a primary focus of education is to instil in young people the necessary academic knowledge, the desire for excellence and multiple experiences of success that will allow them to transform themself into productive and active members of society (Norrish, 2015).

Today, however, schools have begun to be seen not only as the source of academic knowledge transmission, but also a place where young people can learn the attitudes, character strengths and social-emotional skills needed for successful transition, wellbeing and beyond. For the past several decades, the sole academic focus of schooling has been called into question and school leaders as well as teachers are being asked to adopt a more holistic, social emotional approach in learning (e.g., Cohen, 2006; Huitt, 2011; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). One of the authors of this chapter published in 2006 an article titled, *It's Time we Teach Social-Emotional Competence as well as We Teach Academic Competence* (Bernard, 2006).

This call for social-emotional education has been supported by meta-analytical research by Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) who presented data from 213 school-based universal social and emotional Learning (SEL) programs with 270,034 students from all grades involved and showed that there was an 11-percentile-point gain in students' achievement; similar findings were found for the reduced incidence of problem behaviors and other important student outcome measures (Sklad, Diekstra, Ritter, Ben, & Gravesteijn, 2012). Social and emotional education has been frequently called "the missing piece" not only for reshaping schooling but also for serving the purposes of a complete and

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well-rounded education (Collaborative for Academic, Social, Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2005; Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2016).

School Coaching

School Coaching as a field and as a process can play a key role in the social-emotional learning of young people. The term 'school coaching' or 'coaching in education' has been used loosely with a generally accepted definition as yet to be agreed on. School coaching has been defined as a "one-to-one conversation focused on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate" (van Nieuwerburgh, 2012, p. 17).

Although the school coaching literature focuses mainly on student-oriented interventions (e.g., Allison & Harbour, 2009; Green, Grant, & Rynsaardt, 2007; Merriman & Codding, 2008; Morse, 2009; Plumer & Stoner, 2005), school coaching refers to a wide range of applications with regard to the target population (i.e. school leaders, teachers, students, parents) as well as the approach implemented (i.e. Behavioral Coaching, Solution-Focused Coaching, Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching, Instructional Coaching, Coaching for Educational Leadership, Literacy Coaching, Peer Coaching) (for a review see Devine, Meyers, & Houssemand, 2013). There is also a current emphasis in the coaching field for theoretical and practice convergences by building integrative models of school coaching (Katsikis & Kostogiannis, 2016).

The main role of a school coach is to facilitate, encourage and enhance the coachee's goal attainment and well-being and foster self-directed learning for personal growth and development (Green et al., 2007). The school coach helps teachers, students and others in the school community to become active determinants of their own development and flourish in academic, social-emotional and behavioral terms. S/he may also serves as a role model for encouraging school staff make a shift in their professional role from instructors to facilitators and catalysts of students' holistic development (e.g., Griffiths, 2005; Whitmore, 2002).

During the coaching process, a school coach demonstrates key skills such as: (a) establishing active rapport and trust with a coachee, (b) active listening for meaning construction and goal attainment, (c) questioning for understanding and empathy, (d) prompting action, reflection and learning, (e) developing confidence of the coachee and (f) celebrating success (Creasy & Paterson, 2005). The school coach should also be familiar with local and state educational policies, the community's needs and interests as well as political and cultural issues (e.g., Laba, 2011) for disseminating outcomes of school coaching in the community.

When coaching teachers, the school coach acts as (a) a resource provider by expanding the teacher's use of resources to improve instruction, (b) a curriculum specialist by ensuring the implementation of evidence-based curriculum that goes beyond academic excellence, (c) an instructional specialist by coaching teachers on methodologies and best practices that can be used to meet specific learning

challenges, (d) a classroom supporter and facilitator to increase the quality and effectiveness of instruction by observing, promoting reflection, innovation and providing feedback, (e) a learning facilitator and change catalyst by challenging current practices and supporting professional, social-emotional and behavioral development and (f) a confidential resource for helping teachers cope with stress (e.g., Bernard, 2016a, 2016b; Killion, Harrison, Bryan, & Clifton, 2012).

The scope of a school coach's work is to amplify teachers' initiatives in addressing daily challenges in schools and their attempt to make a difference in students' well-being. School Coaching is a sanogenetic model of change that is based on prevention and proaction towards students' wellness, growth and development. This constitutes one of the basic differences of coaching in regard to other modes of mental services such as therapy and counselling. Indeed, psychotherapy, and to some extend counseling, are mainly based on pathogenetic models and focus on remedying and healing problems (Katsikis, Kostogiannis, & Dryden, 2016) while coaching is proactive and preventive in nature targeting to goal and objectives attainment.

Additionally, psychotherapy relies on diagnosis and pathology, regards the person as a "patient", focuses on problems that have already been established and deals with identifiable dysfunctions (Williams, 2003). While psychotherapy and counseling are focused on present and past, coaching focuses mainly on present with a clear orientation towards future. Coaching provides guidance that helps people make changes and achieve their goals with the basic assumption that they are in a good mental and emotional state. Coaching answers the question of "how we can change" rather than "why we should change" which is an issue of counseling and traditional therapy. Thus, school coaching appeals to the majority of school population who is generally healthy, including teachers and students that are at risk for psychological disorders; it also appeals to students and school personnel that have been carried through remedial services but now want to achieve their goals and enhance their well-being.

All in all, school coaching is a much promising and highly upcoming field that can benefit all members of a school community to grow and flourish. It provides students with unique social-emotional and behavioral skills that significantly enhance their achievement and well-being in the school context. It supports the effectiveness and wellbeing of teachers, parents and other members of the school community. Given the multiple needs of schools in the twenty-first century and the highly important call for greater focus on social-emotional development of students and schools (see Bernard, 2006), School Coaching, with its evidence-based and effective practices, can become one platform of choice for addressing such a need and significantly promote school growth and development. An example of one such promising approach is School Rational-Emotive Behavior Coaching (S-REBC) that is presented below.

Rational-Emotive Behavior Coaching in Schools

Rational-Emotive Behavior Coaching applied in schools (S-REBC) is the application of Rational-Emotive Behavioral Coaching in the school context. As such, it derives from the theory and practice of REBT with students, parents and teachers

based on the REBT theory of Albert Ellis (Ellis, 1994; Ellis & Bernard, 2006; Vernon & Bernard, 2018).

S-REBC has been used 'informally' over the past several decades or more with students seeking or being referred for support to deal with presenting problems and developmental issues. The types of issues dealt with in S-REBC coaching fall into two general classes: (a) social, emotional and learning problems and (b) developmental.

Common problems of students of all ages including quite commonly, (a) procrastination, (b) low motivation and (c) emotional problems that do not qualify as mental health disorders but which play a disruptive role in the life of a student including anxiety, anger and feeling down.

Developmental problems emerge more particularly in older children and adolescents and include identity issues, relationship issues (peer, family) and questions that young people have surrounding their choices in what they study at school (major areas of interest), pre-employment, employment and transitioning to higher education.

Additionally, mental health practitioners, as well as school administrators and teachers, function in coaching roles when they conduct workshops for parents who attend not because of their mental health problems but wished to become more effective parents. Two popular forms of Rational-Emotive-based parent education programs are Bernard and Bernard's (2017) *The You Can Do It! Positive Parenting Online Program* and *The Rational Parenting Program* (David & DiGiuseppe, 2016). REBC developmental programs for teachers have been described for the past 20 years (e.g., Forman, 1994) and continue to be a popular form of teacher professional development today (e.g., Bernard, 2016a, *Stress Management for Teachers and Principals*).

Two Types of S-REBC

S-REBC takes two general forms. The first form of S-REBC is *problem-solving*. Here, the school coach meets with a student, teacher or parent with the explicit goal of helping the coachee solve a presenting problem. In the case of students, problems fall into two categories: *practical problems* (e.g., how to study, make friends, procrastination) and *emotional problems* (e.g., anxiety, feeling down, anger, procrastination) (e.g., problems with peers, self-identity, study, transition from primary and secondary).

Emotional problems fall below the threshold of mental health problems. In the case of its use with teachers and parents, typical applications include stress and its management, relationship-building, communication, motivation and managing problem behavior of young people. In the case of students, coaching takes the form of traditional ABC assessment and intervention conducted to meet the cognitive and linguistic maturity of the young person. It employs collaborative methods for identifying problems and emotional- and practical, cognitive-behavioral problem

solving strategies. The origins of this problem-focused coaching of teachers and parents can be traced to the book, *Rational-emotive Consultation in Applied Settings* (Bernard & DiGiuseppe, 1994) with chapters, 'Rational-emotive parent consultation' (Joyce, 1994), 'Problem-centered consultee-client consultation' (McInerney, 1994) and 'Teaching parents and teachers RET through direct service to client' (Waters, 1994).

A second form of S-REBC can be considered *developmental*. Here, coaching has a focus on increasing strengths rather than overcoming problem and deficits. This developmental focus is more preventative than problem solving S-REBC. Strength-building includes coaches working with individuals and groups that have a developmental focus (success, happiness) and involves an emphasis on explicit presentation by the coach of rational beliefs normally combined with other evidence-based cognitive-behavioral practices. In the early days, non-teaching (as well as teaching) personnel presented Rational Emotive education to groups of students (e.g., Knaus, 1974; Vernon, 2006a, 2006b; this is well described in Vernon's chapter (1994), 'Rational-emotive consultation: A model for implementing rational-emotive education').

A current-day, Rational-Emotive approach that is being used in S-REBC coaching is based on the theory and practice of You Can Do It! Education (e.g., Bernard, 2013a) and is best represented in Bernard's (2013b), *The You Can Do It! Education Mentoring Program.* You Can Do It! Education programs, including its coaching program, are based on the following social-emotional learning framework.
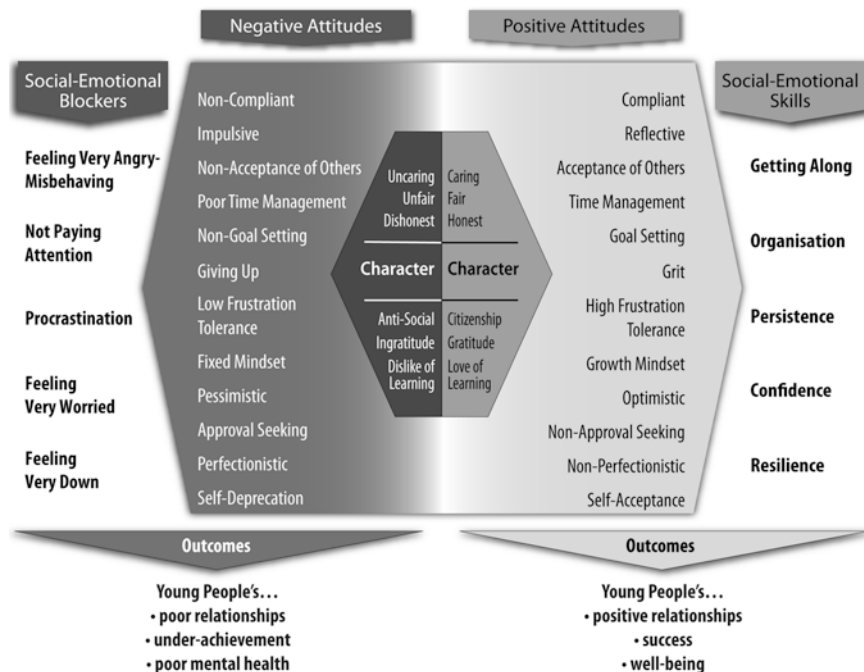
This framework addresses the negative and positive aspects of the psychological functioning of young people that lead to poor learning, behaviour, social and emotional outcomes. Negative Attitudes (many which are irrational beliefs) and under-developed Character (*values and strengths*) help create five Social-Emotional Blockers. Additionally, the framework represents the Positive Attitudes (many which are rational beliefs) and Character (*values, strengths*) that support five essential Social-Emotional Skills all contributing to positive outcomes. Coach-coachee discussion and activities involves the coachee helping a student to become aware of and manage five social-emotional blockers (anxiety, feeling down, anger, procrastination, not paying attention) partly though the re-structuring of negative, irrational attitudes into more positive, rational ones. Additionally, as Michael Bernard (2009) discussed with Albert Ellis, for (young) people to become more rational, not only do their irrational beliefs need disputing and changing, but rational beliefs need to be explicitly and continuously taught and reinforced.

Research published over the past decade demonstrates the positive impact of You Can Do It! Education on the mental health, wellbeing, achievement, behaviour and positive relationships (e.g., Ashdown & Bernard, 2012; Bernard, 2017; Bernard & Walton, 2011; Markopoulos & Bernard, 2015; Yamamoto, Matsumoto, & Bernard, 2017).

The main purpose of developmental S-REBC is to help students, teachers, parents and the whole school community is Rational Living—through proactive use of a range of rational beliefs espoused by Albert Ellis (e.g., Bernard, 2011; Ellis & Becker, 1982; Ellis & Harper, 1975) including but not limited to: self-acceptance, self-interest, social-interest, high frustration tolerance, commitment to creative pursuits and by thinking more rationally and, as a consequence, experiencing healthy emotions, functional behaviors and achieve short- and long-term goals. For students, developmental S-RECB is also a means for helping students prepare for and manage common developmental challenges.

S-REBC Is Multi-modal and Comprehensive: A Case Study

Whether or not S-REBC is being used to help students or their significant others to manage and solve problems or resolve future-oriented developmental issues (e.g., "What do I want to be doing in five years?" "What's my sexual orientation?"), S-REBC involves employing REBT techniques (e.g., ABCs, disputing, explicit teaching of rational beliefs) with other 'best-practice' techniques found in the CBT, stress management and positive psychology literature.

Here's an illustration of a stressed teacher Michael Bernard coached where "standard" S-RECB techniques were combined with 'best practice' stress management techniques to produce a significant improvement in a coachee over a 2-month period.

Helen, a teacher-librarian, sought out my help as she was dreading her year 9 class. Helen was a 20-year veteran who had established a solid reputation of high competence—

additionally, Helen had a very positive family life including two teenage children and a loving partner, plus Helen had many personal interests (e.g., she sang in the chorus). Helen had no history of mental health issues nor was she experiencing any at the time she expressed an interest in coaching—though she was experiencing intense levels of physiological, psychological and behavioural stress.

Presenting Problem: Helen's Year 9 students would do everything in their power to disrupt her lesson. One of her students, George, an intimidating student, often rattled her so much she felt her 20 year teaching career could end at any time.

Fortunately, Helen survived George and his classmates eliminating most of her physical and emotional symptoms of stress—she regained control of her class and did some of her best teaching of IT research skills needed in many of the grade 9 subjects.

Over a 2 month period, Helen met with her coach for 50-min sessions. During these sessions, the basic steps of REBT and S-REBC were taken with Helen's learning principles of emotional responsibility, the ABCs and how to challenge and change her stress creating beliefs. Additionally, her coach reviewed with Helen aspects of her coping skills and life style that were also impacting on her level of stress. These included:

- Generally, endorsing her preferences while disputing her absolute demands about events in the classroom
- Re-calibrating the 'badness' of stressful events (de-catastrophizing)
- Deciding not to take what was happening personally (self-acceptance)
- Re-affirming her moral purpose (e.g., make a difference in the lives of young people)
- Relaxing when she noticed she was tensing
- Employing classroom management skills (assertiveness)
- Awaking earlier to exercise and eating breakfast
- Seeking additional support from colleagues at school

Additional information on S-REBC with teachers is contained in the last section of this chapter.

Processes of S-REBC

Drawing upon Katsikis, Kostogiannis, and Dryden's work on REBC Life Coaching (Katsikis et al., 2016) and Katsikis and Kostogiannis's work on S-REBC (Katsikis & Kostogiannis, 2016), we present a ten-step problem-focused coaching process that is based on REBT theory and adjusted for individual or group S-REBC. According to REBT theory, students who employ negative habits of the mind (officially known as irrational beliefs) to interpret and evaluate an event or situation, experience unhealthy negative emotions and exhibit dysfunctional behaviors, while students that endorse positive habits of the mind (officially known as rational beliefs) for this same event, experience healthy negative emotions and are, thus, motivated to deal effectively with it.

Initiating REBC Problem Solving

In the beginning of the S-REBC process, the coach elicits the coachee's explicit agreement to target an emotional or behavioral issue for change. The coach builds an appropriate bond with the coachee, shares his/her view of the coaching process and helps the coachee to agree on personal goals and mutual roles by establishing a coaching plan. In case of possible failure to help the coachee, the coach takes either a school counseling role for more intensive help (when the coach is also trained as a school counselor) or refers the coachee to a school psychologist or other specialist until the coachee is ready to resume coaching work with the coach. The ten presented steps below are typically followed during a S-REBC coaching setting when the coachee has emotional or behavioral issues that serve as specific obstacles to pursuing his/her school objectives and goals.

The Main Steps of S-REBC Problem-Solving

<u>Step 1</u>: The coach asks for a specific example of a coachee's issue. The coach helps the coachee define and agree working upon the issue, and probes him/her to identify the most important aspect of the issue.

<u>Step 2</u>: The coach helps the coachee agree on a goal with respect to the issue as defined by the coachee.

<u>Step 3</u>: The coach helps the coachee identify the emotional and behavioral consequences of his/her issue.

<u>Step 4</u>: The coach helps the coachee elaborate on his/her goal with respect to the presenting issue (e.g., which healthy emotions and behaviors s/he wants to achieve and which unhealthy emotions and behaviors s/he wants to weaken during coaching).

<u>Step 5</u>: The coach identifies positive or negative habits of the mind linked with the coachee's issue and agreed goals.

<u>Step 6</u>: The coach helps coachee see the connection between his/her negative, irrational thinking and his/her negative emotions and behaviors, and the connection between his/her positive, rational and his/her positive emotions and behaviors.

<u>Step 7</u>: The coach helps the coachee examine his/her interpretations and evaluations of and elicits or teaches new positive habits of the mind (or enhances already existed ones) by using functional ("How helpful are they?"), logical ("Do they make sense?") and realistic ("Are they true?") questions. At the same time, the coach prepares the coachee to deepen her/his conviction in the positive habits of the mind and weaken her/his respective commitment to the negative ones.

<u>Step 8</u>: The coach negotiates and assigns the coachee with a coaching exercise/task for further practice of the new acquired positive habits of the mind beyond the S-REBC setting.

<u>Step 9</u>: In the next meeting, the coach checks the homework assignment in collaboration with the coachee and the former facilitate the working through process.

Step 10: The coach encourages the coachee to become her/his own coachee by helping him/her to establish positive habits of the mind to bring about high achievement, positive behavior and relationships, and well-being.

The above steps are more appropriate for an individual or a small-group S-REBC setting and mainly appeal to school coaches and teachers who are trained in S-REBC procedures.

Coach's Characteristics

RECB coaches engaged in problem-solving coaching are active-directive in the sense that they encourage the coachee to follow a specific ten-step process, as presented above, and helps him/her substitute his/her negative attitudes and irrational beliefs with more positive ones; we recommend their style to be characterized by vigor, vigilance, mental stamina, passion, sensitivity, flexibility, firmed kindness, beneficence, honesty and natural confidence towards every coachee. The coach invites the coachee to actively participate and critically reflect on the differences between positive and negative ways of thinking and capitalizes on the intuition and the spontaneity of the coachee making ongoing connections between thinking, emotions and actions (the main tenet here is that coachee's thinking patterns, and not events, are *mainly* responsible for her/his emotions and behaviors at school).

Although, typical Life Coaching is conducted in a one-to-one format, S-REBC can also be conducted in small group, group or classroom formats depending on the culture of each school and the needs of coachees. It can be conducted in most of school environment types, such as in the coach's office and other school venues where confidentiality and constructive conversations are assured. S-REBC can be fully or partially integrated as a school mental health service. In its full form, coaching can become a substantive part of the school curriculum and a *required* training for all school personnel; in its partial form coaching can be an adjunct school mental health service and an *optional* training for all school personnel.

S-REBC Techniques

REBC techniques span the range of assessment and intervention strategies used when conducting counselling and therapy with both students (e.g., Bernard, 2004) and their significant others (e.g., parents, teachers) (e.g., Ellis, 1994). As such, the professional learning experience of the school counsellor in REBT is one key determining factor in which techniques are being utilized in coaching sessions.

It is often the case that a coach using REBC techniques with a student will utilize activities from Rational-Emotive Education curricula that are written to introduce REBT ideas (ABCs, rational beliefs) to school-age children. Ann Vernon's *Thinking, Feeling, Behavior* (Vernon, 2006a, 2006b) is a source of such activities as well as Michael Bernard's *NEW* Program Achieve (Bernard, 2018).

An example of a useful technique is "Mr. Head goes to school with his friends" (Katsikis, 2017). Based on Knaus's work (1974, 2001) on Rational-Emotive Education, Katsikis (2017) extended Knaus's effective technique of "Mr. Head" on how to metaphorically explain REBT theory to students of different developmental stages during S-REBC. In this updated technique, "Mr. Head" represents the rational and irrational beliefs; Mr. Head has a direct effect on "Mrs. Heart" (which represents the emotions that students feel based on "Mr. Head's" instructions) and "Mr. Body" (including "Mr. and Mrs. Mouth", "Mr. and Mrs. Hand", "Mr. And Mrs. Leg", and other parts of the body, which represent the varied behavioral acts that students usually endorse based on "Mr. Head's" instructions). Through appropriately developmental ways and in different modes (e.g., through stories or paintings), students of different ages learn to use this metaphorical scheme in order to locate positive or negative ways of thinking and their accompanying emotions/behaviors, and encourage themselves change negative thinking patterns to positive ones.

Crisis Management

S-REBC can have a crucial impact in crisis management episodes at school through the following eight steps (Katsikis, 2017).

When a crisis episode has taken place at school, the S-REBC coach can follow these steps to deal with crisis effectively and teach his/her coachee a similar process:

Step 1: Remove the student from the crisis point in order to have a rational discussion with him/her.

Step 2: Ask student to tell you exactly what happened (be kind but firm, patient and empathic).

Step 3: Ask student to tell you exactly what did s/he do (or thought to do but s/he didn't) during the crisis situation.

Step 4: Ask student to tell you what s/he did tell her/himself about the event (inquire for negative habits of the mind) and make the connection between these habits and his/her actions.

Step 5: Examine these negative thoughts in collaboration with him/her: Ask, "If you think like this, how would you feel/what would you do?"

Step 6: Directly teach new positive habits of the mind and encourage the student to make use of them in similar circumstances.

Step 7: Ask the student: "How can these positive thoughts could help you in this situation? What could you do instead?"

Step 8: Finally, ask: "What do you need to do now? When? Where? Why?"

S-REBC with Teachers

Coaching and mentoring of teachers is becoming a very common form of support both for new and experienced teachers. Schools can benefit a lot from services of coaching in teachers because data have shown that teacher cognitive abilities (e.g.,

professional knowledge in terms of pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge) and relevant affective-motivational characteristics (in the form of teacher motivation, self-regulation, and professional beliefs about teaching and learning and the subject content) are significant determinants of their health, instructional practices and, then, students' achievement and well-being (e.g., Blömeke & Delaney, 2012; Eccles & Wigfield, 2000, 2002).

In the same line with coaching or mentoring students, coaching (or mentoring) teachers is relied on evidence-based, cognitive behavioral theories that have become the golden standard not only in the psychotherapy field (David & Lynn, 2010) but also in the field of coaching (Freeman, 2016). Therefore, effective S-REBC services can be delivered to teachers based on the theory and practice of REBT theory of Albert Ellis (Ellis, 1994; Ellis & Bernard, 2006; Vernon & Bernard, 2018). For example, Albert Ellis founded an innovative school, called *The Living School*, where he was training teachers on how to coach students (and their parents) in problem-solving and developmentally important issues during their school lessons (Ellis, 1972).

Again, S-REBC for teachers takes two forms; *problem-solving* coaching and *developmental* coaching. Both coaching forms can be used in individual or group formats with teachers.

In the former, the school coach meets with the teacher with the goal of helping him/her solving a practical (e.g., how to teach kids organizational skills) and/or emotional problem (e.g., how to manage teacher stress). In the case of practical problems, the school coach can train the teacher on how to use various resources (e.g., methods, techniques, skills, exercises, etc.) for teaching children various skills in the classroom or other school venues (e.g., social-emotional skills, team-building, collaboration between students, motivational strategies, strategies for preventing student academic and social-emotional difficulties etc.). In the case of emotional problems, teachers can be helped through teaching the ABC model including disputing and changing their irrational to rational beliefs (rigid to flexible) to manage their emotions and behaviors towards themselves, the others (e.g., students, parents) and the rest of the school environment in case they are bogged down by emotional pressure and difficulties. Again, teachers' emotional problems that are worked through S-REBC fall below the threshold of mental health problems.

In the problem solving type of S-REBC coaching, teachers can benefit from traditional ABC assessment and intervention conducted to meet their practical and/or emotional problems, which frequently underlie the former. The S-REBC coach helps teachers identify irrational beliefs that underlie their emotional and behavioral output towards students, parents and the school through specific tools like STIB (Screener for Teachers' Irrational Beliefs; Katsikis & Kostogiannis, 2016) or TIBS (Teachers' Irrational Beliefs Scale; Bernard, 2016b; Bora, Bernard, Trip, Decsei-Radu, & Chereji, 2009) and then, through guided discovery methods (e.g., through Socratic questioning). STIB and TIBS scales guide them actively and directively towards effective, cognitive behavioral solutions of their practical or emotional problems.

For example, STIB is a useful tool, during problem solving S-REBC that screens for teachers' demandingness beliefs as the primary mechanism of their unhealthy emotional and behavioral output. STIB is a valid screener of teachers' demandingness

beliefs supporting a one-latent factor model ("teacher demandingness beliefs") based on adequate fit statistics from a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of its 15 items (χ^2 = 108.513 for 90 df, CFI = 0.943, NNFI = 0.934, SRMR = 0.062, RMSEA = 0.043, 90% RMSEA = 0.000–0.007).

In a recent example of the use of STIB in problem solving S-REBC with teachers, a group of Greek teachers were trained on how to apply basic S-REBC principles with their students by using main principles of the REBT model. The sample for this 4-h seminar consisted of 104 teachers (N = 104; n = 52 female and n = 52 male teachers; n = 48 from primary and n = 56 from secondary education; mean age = 41.98, SD = 7.88). Participants had applied for this seminar at a voluntary basis 1 week before and they were knowledgeable about a 4-h seminar on the role of cognitions in teachers' and students' achievement. Researchers presented a PowerPoint Presentation on the role of S-REBC at schools highlighting the importance of cognitive modification of teachers' ib's to rb's. The research hypothesis was that a 4-h S-REBC seminar may be sufficient for a statistically significant (but not necessarily reliable) modification of teachers' demandingness beliefs from pre- to post-test. Table 1 presents Mixed Anova results illustrating estimated marginal means by time (as a within-subjects factor) for the dependent variable (demandingness beliefs) measured with STIB.

Results showed that there was a significant main effect of time on demandingness beliefs (F(1, 109) = 57.845, p = 0.000, η^2 = 0.347); a 4-h REBT seminar on teachers' irrationality was a motivator for teachers to significantly ameliorate their demandingness beliefs in the expected direction (lower demanding-ness beliefs at the post-test). Further analyses with Reliable Change Index (RCI; Jacobson & Truax, 1991) showed that this significant change was reliable and meaningful (RCI = 5.54 > 1.96 meaning that there is less than 0.05 probability that this result is effected by other factors than the seminar). Even though this intervention was not based on an experimental or a semi-experimental design (no randomization or control group) because of time and space limitations, results from STIB confirmed our hypothesis that a parsimonious but comprehensive 4-h S-REBC seminar can motivate initial change in teachers' primary core cognitions (in the form of demandingness beliefs).

In developmental coaching, the S-REBC coach helps teachers to identify, utilize and develop further their rational beliefs, social-emotional skills and positive instructional and classroom strategies that they have developed during their career. For example, the S-REBC coach helps teachers become more successful and happy in the school context by enhancing their rational beliefs about themselves, students,

Table 1 Mixed Anova results across time and estimated marginal means by time for teachers' demandingness beliefs

Factor		M	Mean difference	SE	F	df/df error	p	η^2
Demandingness								
Time	Pre	46.31	6.00	8.77	57.845	1/109	0.000	0.347
	Post	40.31		10.57				

Note: N = 104; time = 2 levels, pre and post; the mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

parents and the school context and by personal development exercises that are based on the principles of (a) a balance between self-interest and social interest, (b) self-direction, (c) self-acceptance, (d) tolerance of others, (e) a balance between short-term and long-term well-being, (f) commitment to creative and absorbing educational goals and pursuits, (g) responsible educational experimentation, (h) responsible willpower at school, and (i) flexible scientific thinking (see Bernard, 2011).

Conclusion

S-REBC is mainly based on the theoretical, research and practice tradition of REBT theory but also makes holistic use of other CBT and social-emotional learning models and evidence-based practice. It is a much promising coaching platform for enhancing the achievement, functioning and well-being of young people at school. Schools who promote rationality (e.g., rational attitudes and beliefs) and the teaching of social and emotional learning skills in their curriculum or their school services can effectively help students flourish and get the most out of their school. The ultimate goal of S-REBC is to support schools in giving young people the optimal chance to become resilient, rational thinkers, high achievers plus responsible, and caring adults.

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Parent and Family Coaching

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This chapter describes a relatively new field of coaching, namely *parenting coaching*. Its focus will be on evidence-based, positive parenting practices and contributions of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT; Ellis, 1962) to the practice of parent coaching. The chapter will answer the following questions:

(a) What is family and parenting coaching, how did this field emerge and why is it important for the coaching field?
(b) How can family/parenting coaching be conceptualized based on the Rational Emotive—Cognitive Behavior Coaching (RE-CBC) approach?
(c) What is RE-CB Parenting Coaching and how does it differ from other forms of coaching?
(d) What are the typical, non-mental health issues of parents where RE-CB parenting coaching can be applied?
(e) What professional background does a RE-CB coach need to be effective?
(f) What are the best practices in the family/parenting coaching field, in terms of processes, evidence-based programs and their coaching components and techniques?
(g) What are the usual relationship, assessment, intervention and evaluation coaching steps employed in RE-CBC of parents and families?
(h) What are the future directions in terms of RE-CB family and parenting coaching?

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What Is Family and Parenting Coaching?

Family and parenting coaching is seen as a process based on a partnership between a family system (e.g. a parent or familial group) and a coach that has the role of facilitating the achievement of the family objectives and goals (Allen & Huff, 2014). This can be considered a psycho-educational, interactive, and collaborative process, through which guidance is provided for families and parents in order to facilitate the attainment of their goals (e.g., enhance their or their children's well-being, satisfaction, achievements etc.).

Parent and family therapy is a widely used form of intervention (Kaslow, 2000) for families/couples in distress, like having members/children with psychopathology, with more and more evidence arguing for its efficacy for a large range of disorders (Fellows, Chiu, Hill, & Hawkins, 2016). One of the techniques that was mentioned within parent and family therapy is coaching. This component was initially mentioned as a micro-tool incorporated in these interventions (Webster-Stratton, Rinaldi, & Reid, 2011), but once the field of coaching grew, the new field of parent and family coaching emerged as a separate type of intervention, targeting non-clinical difficulties in well-adjusted families, having primary growing and developing goals.

The topic is important since there are some recent meta-analyses (Fellows et al., 2016; Mitnick, Heyman, & Smith Slep, 2009) showing that satisfaction in couples and families is significantly decreasing, in connection with certain variables, among which are work or parenting related stressors (Fellows et al., 2016). Moreover, becoming a parent has been shown to significantly affect couples satisfaction in a negative way (Mitnick et al., 2009). Other studies also reported that parents or couple partners are more and more open to learning different kind of interventions targeting family/parenting problems, and developing new skills related with these issues (Halford, Markman, Kline, & Stanley, 2003). Therefore, many couples/parents are nowadays concerned with how they can be more satisfied and more effective in their roles, and the new emerging family/parenting coaching field can guide them and give them practical tools for reaching this goal.

How Is the Family/Parent Coaching Process Different from Therapy?

Due to their helping nature and focus, parent/family therapy and coaching overlap in a significant proportion. Both approaches rely on the many common theoretical assumptions of human functioning, imply a confidential relationship with the goal to assist individuals in need (Hart, Blattner, & Leipsic, 2001). On the other hand, there are a few essential differences between the two types of interventions. Therapy concerns primarily psychological interventions with families and parents in distress, having members/children with psychopathology, while parenting coaching focuses mainly on growing goals or specific non-clinical difficulties in well-adjusted

families (Cox, Bachkirova, & Clutterbuck, 2009; Dryden, 2010). Other distinctions between therapy and coaching in the family/parenting field are (Dryden, 2010): (1) coaching is more focused on how to achieve the family related goals, while therapy deals more with how to tackle family-related problems; and (2) the coaching approach is more skill-oriented, guiding parents and children how to enhance their abilities based on continuous feedback. Parent coaching has a more personalized on-to-one approach, the practitioner using home visits or inviting the parent and child to interact, observing them, and offering immediate guidance and feedback.

Theoretical Background of the Rational Emotive-Cognitive Behavioral Parenting and Family Coaching

Theoretical Underpinnings of Positive Parenting and Rational Parenting

Parenting has been most often conceptualized based on Patterson's model (Patterson & Fisher, 2002), which argues that several factors, such as genetic and environmental ones, alongside with parents' and child's specific characteristics determine the nature of the parental relationship (David & DiGiuseppe, 2016). This model is viewed as a bidirectional one, taking into account not only the influence of the parent on child, but also the reverse effects, considering there is more and more evidence for the fact that child's behaviors significantly influence parenting practices, even from very young ages.

Parenting Styles have been classified based on multiple criteria, but the most influential classification in scientific research is the one proposed by Baumrind (1967). This classification divides parenting styles based on two dimensions, *warmth* and *control*. Therefore, three parenting styles are derived. The first one, the *authoritative* parenting style, is characterized by high levels of both warmth and control. Parents who adopt this style establish clear rules and appreciate compliance, but are responsive and the rules are explained using rationales (Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, van IJzendoorn, & Crick, 2011). The second style is called *authoritarian* parenting style, representing a combination of high control and low warmth. Parents that are authoritarian use punishments, are very demanding, have strict rules which are not explained to children, and encourage obedience (Kawabata et al., 2011). The combination of low control and high warmth define the *permissive parenting style*, which implies very lax boundaries, accepting children's behavior no matter what, and responding to their needs. Other taxonomies regarding parenting styles mention parenting styles, like neglecting parenting (low control and low warmth), or psychologically controlling behavior (practices like possessiveness affection retraction, and guilt provocation are used) (Kawabata et al., 2011). There is a large body of literature (Kawabata et al., 2011) showing that the most adaptive parenting style is the authoritative one, studies showing that it is associated or causes positive psychological and social consequences.

Bowlby's (1982) *attachment theory* describes the nature of the relationship between children and their primary caregiver (usually the mother) and how the particularities of this relationship will impact the behavior of the child in future relationships through his/her life. Based on the experience related to the bond with the primary caregiver, children will implicitly build their expectations regarding later relationships (Fraley, 2002). According to this theory, the expectations are made based primarily on two variables, namely the responsiveness and trustworthiness of their caregiver. Taking into account the way in which the caregiver acts regarding these two variables, and how the child responds, four major patterns of interactions were derived: *secure attachment*, *anxious-ambivalent attachment*, *anxious-avoidant attachment*, and *disorganized attachment* (Bowlby, 1988). Empirical data from literature, including some longitudinal studies, confirmed the contribution of early interpersonal experience in shaping later attachment behaviors, but the extent of this contribution to the variance of relationship behavior is still in debate, results from studies showing mixed patterns(Chris Fraley, 2002).

Positive parenting, based on the above mentioned theories, represents thus the use of an authoritative parenting style, with high warmth and responsiveness, but also high control, positive affect, strong parent-child bond and intimacy, and open communication (David & DiGiuseppe, 2016). REBT has extended the parenting styles classification (Hauck, 1967), putting them in relation to different irrational and rational beliefs patterns of parents and analyzed how these are related with different positive and negative parenting styles. Three major parenting styles emerged (Hauck, 1967; Joyce, 2006): (1) unkind and firm—characterized by high demandingness, low frustration tolerance, and child's downing leading to strict rules and strictness; (2) kind and not firm—parents do not want to frustrate children and therefore do not set rules, but they show affection; (3) kind and firm—high levels of rational beliefs, especially unconditional acceptance of both self and child. The kind and firm parenting style is the basis of rational and positive parenting coaching which will be described later in this chapter.

Parent Coaching in Evidence-Based Parenting Programs

One specific area where parent coaching was frequently used is parenting programs. Parenting programs are evidence-based psycho-educational interventions in which parent participate in order to learn effective parenting strategies. Parenting programs are most often using a group format, modeling tools (e.g., video vignettes of parenting strategies), homework tasks and monitoring strategies in order to help parents effectively address and solve various child difficulties (e.g., behavioral problems, externalizing and internalizing disorders). Some evidence-based parenting programs are mentioning in various proportions the use of coaching as a specific tool in order to teach parents how to effectively manage their children's behavior problems, such as the *Parent-Child Interaction Therapy* program (Eyberg, 1988), the *Incredible Years* program (Webster-Stratton et al., 2011) and the REBT based

Rational Positive Parenting Program (David, 2014). Techniques are based on inter-active sessions, where the coach assists parent-child interactions (usually at home) and offers feedback and moment-to-moment guidance to the parent (David & DiGiuseppe, 2016).

The Rational Positive Parenting Program (rPPP, David, 2014; David & DiGiuseppe, 2016; David, David, & Dobrean, 2014; Gaviţa, 2011; Gavita, DiGiuseppe, & David, 2013) represents the most recent REBT parenting program, focused both towards: (1) enhancing the emotion-regulation skills of the parents, especially on dealing with stress by restructuring of irrational beliefs; and (2) build-ing positive parenting strategies derived from the "kind and firm" parenting style. rPPP has three forms: full-length, short version and an online form, with the first two formats implying a collaborative framework within a group format.

Coaching used in the rPPP have the goal to provide guidance in parent-child interactions (live or videotaped) in order to help parents integrate a rational parent-ing mindset and use the kind and firm parenting style (David & DiGiuseppe, 2016; Ellis, Wolfe, & Moseley, 1966). Parents are directly guided during individual coach-ing sessions, at home or coach's office (e.g., based on parent-child interactions or videotaped interactions), or coachable moments during the program on how to use rational thinking during non-compliant behavior, regulate their emotions, pay atten-tion and stimulate desired behaviors, develop and maintain a positive parent-child relationship, how to implement effective family rules, how to solve problems with the child. Also, parents are guided to develop action plans for implementing the kind and firm parenting strategies between the sessions and then their progress in integrating these skills is monitored during the program. Moreover, a special atten-tion is given to teaching parents coaching skills in order to be able to identify coach-able moments and coach their children emotional and social skills.

The rPPP makes also use of innovative and technology based coaching methods, such as attention bias modification procedures (the online version; David, Capris, & Jarda, 2017; David, 2014) and "psychological pills". "Psychological pills" (David, 2012) are personalized rational statements that parents prepare for high risk situa-tions in order to be able to access them and integrate the thinking strategy for man-aging their reactions. This coaching tool has been developed in the PsyPills app, where parents can use their mobile devices when in distress to immediately access personalized "psychological pills" based on their type of emotion, the source area of emotion, the type of dysfunctional cognition, and the main theme of cognitions.

The efficacy and the mechanism of change of the all three forms of rPPP were tested in four randomized clinical trials (David et al., 2017; Gaviţa & Călin, 2013; Gaviţa, David, Bujoreanu, Tiba, & Ionuţiu, 2012; Gavita, David, & DiGiuseppe, 2014), with samples of parents with children from all age categories between 2 and 18 years. Results showed that rPPP is effective in reducing child externalizing behavior problems, even with better results at follow-up than the standard parenting programs. In terms of the mechanism of change, studies revealed that parental dis-tress was a very important mediator, alongside with parenting behaviors, unlike the standard parenting programs, which were documented as having as mechanism changes in parenting (David, 2014; Gavita et al., 2014).

RE-CB Parenting Coaching

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT; Ellis, 1962) represents one of the first forms of cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive and Cognitive-Behavioral Coaching (RECBC) has emerged based on REBT assumptions and valid theory. The main distinctive assumption of REBT is that the proximal cause of emotional responses are evaluative beliefs (i.e., irrational and rational beliefs), assuming that emotions are not caused by certain situations, but by how these events are evaluated. Usually, people evaluate an event in a rational (defined as logical, pragmatic and/or empirical supported) or irrational manner. There is research showing high associations between irrational beliefs and negative dysfunctional reactions (e.g., affective outcomes or maladaptive behaviors; see David, 2015; Vîslă, Flückiger, Grosse Holtforth, & David, 2016), while rational beliefs are strong related with functional emotions or act like protective factors against dysfunctional ones (Dilorenzo, David, & Montgomery, 2011; Hyland, Maguire, Shevlin, & Boduszek, 2014; Oltean & David, 2017).

One of the core aspects of the theory is the ABC model (Walen, DiGiuseppe, & Dryden, 1992). In the parenting context, the ABC model explains how parent's emotions and behaviors (C—consequences) are not directly determined by child-related events (A—activating events), but rather by the way these events are cognitively processed and evaluated (B—beliefs). Thus, the main goal in such an approach of rational parenting coaching is to guide parents on how to restructure their irrational beliefs about their child's behavior, which are vulnerability factors, with rational beliefs, which are important resilience mechanisms. Thus, using specific live or recorded child interaction situations, parents are coached how to be able to use rational thinking mindset to have a more adaptive response.

In the previous section, we have briefly described the main assumptions of family and parenting RE-CB. In the following section, we focus on the role of the parenting coach and on the objectives that can be achieved through the RE-CB parenting coaching process. Then, we present the parenting coaching process, which can be used as a separate intervention or integrated as a sequence during the parenting coaching programs. In the last part of this section we briefly present an example of using an evidence-based generic framework (ABC model) for parent emotional management.

The RE-CB Parenting Coaching Process

The process of parenting coaching is focused on the present, with the aim of promoting child and parent adjustment, and makes use of RE-CB coaching techniques to help the parent reach their goals, by identifying future directions and implementing the necessary steps to reach those goals. The specific purpose of the parenting coaching process is to develop parents' skills (e.g., emotion management skills,

rational thinking), with the ultimate goal of increasing the functionality of the parent-child relationship and support child autonomy and socialization. The assumption is that by receiving close assistance, monitoring and feedback during the implementation of these abilities and skills will facilitate the desired changes in relation with the child. Thus, RE-CB parenting coaching is a non-therapeutic approach, dealing with non-clinical problems, is goal focused, time-limited and focused on present and future.

The RE-CB parenting coaching process is based on creating an egalitarian relationship between coach and parent/family member(s), based on collaborative empiricism, and requires parent/family's involvement as a partner in the process of change. The role of the coach is to partner with the family, in order to offer support, to help them in creating a vision for improvement and implement their action plans. Thus, the RE-CB parenting coach assists the parent in stating their goals, developing their plans, implementing more effective parenting/family strategies, refining their plans and assessing their parenting. In short, through a collaborative relationship in which power is shared, coaches help parents to identify and achieve desired goals related to their parenting role and closely assist parents in implementing the changes needed to achieve their goals.

RE-CB Parenting Coaching Best Practices: Models and Tools

The ABC Model

According to REBT theory, our thoughts have a strong effect on how we feel and behave in response to a particular situation or event (e.g. a child's deviant behavior). Therefore, emotions are not directly determined by life events (e.g. a fight), but are rather the results of our evaluative beliefs about these events. This assumption of REBT is summarized based on the ABC model (see Fig. 1).

According to REBT assumptions, the key to change the way we feel is changing the way we think. To achieve this goal within a parenting coaching process, coaches need to use the ABCDE process. The ABCDE process/includes the following six steps:

1. *A (Activating events)*
   In this step, the coach teaches the parent to identify an upsetting event (ex. "I shouted to my child"). Noted statements must be relevant to the patient and based on the present. It is very important that only a simple description of the facts, not interpretations, be mentioned/discussed in this step.
2. *C (Consequences following the events)*
   At this stage, the patient must note the consequences of the event: (a) dysfunctional negative consequences (e.g. depression, anger), (b) dysfunctional behaviors (e.g. isolation), (c) physical symptoms (e.g. faster heart beats, sweating).
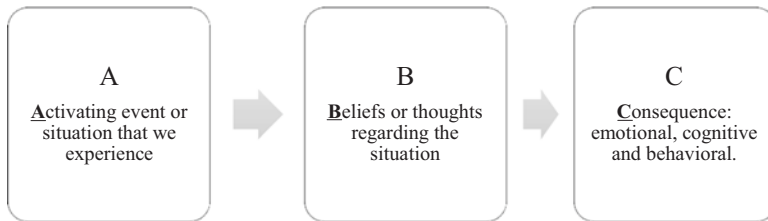
Fig. 1 ABC cognitive model

3. *B (Irrational Beliefs)*

   In this step, the client must understand that in order to change the dysfunctional consequences, the way of thinking must be changed. The first step is to identify these irrational beliefs. There are four categories of negative irrational beliefs: (1) *Demandingness*—things should be in a certain way (e.g. "The child must listen to me!"), (2) *Awfulizing*—things that happen are the worst things possible (e.g. "I shouted to my child and *that's horrible!"*), (3) *Frustration Intolerance*—beliefs that we can't stand something ("I cannot support that!"), and (4) *Global evaluation*—general etiquettes about ourselves (e.g. "I am a terrible parent!"), others (e.g. "My child is disrespectful!") or life (e.g. "Life is worthless!").

4. *D (Debating Irrational Beliefs)*

   In this step, the parentis assisted in challenging its identified irrational beliefs by debating them, using the following questions: (a) "Does this belief help me?"; (b) "Is there any evidence to support my belief"?, (c) "Is it logical?".

5. *E (Effective Rational Beliefs/Parenting Philosophy)*

   After disputing irrational beliefs, parents need to change them with rational alternatives, among which: (a) *Preference beliefs*—beliefs that express the desire, but accept possible failure (e.g. "I really wish I can communicate better, but I accept if I do not always do that!"), (b) *Realistic evaluation of badness*—beliefs that express that a situation is bad, but not catastrophic (e.g. "To shout to my baby is very bad, but I'll try to fix my mistake!"), (c) *High Frustration Tolerance*—beliefs that express tolerance to unpleasant situations (e.g. "I do not like that I shouted, but I will try to change this behavior!"), (d) *Unconditional acceptance*—contextual evaluations of myself (e.g. "I did not have good parenting behavior, but it's okay, I am still worthwhile as a parent!"), others (e.g. "I'm sad when the baby does not listen to me, but she is a good and loving child!"), or life (e.g. "My life as a parent is not as I expected to be, but there are still wonderful moments!").

6. *F (Functional Consequences)*

   In this final step, the coach discuss with the parent the new effects, the functional affective (e.g. sadness), behavioral (e.g. playing with the child), and/or physical (e.g. energy) consequences.

Socratic Questioning

As we stated above, a significant part of a parenting coaching process is represented by asking questions, a technique that leads to reflection, knowledge and supports the learning process (Neenan, 2009) in the experiential learning cycle. However, addressing unstructured questions without a specific purpose will not lead to the desired results. Therefore, in order for the objectives proposed in the coaching process to be achieved, the questions asked should be based on a scientifically valid method, specific to Socratic questioning technique. Socratic questioning is an evidence-based cognitive behavior therapy technique and equally useful in coaching to raise reflection and problem solving skills (Neenan, 2009). Socratic questioning technique is based on a guided discovery approach that allows clients to reach their own conclusions. Socratic questioning technique's purpose in coaching process is to ask questions (1) for which clients have the knowledge to give answers, (2) that draw clients' attention to relevant information, (3) that move the clients perspective from a concrete one to an abstract one, and (4) that permit the client to apply the new information to construct a new conclusion (Padesky, 1993).

During the parenting coaching process, efficient Socratic questions will lead to knowledge and learning. Four steps have been proposed that can maximize the efficiency of the Socratic questioning method (Padesky, 1993): (1) asking informational questions (relevant questions for the parent), (2) listening (the coach need to listen parent's answers and building the case and future questions based on previous answers), (3) summarizing (achieving an overview of new information every few minutes), and (4) synthetizing or analytical questions (applying the information to the parent's concerns).

Rational and Positive Parenting Mindset

The rational parenting mindset has in its center the unconditional acceptance, which refers to the parent not making ratings of themselves (in terms of human worth) based on behaviors or performance in the parenting role or other roles they take. Unconditional acceptance as parent mindset is expressed in thinking such as: "I accept myself as parent even when I make mistakes and try to improve my parenting". Another essential asset of rational mindset is parents' unconditional acceptance of the child, which refers to coaching parents to fully accept their child/children, whether or not they behave, respect/appreciate them or act competently (Ellis et al., 1966). This does not imply that they necessarily like certain traits or behaviors in their children. Based on these principles, parents can be coached to fully accept themselves and their children with all their imperfections, as human beings, while at the same time aiming to improve specific behaviors (Gavita, David, DiGiuseppe, & DelVecchio, 2011).The final goal is for parents to achieve a strong mindset of unconditional acceptance that can be modeled and coached for the child and which constitutes an important resilience mechanism.

Hauck (1967) proposed the kind and firm parenting style, as positive parenting strategy, which is based on high levels of rational beliefs, especially unconditional acceptance of both self and child. Therefore, based on the rational parenting approach, the primary goal of RE-CB parenting coaching is to identify specific irrational beliefs associated with parenting behaviors, restructure them, and to promote both a rational mindset in parenting and positive parenting (David & DiGiuseppe, 2016). Thus, rational and parenting practices imply the use of strategies of emotional regulation, positive parent-child interactions, reinforcement, praise, validation, firm rules, problem-solving, conflict resolution and encouragements.

The main objective of parenting coaching is to optimize parental and child functioning, using a problem-solving process. In the above sections we described a number of cognitive techniques that can be used successfully in parenting coaching. Even though these cognitive techniques can bring positive changes in parents' mindset, mood or behaviors, there are techniques that directly address dysfunctional parental or child behaviors that can be changed by developing parenting abilities.

In the following section we emphasize two of the most important characteristics that are specific to coaching (even if they are used in various proportions also in therapy or other helping interventions) and we detail how they apply to the parenting coaching field:

The Experiential Framework

Experiential learning theory is defined as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Kolb's theory (1984) emphasizes the central role that experience plays in the learning process. Kolb's theory describes learning as a four-stage cycle consisting of (1) concrete experience, (2) reflective observation, (3) abstract conceptualization, and (4) active experimentation. According to the theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), in order for learning to be most effective, learners need the abilities represented by each stage. The impact of Kolb's theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) have been established within several coaching studies, being linked to the success of the coaching process (see Griffiths, 2005). First, as we said above, learning is inherent within the parenting coaching process. Second, both parenting coaching processes and experiential learning theory have the primary objective of personal development. Experiential learning theory represents the foundation for coaching practice (Kopf & Kreuze, 1991), given that coaching provides an opportunity to learn through experience. Therefore, for the process of parenting coaching uses the basic adaptive learning processes for helping parents use positive parenting in their specific situation. Thus, learning is facilitated in parenting RE-CBC by a goal-directed parenting coaching process, based on reported specific interactions

and recorded and/or observed interactions during the sessions between the parent and child (e.g., child directed play or parent directed play). Thus, the RE-CBC based parenting coaching process provides an opportunity to learn from the direct experience of being a parent and questioning own strategies.

Feedback and Monitoring

Feedback is a critical tool used as often as possible in the process of goal attainment in coaching (McDowall & Kurz, 2008). For an effective use of feedback in parenting coaching field, this technique should include a few components: (1) modeling—giving examples of positive parenting practices and rehearsing them, (2) using action plans for implementing the new parenting practices and using close observation/monitoring of parent's strategies; (3) reinforcement—praise and celebrate parents' functional parenting practices, and (4) correction—closely directing the parent to the development of functional behaviors using constructive feedback. The purpose of using feedback techniques in the parenting coaching process can be: (1) *a direct one*—providing feedback to the parent in the process of attaining its goal, or (2) *an indirect one*—developing parent's feedback skills in the relationship with the child. The technique of providing feedback has been shown to be effective in a number of coaching programs for specific populations, including parents (Schuhmann, Foote, Eyberg, Boggs, & Algina, 1998), with positive results regarding changing leading verbalizations such as questions, commands, critical statements, parent's child-centered interaction skills, and behavioral descriptions of acceptable behaviors.

The process of developing feedback abilities can be done in parenting RE-CBC in a classical way—direct interaction between parent and coach, respectively parent and child, or by using the modeling learning process—the use of video feedback (e.g., SOS Help for Parents video series). Watching videotaped interactions provides parents with the opportunity to associate the feedback with a specific behavior, without resorting to the memories of a past behavior.

Case Examples

Case of Harry

Rachel comes to coaching due to the recent complains of her son's school teacher, with the goal of helping her son be more compliant in the classroom. Her 9 years old son, Harry, now in the fourth grade, is characterized by teacher as naughty and was kicked out of class several times a day. When Rachel came to the first parenting

coaching session, she was very worried thinking it was her fault because she caressed Harry too much, being her only child. Rachel has regular meetings with Harry's teacher, explaining to her that Harry often speaks during the hour, over her or other colleagues, and he constantly disturbs the hours. Although Rachel tried to talk to Harry about this subject, he ignored his mother and he did not want to talk about the subject.

First of all, the coach asks Rachel to interact with Harry during a structured play context. Then, Rachel is given feedback regarding their interaction. The coach observed that Rachel is eager to tell Harry what to do even in situations when the instruction is to let him decide how to play. Thus, the following coaching sessions are dedicated towards helping Rachel to monitor Harry's misbehavior, her emotional and behavioral reactions, and to identify how her behaviors (positive or punitive) are related to Harry's misbehavior. Rachel used the ABC monitoring form and she identified that she got angry when her son did not respond to her requests immediately. The belief that was activated was "I must be in control over my child" and the coach helped her understand the roots of her belief and its irrational character using Socratic dialog. She then elaborated a rational version of thinking during these episodes and practiced the new belief during simulated situations with the coach, until she was able to reduce her anger and feel only annoyed. Then she practiced during the coaching sessions how to establish a positive emotional connection with the child by planning attractive activities, share emotions and connect daily. Each session had a parent directed component, teaching Rachel specific skills and setting action plans about how to apply them with Harry, and a child directed component, when Rachel had the task to follow Harry's lead during play and provide him with positive attention for improving their connection. Rachel observed that Harry started to be more open and he was sharing with her various aspects related to how his school day went. This gave her confidence that the coaching is helpful and that the problems will be solved. Next, she practiced how to use unconditional accepting messages to make Harry understand that she wants him to change his specific misbehaviors from school. Rachel learned how to be supportive of him and at the same time to set and to follow rules using the kind and firm parenting style. They analyzed the context of his misbehavior at school and came together with the solution of writing a question every 15 minutes, related to the topic discussed, that he can address to his colleagues at the end of the hour. The coach congratulates Rachel for how she guided the problem-solving process with her son and tells her that the way she thought about each change was a very good one. At the end of the session, the coach makes a new summary of the discussion and agrees the homework that Rachel think of ways she can reward Harry successes so that they can plan how to implement the selected rewards next session.

Case of Ann

In this section we will exemplify a complete RE-CB parental coaching process with the single mother of a gifted teenager.

Case Description

Ann is a single parent of a 13-year old boy. Her child, John is a gifted child who is approaching adolescence and Ann wants him to be more open to her when he makes mistakes. Ann says John started about 3 months ago to lie about different behaviors, for example where going with friends, school grades and household behaviors.

Ann divorced a year ago and is worried that her post-divorce condition and her emotional state, has affected John. Her main concern is that John is lying to not upset her. John is a gifted child, with high performance in artistic and academic fields. Ann describes her child as very intelligent, sincere, who communicates his emotions a lot, but who lies about his mistakes. From John's last lie (missing from school and telling her mother it is a free day), Ann has decided to follow a parental coaching process, wishing to develop her parenting skills, to be more open and more communicative with John.

The Parental Coaching Process

For a better understanding of the parental coaching process, we structured the implementation of the intervention in three phases.

Phase 1: Goal Clarification and Current Status

In the first phase of the parenting coaching program, the aim was to familiarize Ann with the RE-CB parenting coaching principles and to assess the baseline difficulties and establishing objectives for change. This phase can be seen as a psychoeducation and assessment session, in which the coach explained to Ann her guidance role, the relationship between them being focused towards collaborating for helping her attain her parenting goals, namely to develop different skills to help John. Further, the coach explored through the semi-structure interview technique Ann's expectations and guided the discussion to find out her goals. At the end of this phase, the coach assigned homework for detailed daily monitoring of John's lying behavior, her reactions, and beliefs. He also prescribed her to spend 30 min every day with John in a preferred activity for him.

Example: Setting Goals

Coach: Ann, now that you have explained to me what the problems are and we discussed about the steps of this program, let's talk a little about your goals. Do you agree?

Ann: Yes, I think is a good idea.

Coach: I understand that the only behavior that bothers you at John is that he's been lying often lately about his mistakes. Is it true?

Ann: Yes!

Coach: As we discussed, in order to help John behave, you need to develop more effective parenting abilities and skills. Ann, what are your goals in this matter?

Ann: I do not want to be absurd; I do not want John to never lie again! I want to understand why he does this behavior, why he is lying to me. Then, I want to be able to communicate to him that his behavior is disturbing me, without getting angry, without crying. And, of course, I'd like John to stop lying so often.

Coach: From what I understand, you want to have a closer relationship with John, to be able to communicate what bothers you, without emotionally giving up. Plus, you want to help him communicate better with you and tell you the truth. Is this correct?

Ann: Yes, I want me to better manage my mood and help him in telling me the truth.

*Coach*Ş

Phase 2: Conceptualization and Change Planning

In the second phase of the parenting coaching, Ann learned the ABCs of her anger and how to identify and restructure her irrational beliefs about John's lying, and other stressful situations. She used the situations recorded in the ABC form in order to identify the connection between her thinking and her unhelpful reactions towards John: anger, raising tone, threatening. Then the coach helped her restructure her irrational thinking (see below) and develop and action plan in order to respond calm and negotiate with a set of adequate rules and privileges for telling the truth. The plan included also panned time together and Ann observing and rewarding John's successes and qualities.

Example: ABC Cognitive Model

Coach: Ann, we have established earlier that the issue we are discussing today is John's lying behavior. This is the problem, the A from the ABCDE model. How do you feel about it, about this behavior?

   Ann: I am angry.

   Coach: Ok. What else do you feel about the situation, apart from anger?

   Ann: I'm a little bit down.

   Coach: How do you feel about your anger?

   Ann: I feel guilty that I feel like this.

   Coach: From what you told me, I understand that there are a number of emotions associated with the practical problem we are discussing. First, there are two primary emotions: anger and sadness and another secondary one, associated with anger, namely guilt. I understood well?

   Ann: Yes! That's what I feel!

   Coach: As we discussed earlier, if we manage to control your anger, sadness and guilt, we will find solutions to the practical problem. What emotion is more pressing for you?

   Ann: Anger is the most intense.

   Coach: How does this state of anger manifest?

   Ann: I shout to John and I say things that I regret later.

   Coach: Does this state of anger help you?

   Ann: No, of course not!

   Coach: If the mothers you know would be in the same situation described by you, do you think they would get angry?

   Ann: No, I do not. My mother, for example, was very calm.

   Coach: Do you think that anger is helpful in this situation?

   Ann: No, of course not! It blocks me from getting along with John and approaching effectively this situation.

   Coach: If 50 mothers would be in the same situation described by you, do you think they would get angry?

   Ann: No, I do not. My mother, for example, was very calm.

   Coach: I understand from what you told me that not the event angers us, but the way we interpret it. Is it true?

   Ann: Well, yes…..it is true.

   Coach: So, if the way you interpret the event made you angry, what did you think the last time when John lied? What were your thoughts?

   Ann: That I do not like what he does, that I cannot stand that my baby behaves like that!

   Coach: And this thought made you angry?

   Ann: Yes, even now I am a little angry!

   Coach: So what are you telling yourself right now?

   Ann: I tell myself that I cannot stand him lying.

> *Coach: Okay, so these thoughts cause you anger, anger that is not the state you want to have. How would you like to feel?*
>
> *Ann: I could not be calm or happy, but I could be disappointed.*
>
> *Coach: From what we have learned so far, what do we need to change our anger in disappointment?*
>
> *Ann: To change the thought that does not help me I guess.*
>
> *Coach: Well, what is the thought that does not help you?*
>
> *Ann: That I say I cannot stand this situation.*
>
> *Coach: Is this belief a logical one? Are you out of the situation? When you do not stand something I assume you're not staying there, right? Is the situation so bad?*
>
> *Ann: Well, it's not that bad, I do not like it, but I can tolerate it!*
>
> *Coach: Very good! How do you think you would feel if you had this thought in the same situation?*
>
> *Ann: I think I would not be so angry, maybe just disappointed, and I would not shout to John.*
>
> *Coach: Do you think you could try thinking like that the next time when John is lying to you?*
>
> *Ann: I can try... I do not think it will be easy, but I can try!*
>
> *Coach: Trying is the first step towards succeeding, right?*
>
> *Coach*Ş

Phase 3: Implementation of the Plan, Monitoring and Feedback

The third phase is the most important part of the RE-CB parenting coaching, and involved Ann practicing the implementation of the skills with the help of the coach, monitoring the implementation of these changes and providing feedback. At this stage a readjustment of the initial plan was necessary in Ann's case since Ann set very tight rules regarding John's mistakes and the coach advised her to give him the chance to register success. Then, the coach focused on monitoring the implementation of changes in the relationship between Ann and John and on developing Ann's abilities to provide John with positive feedback, to communicate more closely with John. Also at this stage, the coach guided Ann to discover different activities to do with John, activities to help them communicate better, pay attention to John, and develop the unconditional acceptance of both. At the end of this stage, the coach made a summary of the parenting strategies learned by Ann and the status of their implementation, conducted a monitoring of John's behaviors, developed a coping plan with difficult situations and conducted the final assessment.

Example: Developing New Activities

Coach: Ann, now that I have noticed that the implementation of the changes goes pretty well, that you and John are communicating better and his lying behavior is reduced, we can talk about planning some activities that you are happy to do together and can promote emotional coaching and connection.

Ann: I wanted to talk about it too. For example, John likes animated movies a lot, but I do not agree with them because they have many scenes of violence. I would like to look with him but I do not want to encourage this kind of movies.

Coach: Ann, if there were therapeutic cartoons for children, do you think you could encourage John to look together and discuss upon them?

Ann: Of course. He is curious and would be interested.

Coach: Look, I'm giving you this CD with a series of therapeutic cartoons for John, where he can learn how to deal with shame when he makes mistakes. Do you think he will enjoy this activity together?

Ann: Yes, this sounds very excited! I'm thinking of making an agenda for us and writing down together the general conclusions of each episode. John will be happy about this!

Coach: Sounds great. Now what it might help is for us to watch a few minutes of the episode and practice with me how you plan to discuss what is happening with John during the movie and afterwards, in order to help him integrate the actions and make sure you find a balance in not pushing him but also let him lead discussion. Do you agree to do this in the next five minutes and receive feedback so that we make sure?

Ann: Sure, let's practice this.

[Practice and feedback]

Coach: Do you think until next week you can watch this episode with John, talk about it and draw conclusions?

Ann: Absolutely; now I know also how to make it more fun and use this opportunity to connect with him and help him learn about the value of telling the truth.

*Coach*Ş

Catering for Individual Differences in RE-CB Parenting Coaching

Main findings regarding individual differences in children that can impact the parenting practices were summarized in a recent qualitative synthesis (Klahr & Burt, 2014). The results of this meta-analysis confirmed the perspective found in most of the studies from this field that parenting behaviors are multi-determined. Genetic studies also revealed that parenting practices and behavior differ as a function of genetic factors, but the magnitude of the impact is hard to accurately be determined due to the high

heterogeneity of the studies. The most important variables in this study that were associated with parenting practices were categorized in the following categories:

(1) familial characteristics: ethnicity, community, family financial stress;
(2) parents' characteristics: personality;
(3) child's characteristics: temperament.

Thus, when implementing RE-CB parenting coaching, the coach should be aware about the interactive nature of parenting and how various features of the parents or the child can affect the success of the intervention. Thus, vulnerability factors such as how to deal with stress need to be addressed during the coaching. Furthermore, strengths such as open or extroverted personality style or balanced temperament need to be used as resources during the RE-CB parenting/family coaching process.

General Conclusions: Dos and Don'ts in RE-CB Parenting and Family Coaching

In modern times, due to rapid social change, pressure on the family is intensifying and parenting is assessed realistically, as complex and very challenging task. Thus, parenting coaching is a new and ever-evolving development field and it is necessary to make a synthesis of efficient parenting coaching tools. Providing an overview of best-practices that can be used in the parenting coaching field can have major implications in the development of effective evidence-based parenting programs. The aim of this chapter was to describe the parenting coaching field in relation to the contributions from the REBT field in terms of models used, processes, and techniques. In the next section we present the essential Dos and Don'ts based on the RE-CB parenting/family coaching:

Dos

– Use family/parent coaching when parents and families are presenting with growing goals targeting specific non-clinical difficulties in otherwise well-adjusted families; use RE-CB parenting/family coaching during other types of programs for attaining specific learning goals.
– Use the ABC model in coaching, to identify the specific irrational beliefs associated with dysfunctional parenting behaviors and emotions, restructure them, and the promote rational alternatives in order to learn more adaptive behaviors and to achieve more functional emotional responses.
– Foster the unconditional self-acceptance of parents and their unconditional acceptance of the child as mechanisms for a healthy parent-child bond and foundation for behavior change;
– Coach a "kind and ferm" parenting style which corresponds to positive parenting, with high warmth and responsiveness, but also high behavioral control, positive affect, intimacy, and open communication.

Don'ts

– Do not use RE-CB parenting/family coaching when parents present with problems related to mental illness. In this case parents need to be referred to mental health practitioners in order to receive the adequate treatments.
– Do not use the RE-CB parent/family coaching tools mechanically. Make sure you use evidence-based theories of positive parenting and you understand the REBT philosophy connected to rational parenting, positive parenting and coaching procedures before providing this type of services.

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Health Coaching

Sharon Freeman Clevenger

Introduction

When a client requests help with any health-related problem for general wellness, healthy living and/or adherence to medication management, it is important for the health coach to provide assistance, while navigating boundaries between health practitioner and coach. Health Coaching is a profession designed to be a partnership with a client (or coachee) that requires listening, observation and customized solutions and strategies to support and enhance skills that the client already possesses. In addition, the health coach is very different from a health care practitioner. In many cases, the health care practitioner may use health coaching skills; however, the health coach (HC) who is not a licensed healthcare practitioner, may find it awkward and fraught with ethical quagmires if they cross the boundary into psychological or medical practice. This chapter will provide a basic outline of the differences and definitions of "health care practitioner" and "health coach" along with basic guidelines and skill sets that are critical components for successful health coaching. Health coaching, as opposed to counseling, prescribing or other health related interventions, is a process of collaboration that is focused on the implementation of a plan. The plan may be received from the coachee, nutritionist, medical practitioner, and possibly psychotherapist, with the understanding that the coachee knows what the desired outcome looks like, but may lack the resources, or confidence needed to complete the plan. Theoretical and practical differences between health professions and coaching professionals begin with techniques that are borrowed from athletics, and then integrated with techniques found in the fields of psychology, education, nutrition and medicine. This chapter will use the terms "coachee" or "client" interchangeably for the client, health coach (HC) or "coach"

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for the health coach, "wellness" coaching for preventative coaching and "health" coaching or lifestyle coaching for specific areas of focus, problems and/or conditions (e.g. weight loss, dietary prescription implementation, etc.).

Definition and Brief History of Health Coaching

The origin of the term "coach" is thought to have originated in approximately 1830 at Oxford University as slang for an "instructor/trainer or tutor who "carries" a student through an exam referring to the horse-drawn coach from the 1600s (Fields, 1991). The process of "coaching" probably began much earlier, most likely during the time of Socrates around 450 b.c. In fact, the dialogue that is utilized by clinicians and coaches alike is the "Socratic Dialogue" which is a calculated, planned and masterful method of asking questions for the purpose of stimulating critical thinking and drawing out responses, ideas and presumptions (Weintraub, Segal, & Beck, 1974). Dr. Aaron T. Beck conducted a series of experiments in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the early 1960s and 1970s using the Socratic questioning method and discovered that depressed patients improved much faster if the Socratic questioning method was used than the patients who received treatment as usual (psychodynamic psychotherapy and/or medications) (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). Although the technique appears very easy, if not simple, it is exceptionally difficult to master. One could argue that the Socratic method of questioning was the first coaching technique.

Master clinicians are sometimes viewed with awe and mystification because of the apparent ease with which they appear to simplify conceptualizations of the patient, identify the specific target problem and focus treatment in a way that increased the potential for change. When a student, or newly licensed professional says: "you make it look so easy!" it is a bit shocking: Because it is not easy; it is organized and well-practiced. Coaching skills are not obtained nor developed automatically either. Coaching, mentoring and teaching requires patience, practice and perseverance.

Health coaches have the additional challenge of balancing interactions and responses between the medical or psychological world and the counseling or coaching world. It would be unthinkable to accept the challenge of becoming a hockey coach without first obtaining basic knowledge about the sport, the equipment and the rules of hockey. Health coaching is similar in that the coach working with people who desire assistance with healthy lifestyles that may include struggling with reducing calories, increasing healthy foods and/or confusion about adequate nutrition, should first seek basic knowledge and understanding about individual goals and healthy supportive nutrition. As stated earlier, health coaching, compared to counseling, prescribing or other health related interventions, is a process of collaboration that is focused on the implementation of a health-related plan. The plan may be received from a nutritionist, medical practitioner, the coachee and/or possibly a psychotherapist, with the understanding that the coachee knows what the desired

outcome looks like, but may lack the resources, or confidence needed to complete the plan. Coaching, in general, can be defined as providing corrective and reinforcing guidance, with ongoing feedback, with a focus on the larger, long-term and/or multidimensional goal through deliberate practice and repetition for continuous improvement (Graddy & Wright, 2017). Health coaching, as opposed to coaching in general, is defined as the practice of health education and promotion within a coaching context for purposes of enhancing the well-being of individuals or groups, and to facilitate achievement of health-related goals (Palmer, Tubbs, & Whybrow, 2003).

The goal for a healthy lifestyle coach (HC) who specializes in nutrition, for example, is similar to the hockey coach: Know the general guidelines for overall healthy eating and the location of authoritative knowledge and information. In addition, a HC should be familiar with means to assess for problems that would require referral back to an expert (dietician, medical practitioner, etc.). The HC will be collaborating with the coachee in their quest to correct nutritional deficits, or excesses that they would like to change, and possibly other underlying lifestyle issues that may eventually result in illness symptoms if left uncorrected. An example might be the client who is referred for general poor health related to lifestyle issues. The goal presented by the coachee is "help me do something with this diet they gave me"; however, the HC notices that they smoke cigarettes frequently and do not exercise, even modestly. The first step of coaching a multi-problem client will be to first narrow down what appears to be a vast number of targets into one or two specific targets that are reasonable, proximal to the session and within the repertoire of the client (Guss, Burger, & Dorner, 2017). In the case of a complex coachee requesting dietary assistance, if the HC does not possess a basic understanding of nutrition, and its biochemical importance, the HC may begin with an initial plan that is useless to the coachee. A possible first step with the client above might include helping the coachee locate authoritative resources to explore their knowledge base about diet and nutrition especially regarding nutrients that are essential (must be consumed) without overwhelming the client. Knowing where to locate good resources about nutrients that support a healthy body, build neurotransmitters and support general health and overall wellness goals is the foundation upon which individual plans and goals are built. An example of working with a difficult, or complex client, will be provided later in the chapter.

Theoretical Basis for Conceptualizing the Coaching Process

An examination of the components of successful coaches by Graddy and Wright (2017) identified six principles employed by successful running coaches relevant for promoting skill development in the coachee. The first three are foundational: (1) know your coachee; (2) model the qualities you seek to instill; and (3) communicate clearly and consistently (Graddy & Wright, 2017). The next three skills are described as "higher order" coaching skills that "enable superior coaches to develop others into truly outstanding performers" (Graddy & Wright, 2017). They include: (1) be a

Table 1 Six skills of successful coaches

Skill	Example in sports coaching	Example in health coaching
Know your coachee	Hockey team of 8-year-old boys and girls (as opposed to adult males of university age)	54-year-old with limited reading ability and poor self-confidence to learn something new
Model the qualities you seek to instill	Patience, repeat the skill with encouragement and excitement over improvement. Participate (run along with, work along side)	Confidence in the person's inherent ability to learn based on taking things "one at a time". Stay involved the entire interaction, demonstrate tireless effort (do not take a break while the coachee works)
Communicate clearly and consistently	Using the same words/phrases in age-appropriate language. Provide thoughtful, timely, personal and actionable feedback	Using the same words/phrases clearly over and over until you hear the coachee using the same phrase (example: an acronym). Provide thoughtful, timely, personal and actionable feedback
Be a keen observer	Notice when a child is using an incorrect technique and is getting frustrated	Notice tiredness, frustration or attempts at a task that is too complex (multi-part vs. 1 or 2-part skill)
Inspire greatness	Using words/phrases that include observations of advancing skills. Excitement when communicating and reinforcement of "can-do" attitude (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005)	Using words/phrases that include observations of advancing skills. Excitement when communicating and reinforcement of "can-do" attitude (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005)
Purposefully build strong and interconnected teams	Collaborate and cooperate with parents, other coaches, venue managers, and players on other teams (as appropriate)	Collaborate and cooperate with other health care providers; promote a communication expectation that we "all work together" toward the same goals

Adapted from "Going the extra mile: Lessons learned from running coaches applied to medicine" (Graddy & Wright, 2017). Educational Health (Abingdon)

keen observer; (2) purposefully build strong and interconnected teams; and (3) inspire greatness (Graddy & Wright, 2017). Table 1 provides examples of each of these six components as they apply to health coaching (see Table 1). Each of the six skills of successful coaches includes cognitive, emotional and behavioral components. For example, in Table 1 under "Be a keen observer" the coaching skill is "notice tiredness, frustration or attempts at a task that is too complex". The behavior is "tiredness" and the emotion is "frustration" which includes thoughts that fuel the negative expectation of results, rather than positive expectations of results. The coach can reverse the trend towards negative thinking with negative results through use of the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) techniques. The principles and theory of REBT has extended to coaching; which involves a one-on-one relationship between the HC and the client. The concept of Rational Emotive Behavior Coaching (REBC) was adapted from REBT and introduced by Neenan and Dryden (2002). Developed by Albert Ellis in the 1950s and early 1960s, rational-emotive

therapy (RET later expanded to REBT) focuses on changing a person's thinking rather than telling them what to do differently (Ellis, 1985, 1994). Tim Gallwey, a champion tennis player, and later coach, wrote that instead of telling athletes what to do, they should help athletes get in touch with their own inner thoughts and reactions that would fuel heretofore hidden performance abilities (Gallwey, 1974). A more thorough review of the history of coaching occurs elsewhere in this volume, as does a more in-depth discussion of REBT/REBC; however, Gallwey's work illustrates the inner strength that is accessed when a coach uses the person's own rational thinking and logic. Coaches utilize the therapeutic concepts of REBT to effect behavioral change in the context of the coaching relationship. Using the concepts of REBT/REBC in a logical, pragmatic and stepwise manner can effectively challenge irrational or problematic thought patterns regarding work, health, performance and general lifestyle. An advantage of using the REBC model of coaching is that it includes a format for the coach to observe the client's efforts and give effective feedback in real world settings.

Health coaches who intend to use REBC should be familiar with the components of REBT in order to apply the theoretical model, concepts and techniques to the HC setting. Basically, Ellis defined the ABC's of RET as "A" standing for the "Activating Event (experience, activity or agents) that disturbs the individual. "B" stands for "Beliefs" (rational or realistic) about the activating event; and, "C" stands for "Consequences" of the thinking and beliefs. In some cases, there are irrational beliefs or irrational consequences, such as emotional disturbance or dysfunctional behaviors, which are iB and iC respectively (Ellis, 1985). Ellis expanded the ABCs to include "D" which stands for "Disputing" iB's (Detecting, Discriminating and Debating); and "E" which stands for "Effective" rational beliefs to replace iB's and replace the upsetting or disruptive emotion with "Effective" and rational behaviors (Ellis, 1985).

Professional health coaches and experts in the field recommend that health coaches obtain basic training, if they have not already achieved this, in several theoretical models of behavior change. Recommended theoretical models of behavior change include: Adult Learning Theory (Green & Ellis, 1997; Malick, Das, & Khan, 2008), (Benson & Dundis, 2003; Guss et al., 2017; Lester, Hvezda, Sullivan, & Plourde, 1983; Zalenski & Raspa, 2006), Positive Psychology (Gillham & Seligman, 1999; Seligman, Parks, & Steen, 2004), Cognitive Behavior Therapy (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2008; Palmer & Szymanska, 2008), Rational Emotive Therapy (Katsikis, Kostogiannis, & Dryden, 2016) and The Transtheoretical Model of Change (DiClemente & Prochaska, 1982; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1992; Prochaska, 2010) including Motivational Interviewing (Linden, Butterworth, & Prochaska, 2010; Miller & Rollnick, 2012). The purpose of reviewing and understanding these different models of human behavior is not to train the coach into being a "mini" psychotherapist; instead, it is to provide the framework for understanding the theories that have influenced coaching methodologies.

An example of using the ABCs of REBC is below in an interaction between a fictitious health coach (HC) and a coachee (Ce):

Ce: I am so stupid! There is absolutely no way that I will ever be able to remember what is on the list of good foods and what is on the list of bad foods.

HC: You said that you are stupid. Are you stupid?

Ce: No, I am not stupid, but sometimes I feel like I am stupid!

HC: How do you know you are not stupid?

Ce: I can pretty much take care of myself very well. I do well at work, people have asked me for advice and extra training. So, they must think I know what I am doing.

HC: What is your expectation about remembering what is on the lists?

Ce: I should be able to read it a couple of times and remember what is on both of them.

HC: Has anyone else looked at the lists, read them a couple of times and remembered everything on them?

Ce: (laughs) No. That would be ridiculous I suppose!

HC: So, how is that expectation working for you, that you could read the lists a couple of times and remember everything?

Ce: Not very good! I do not even feel like trying!

HC: What would you like to do instead?

Ce: I could read a few of them several times, or maybe I can just keep a copy with me to look at when I need to remember.

HC: What do you think of that plan?

Ce: That doesn't feel so overwhelming. I am sure I can do that.

The HC observes that the coachee is feeling frustrated and discouraged (Skill: "Be a Keen Observer"). In addition, the HC knows that coachee is a successful worker who is well-respected at his job (Skill: "Know your Client"). Based on what he knows about the client, and the irrational expectations that the coachee has regarding the lists of foods (A), the HC uses a Socratic questioning style to uncover the irrational beliefs (B) that are causing irrational consequences (C) and behaviors. Using these methods, the HC helps the coachee uncover their own rational beliefs and plan by using (D) to discriminate between rational and irrational which results in (E) effective and rational behaviors and beliefs.

Background and Best Practices in Health Coaching

The field of health coaching is undergoing an explosive growth around the world in a variety of settings by coaches from a wide multidisciplinary set of backgrounds. As a result, it became apparent that a set of standards should be developed to guide clients and HCs on ethical practice that includes specific skillsets and strategies. The groundwork was laid by The International Coach Federation (ICF) that defines coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential by helping clients clarify their mission, purpose and goals, and help them achieve that outcome"

(https://www.coachfederation.org/). The specialized skill set of health and wellness coaches led to the creation of the International Consortium of Health & Wellness Coaching (ICHWC) that created a minimum standard and measure of foundational competencies: the knowledge, tasks and skills essential to the practice of health and wellness coaching (www.ichwc.org). In 2017, the ICHWC partnered with the U.S. National Board of Medical Examiners to launch a board certification for health and wellness coaches as the first step in advancing consistency in training, education and competency assessment (ICHWC, 2017). Health coaching has been validated as effective in reducing consequences of disease states, especially in diseases that are life-style related. Medical practitioners including physicians, nurse practitioners and bedside nurses find that they no longer have the time, or incentives, to provide support to those with poor health due to a lack of motivation, skills, knowledge, resources and/or have high levels of chronic stress (Huffman, 2009; Palmer et al., 2003). In fact, patients who do not follow the directives of their health care practitioners are often blamed as "noncompliant". Further examination of the characteristics of people who are considered noncompliant show that they have significant impediments to making changes such as a lack of resources (transportation, income), a lack of support in their environment (living with others who expect, demonstrate and demand that no change occurs), incompetence in the practitioner (lack of training, understanding, knowledge) and possibly difficulties in their own biopathology (low intelligence, delusions, hallucinations, substance dependence). Impediments such as these are perfect targets for the healthy lifestyle coach who offers a de-stigmatized, friendly, supportive platform for help to change personal health habits, health or reverse chronic conditions and access change information that matches their culture, interest and capability.

Early studies evaluating the efficacy of health coaching lacked one or more components that would provide scientific rigor including: the description of the intervention, educational preparation of the coaches and/or randomization of participants (Ammentorp et al., 2013). Despite these significant deficiencies, many studies of health coaching outcomes showed promise. As health and wellness coaching evolved to include standardization of training and improvement in conducting outcome trials, a brighter picture is emerging of the effectiveness of this treatment field. Areas where health coaching has demonstrated efficacy include home healthcare settings (Huffman, 2007), prevention of hospital readmissions in individuals with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (Benzo et al., 2016), patients' general knowledge of diabetes, self-reported health status, diabetes distress, body mass index (BMI), and glycemic control (Delaney et al., 2017), diet, physical activity, and/or sleep habits in primary care settings (Djuric et al., 2017), improvement of physical activity following total knee replacement (TKR) (Losina et al., 2017), improvement of low back pain (Holden, Davidson, & O'Halloran, 2014) promotion of weight loss and improvement of blood pressure management in overweight or obese individuals (Mao, Chen, Magana, Caballero Barajas, & Olayiwola, 2017) and behaviors of nutrition, physical activity, weight management, or medication adherence (Olsen & Nesbitt, 2010). More importantly, analysis of long-term improvement following health coaching interventions demonstrated that most showed

continuation of positive clinical outcomes at least 1 year following completion of health coaching interventions (Sharma, Willard-Grace, Hessler, Bodenheimer, & Thom, 2016). Interventions considered the most effective in health coaching included four themes of key coaching activities: education, personal support, practical support, and acting as a bridge between patients and clinicians (Spence, Cavanagh, & Grant, 2008).

One of the difficulties for health care practitioners who also practice as HCs is the "how to act like an expert without acting like an expert". Coaching is distinctly different from therapy, consultation and education in that the HC is a partner in the change process who actively listens while empowering the coachee in a non-judgmental manner based on the coachee's concerns, not the HC's concerns (Jordan, 2013). This may pose a problem for the licensed practitioner who has a coachee say "I pass out every morning when I wake up, but I think it must be because I'm dehydrated so it's not a big deal". If the HC feels it is imperative to switch out of coach mode and move into clinician mode, the coach needs to ask permission "would you mind if I switched out of my coach role for a minute, so I can give you some information?" Switching to educator or clinician without permission violates the coaching agreement; therefore, it is wise to do it very rarely and only in urgent situations when it is not considered safe to ask the coachee how they will explore obtaining the information themselves (Jordan, 2013).

Nutrition and Weight Management Coaching: Assessment

The modern view of "nutrition" is usually focused on dieting for weight loss or gain, physical health, or both. The HC will focus on general healthy nutrition concepts beginning with an assessment of what the coachee knows regarding both healthy nutrition and healthy lifestyle management. Nutrition assessment begins with basic understanding about "essential" nutrients, which are the many nutrients that the human body cannot make itself. In order to have a healthy body, we have to consume the nutritional components required for normal function, activity of the mitochondria in the cell and numerous other structures that build, or rebuild, DNA, neurotransmitters and nerves. The most common place to start the assessment is with the calculation of "Body Mass Index" which is a simplistic method of evaluating a person's body fat using weight to height ratio. To calculate your BMI, take your weight (in kilograms), and divide by your height (in meters) squared. It is best to have an easy to read BMI table, many of which are readily accessible on the internet; however, general guidelines can provide a "quick" assessment.

BMI Categories:

Underweight = <18.5
Normal weight = 18.5–24.9
Overweight = 25–29.9
Obesity = BMI of 30–35

Morbid Obesity = 40 or greater. In addition, morbid obesity is considered to be 100 lb (45 kilo) over ideal body weight, BMI of 40 or more, or 35 or more and experiencing obesity-related health conditions, such as high blood pressure or diabetes (Kaiser et al., 2009).

The National Library of Medicine has a free BMI calculator along with downloadable tables at: https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmi_tbl.htm. A full review of medical problems related to nutrition as an healthy lifestyle coach is far beyond the scope of this chapter; therefore, the reader is directed to obtain additional authoritative resources for review, some of which are included in the bibliography for this chapter.

A starting point for understanding nutrition, is understanding the groups of nutrients required for general health, disease prevention and cellular repair. The body requires certain building blocks in order to synthesize stressed or damaged muscle, nerve or organ tissues. These basic building blocks include the general nutrient groups of vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, water, essential fatty acids and essential amino acids (Lichtenstein & Russell, 2005). Every cell in our body requires access to nutrients that either must be consumed (essential nutrients) or nutrients that are synthesized (manufactured) in our bodies to maintain structure and function. For example, a neurological disorder common in individuals that chronically over consume beverage alcohol is Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome. Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome manifests as memory impairment, confusion and even dementia, and is related to a severe deficiency of vitamin B1 (thiamine) (Bourre, 2006). Chronic overuse of alcohol eventually causes damage to the normal ability of the intestinal tract to absorb certain nutrients, including thiamine. Thiamine is critical to the process of transporting glucose to the brain; which is the brain's main energy supply (Bourre, 2006). If the deficiency of this important B vitamin is not reversed, additional disruption of the neuromuscular system occurs causing additional symptoms such as pain or numbness in the hands and/or feet (Bourre, 2006). Once the deficiency is identified, the treatment is replacement of thiamine, usually in an intramuscular injection (Bourre, 2006).

Healthy Eating and Healthy Dieting

A health coach may be sought out for help in beginning, maintaining or understanding healthy eating or healthy dieting. The coachee may have decided to seek the help of a HC themselves, or be referred by a friend, family member or health care practitioner. The first step for the HC is to determine the goal, or expectation, the client has for successful outcome and then evaluate how realistic the goal is for that individual. For example, a client may state "I have four weeks to lose 10 kilo to fit into my wedding dress!" which is not only extremely unrealistic, it is likely unsafe.

Using the REBC model, the HC will identify unrealistic goals, identify and review irrational or unreasonable body image beliefs and coach the client in the development of realistic goals and beliefs. In the example above, the activating

event (A) is fitting into a wedding dress. The irrational belief (B) is that their body is (unattractive, obese) and the only solution (also "B") is to rapidly lose weight in order to fit into the dress. An alternative rational belief may be developed using REBC techniques of Disputing, Detecting, Discriminating and Debating (D) to modify the goal of weight loss to a more realistic outcome and possibly adding in the effective (E) idea of modifying the dress to fit the clients body instead of modifying the clients body to fit the dress. All of the above is predicated on two critical factors: (a) the HC must be skilled in REBC techniques, and (b) the HC must be knowledgeable about healthful nutrition and healthy dieting.

Methods for Tracking Food and Exercise

The HC may choose to use one of many methods of logging food consumption, exercise and other factors as a way to observe, and then discuss, beliefs that may drive diet and lifestyle choices. The National Institute of Health's (NIH) Diet History Questionnaire II is an excellent tool for professional diet assessment. The questionnaire has 36 pages; which is usually overwhelming for most people to complete, as well as score by a health coach or other practitioner. It is readily available for download through the NIH website at: https://aghealth.nih.gov/collaboration/qx/dhq.pdf. In this modern, digital age, most HC's and coachee's would likely prefer mobile applications or online computer programs. For example, there are mobile phone applications such as MyFitness Pal™ and/or applications that link with a wearable device such as a FitBit™ watch. There is also an excellent, inexpensive online food and exercise tracking diary at www.MyFoodDiary.com that includes a huge database of foods along with motivational components and a member's only forum. If a person has a spreadsheet program for their computer, there are downloadable spreadsheet templates, such as excelmadeeasy.com, that will calculate you BMI (Body Mass Index), BMR (basal metabolic rate) and other calculators that will outline the total calories you can eat each day along with exercise tracking to reach healthy weight goals. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a free online application at supertracker.usda.gov that includes food tracker, nutrition information on over 8000 foods. The Super-Tracker also includes a virtual diet coach, weight management and activity tracking features and other planning options that can get a person started with an overall current snapshot, healthy goals for activity and nutrition and options to link with a smart watch or smart mobile phone device.

Healthy Lifestyle Coaching

Observing and disputing choices that could be unhealthy, dangerous, or disappointing to the coachee supports the coach-coachee relationship, and improves healthy outcomes. Another example involved a coachee who announced that after doing his

own research, he concluded that the fastest, and best way to lose weight was to consume only oranges, filtered water and peanuts. He then proudly confirms that he was able to lose almost 18 kilos in 4 months using this method. The coach observes (Skill: Know your coachee) that the coachee is irritable, complains of poor sleep, low energy and "brain-fog". The HC chooses to stay in coach mode and explores, with the coachee, what might account for the symptoms along with the decline in health status (C). It is important for the HC to continue to ask questions regardless of the coachee's irrational belief ("B" of ABC) that all is well with their diet choices.

Many people tend to belief that there is a "quick" fix to their health problems. They may be frustrated that modern medicine hasn't invented a "pill" to make them (faster, thinner, smarter, younger); yet, do not explore or change the underlying lifestyle problems that caused the symptoms in the first place. Without exploring and changing unhealthy lifestyle practices, they will likely continue to feel dissatisfied, frustrated, unhealthy and unhappy. For clients that are "stuck" in the vicious cycle of unhealthy lifestyles, the HC adds information from the Transtheoretical model of change to evaluation motivation for change along with, physical and psychological needs (Maslow) to develop a coaching plan that addresses the negative effects of irrational beliefs (REBC). Combining REBC with Motivational Interviewing enhances the coaching process when physical and psychological self-care deficits appear to be strongly maintained. Some behaviors such as restricting sleep, unhealthy eating combined with lack of exercise and possibly substance abuse can pose a complicated multilevel set of problems. If the HC feels the problems are significant, and possibly even an emergency, the HC should refer the client to the appropriate medical professional for a more thorough evaluation and treatment. If the presenting problems are significant, complex and multilevel, the HC begins with the most likely target of change that is within the client's repertoire and skill level. One of the most difficult skills for a HC, or a therapist for that matter, to master is keeping things simple, agreeable and reasonable to avoid overwhelming the client. If the client feels overwhelmed, they are much less likely to follow through, more likely to become discouraged and as a result, discontinue the change process.

Using Rational-Emotive Behavioral Coaching (REBC) for Healthy Lifestyles

The introductory chapter of this book reminds us that:

> Dryden (2011) reminds us that, "emotional problems exist and may get in the way of productive coaching (p.3). This concept is further expanded upon by Neenan and Palmer (Neenan & Palmer, 2012) who stated: "We believe that some distinctions between therapy and coaching are overstated- therapy often gets dismissed as just repairing weakness and dysfunction, while coaching is focused on unlocking potential, improving performance, enhancing well-being and delivering results." (p. 3)".

To review, REBC includes "ABCDE", where A = activating event, B = cognitive response to the event, C = emotional or behavioral consequences (presumed to result from "B"), D = generation of rational or functional "self-talk" options, and E = emotional/behavioral effect attributed to "D" (Ellis, 1994). Activating events, such as finding out your blood sugar is too high and your blood pressure is also high is all too commonly followed by "should" statements (cognitive response) such as "I should have known better", or "I fail at everything so I should never get my hopes up". The resultant emotional disappointment ("C") may be compounded by repeating this defeatist pattern which results in negativity, pessimism and even depression. The goal of the HC is to observe patterns of cognitive responses that are irrational, and unhelpful, and assist the person to evaluate their assumptions rationally (Neenan & Palmer, 2012). Questions that the coach can ask may include:

1. How could you have known better? What evidence is there that you should have known better?
2. What might be the cost to you if you never get your hopes up?
3. Would you apply this same rule of "never getting your hopes" up to someone else?

The should statement, "I should never get my hopes up", includes other cognitive responses that are not spoken aloud. For example, "I should never get my hopes up….and then I will never be disappointed". Or, "I should never get my hopes up…. because I don't have any control". The resultant behavior ("C") may be to avoid any behavior changes because of the assumption that changes are futile. The coach may consider uncovering other thoughts and responses that limit the persons choices regarding health, lifestyle and social interactions.

Case Example: Bill

Bill is a 48-year-old teacher who is asking for help with his energy and motivation in his job. Bill reports feeling tired all day, has gained a tremendous amount of weight over the past 20 years, is now experiencing health problems related to the weight. He reports that he feels like he does not have any control over his food choices, because "there are no options at my work that healthy". He says to his HC that the only way to follow his doctor's orders for his diet is to bring food to work that he has prepared. He also complains that bringing food to work will be expensive or cause him great difficulty to prepare, pack and keep fresh. He has been purchasing food from the snack machines at school that are high in calories, full of sugar and fat, have very few vitamins or mineral content. Bill finishes his statement by saying "it is useless for me to try and fix all of the damage I have caused to by body over the years. I am going to end up fat, in a nursing home and alone".

Bill's story includes several components: (1) poor nutrition, (2) defeatist irrational beliefs and (3) perceived lack of support. The HC may feel overwhelmed at the magnitude and complexity of Bill's problems unless they narrow things down to one

Fig. 1 Example of circular negative cognitive response

problem at a time. In many cases, coachee's like Bill will switch topics to another problem in a circular fashion (which is how they think) which perpetuates the lack of forward action. The thought pattern Bill has established looks like this (Fig. 1):

Sometimes it can be helpful to draw a diagram like the one above, or use other visual aids when this type of a pattern is observed. A visual diagram can help both the coachee and the HC choose a single target and keep the person on one cognitive assumption, or irrational belief, at a time. The HC knows, based on understanding of REBC that intervening with an irrational belief at any point in the cycle will disrupt other irrational beliefs and consequences will be modified; however, it is important to stay on one at a time, otherwise the coaching session will descend into Bill's usual pattern of irrational negative expectations and hopelessness.

The coach is clearly aware that Bill is not eating healthy foods; which will disrupt his body's natural manufacturing systems for healthy brain and body function. The HC is going to use a Socratic dialogue questioning method combined with Motivational Interviewing (MI) principles to uncover a solution that is within Bill's ability and interest; which, will result in a much greater likelihood of success. The five general principles of MI as outlined by Miller and Rollnick include: (1) express empathy, (2) develop discrepancy, (3) avoid arguments, (4) roll with resistance, and (5) support self-efficacy (Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Neenan & Palmer, 2012). The HC knows that providing Bill with solutions to his problems ("maybe you could" or "I think you should…"), rarely improves follow through with the suggested solution; in fact, he may say that he has tried that before, or the suggestion is stupid, useless, doesn't work, etc. More than 250 randomized clinical trials demonstrated the positive effect of having skill in the use of MI for health coaching across many health problem areas (Wolever et al., 2013). Combining MI with REBC creates a compassionate, collaborative relationship in which the coachee feels respected, confident

and competent enough to uncover change targets that are likely to succeed. With Bill, the HC is hoping to locate a target of change around Bill's beliefs (B) that his lunch choices that must be easy (using something he already has at home) and fast (he does not have to use much energy or preparation). The HC asks Bill specific questions that build upon each other incorporating his own information. Together they partner to identify a likely first point of change target (C); which is then explored further in order gather additional detail.

The dialogue between Bill and his HC might look like this:

Bill: It is hopeless. The snack machine at work is quick and easy, even if there are not any healthy choices.

HC: It sounds like your preference is food that is quick and easy. Is that correct? (seeking to understand what Bill is saying)

Bill: Sure. When you live alone, it is too hard to cook for one person, so I just eat whatever is easy and fast.

HC: You said it is too hard to cook for one person. (Repeating what Bill says communicates neutral listening). Do you mean any cooking at all? Or, cooking one portion for lunch at work?

Bill: I usually cook something for myself on the weekends. Maybe some chili or a frozen dinner from the store. But that is not really cooking, it is just warming up. (Here is a target – the coach is going to look for a way to create a lunch meal out of what Bill is already preparing at home).

HC: I just want to make sure I understand your difficulties. When you prepare chili, do you prepare just one portion at a time? (most people cook in batches that make more than one serving; and if not, maybe Bill can make two portions at a time).

Bill: No. I usually make too much for one person. I might eat some left over during the week, but I usually end up throwing some away.

HC: Do you throw it away because it has spoiled?

Bill: Sometimes it goes bad, sometimes it is not enough for a full meal.

HC: How much would a full meal be as compared to a small meal? Say, a lunch size meal? (smiles)

Bill: I see what you are getting at here. I guess I could put some in a little freezer bag and take it to work to warm up!

Coach: Is that possible to do at your work? (making sure that there are no impediments to completing the task)

Bill: Yes. There is a microwave in the teacher's lounge. I have only used it to warm up food from the vending machine, but I could warm up my leftover chili.

HC: (expand the menu) Do you ever make anything else on the weekends that you end up throwing away?

Bill: Sure. Soup, or baked chicken….meatloaf.

HC: would any of those kinds of things work for lunch?

Bill: I do not see why not! Hey! I am actually looking forward to making some things to try this week!

Bill has chosen a change target that is of interest to him, within his repertoire so he feels confident about the change, and impediments to making the change have been explored and eliminated. The HC could have solved his dilemma by telling him to put a portion of what he cooks in a bag and take it to work with him; however, the HC knows that it is very important for the coachee to create a change process themselves to generate positive beliefs (B), emotions and experiences (C). Bill has changed in the self-defeating irrational belief that he can only eat food that he purchases in the vending machine at work. The HC will reinforce this change at the next meeting and possibly expand and/or modify the change process. The HC knows that it is important to make change at a pace that is reasonable for the coachee to avoid overwhelming the coachee before the new ABC process is automatically followed. Conversely, if the HC proceeds too slowly, the coachee will feel frustrated that things are not moving along as expected. For Bill, the next goal may include exploration of food choices that Bill is making, possible fast, easy recipes that he is interested in making and can manage. The HC's awareness of nutrients that are essential and can be added one, or two, at a time may help to provide Bill with a healthy variety of options. An alternative target might be to increase Bill's activity level in the same gradual manner. For example, having him park a little distance farther away from the door at work to increase walking time and then build on walking time after that is established. Using REBC, a Socratic questioning method, along with MI for health coaching increases the likelihood of positive outcomes for the coachee.

Summary

Using REBC, a Socratic questioning style and motivational interviewing to move a discouraged person forward at a pace that is reasonable generates positive outcomes for both the coach and the coachee. The HC observes self-defeating thought patterns, and partners with the coachee to uncover the basis for their negative assumptions. Asking questions in a manner that accesses the coachee's inner abilities while discussing rational responses improves motivation for change and keeps the client on track during the sessions. Health coaching, as opposed to counseling, prescribing or other health related interventions, is a process of collaboration that is focused on the implementation of a health-related plan. The plan may be received from a coachee, nutritionist, medical practitioner, and possibly psychotherapist, with the understanding that the coachee knows what the desired outcome looks like, but may lack the resources, or confidence needed to complete the plan. Coaching, in general, can be defined as providing corrective and reinforcing guidance, with ongoing feedback, with a focus on the larger, long-term and/or multidimensional goal through deliberate practice and repetition for continuous improvement (Graddy & Wright, 2017). Visual forms of communication, such as worksheets or diagrams, can simplify the direction the HC is taking for the client who is used to circular, self-defeating thought patterns. Eventually, the HC will encourage the individual to take a

thoughtful, rational approach to food, behavior and exercise choices that are within their ability, and not overwhelming. Using thought records and food logs can help to promote self-discovery such as reduced cravings for high fat, high carbohydrate foods and increased energy. A key component to HC is having a strong foundation of knowledge in REBT/REBC, Adult Learning Theory, cognitive and behavioral techniques, motivational interviewing, change models and basic nutrition that might affect physical and/or mental health symptoms like energy, mood, sleep, interest, focus, healthy weight, blood sugar, cardiac function and other health-related problems within the abilities of the health coaching scope of practice.

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Sport Coaching

Angela M. Breitmeyer and Martin J. Turner

An Overview of REBT

> "There are lot of worse things that can happen in your life… Shooting a bad score in the last round of golf tournament is nothing in comparison to what other people go through"—Rory McIloy (Murrells, 2011).

The above quote by Rory McIloy is a prime example of the principal objective of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT; Ellis, 1956, 1991), i.e., to respond more rationally to potentially disturbing life events. Moreover, although the use of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT; Ellis, 1956, 1991) has been empirically supported in the literature in its traditional psychotherapeutic application (David, Szentagotai, Eva, & Macavei, 2005; Dryden & David, 2008; Ellis, 1991; Szentagotai, David, Lupu, & Cosman, 2008), in recent years, researchers have begun to examine its efficacy within the context of other settings, including sport (Turner & Barker, 2013; Turner, 2014; Wood, Barker, & Turner, 2016). REBT has its roots in the larger cognitive-behavioral framework and, as such, is based on the premise that one's emotional and behavioral consequences (C) are not a direct result of an adversity or activating events (A), but rather are due to one's beliefs (B) about the given situation; such beliefs can either be rational or irrational (Ellis, 1956, 1991). Rational beliefs promote acceptance of oneself and others, foster adaptive emotional and behavioral responses, are rooted in true reality, and ultimately, assist in goal attainment. Conversely, irrational beliefs—exaggerative in nature—impose demands on oneself and others with shoulds, musts, and oughts, which potentially

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inhibit goal attainment. In the active, working phase of REBT, an individual's irrational beliefs are disputed (D), with the goal of developing a more effective (E) philosophy comprised of rational beliefs (Ellis, 2000). Ellis (1956, 1991) purported that everyone possesses both irrational and rational beliefs, as well as choices about how to feel, think, and behave. Thus, one's beliefs, emotions, and behaviors are interrelated and mutually impactful. Because goal achievement, particularly as it relates to sport performance, is of utmost importance to athletes, teams, coaches, and organizations, REBT has particular relevance in sport settings. In essence, REBT can assist athletes in interpreting a competitive sport situation from a more grounded and rational perspective.

Just as the field of sport psychology has evolved over the past several decades (Portenga, Aoyagi, & Cohen, 2017), REBT has evolved into Rational Emotive Behavior Coaching (REBC; Sherin & Caiger, 2004; Kodish, 2002), and this evolution is particularly relevant to sport populations. Furthermore, the use of the term "coaching" implies a shift from capitalizing upon strengths rather than fixing weaknesses - as "therapy" may suggest. In that sense, athletes and coaches may philosophically be more amenable to engaging in sport psychology consultation if presented to them as "coaching."Likewise, arguably the term "coach" is borrowed from sport, where coaching is typically centered on helping others to develop and achieve their goals (in life and sport). Importantly, if one critically reviews much the REBT in sport literature (see Turner et al., 2016), "therapy" has not taken place. Rather, researchers and practitioners, while ensuring high REBT standards, have actually conducted REBC, in part because the goals of the intervention have been to augment sporting performance (e.g., Wood et al., 2016). REBC is a "direct and pragmatic coaching approach for enhancing human functioning and improving behavioral health" (Ogbuanya et al., 2017), a purpose that fits with what many sport psychology practitioners strive for in their work with athletes.

Similarly, the debate over semantics goes beyond the terminology used to describe the work we do, and extends to the title used to describe the role we assume. For legal, ethical, and scope of practice related issues, non-licensed mental health professionals who work with teams and athletes to improve their sport performance typically refer to themselves as sport psychology consultants, and consequently, the work they do as sport psychology consultation. However, when intervening as a sport psychology consultant, mental skills coaching, e.g., REBC, is implemented. While sport psychology consultants are not technically considered coaches and may or may not hold coaching qualifications, they are typically implementing coaching as part of their sport psychology consultant role.

In sum, the purpose of this chapter is:

- To provide a history of the extension of REBT to REBC, describing relevant concepts, theories, and practices;
- To highlight the importance of REBC within the context of sport coaching;
- To provide a brief history of the development, empirical support and implementation of REBC within the context of sport coaching;
- To address overall attitudes towards REBC from sport coaches;

- To provide practical advice for the successful implementation of REBC in the sport setting;
- To address limitations and future directions for the use of REBC with athletes and teams.

REBT and Sport Psychology Interventions

Within the context of sport psychology consultation, there is intervention in the traditional psychotherapeutic sense, i.e., clinical sport psychology (Gardner & Moore, 2006) and intervention provided in a more educational manner (Danish, Petipas, & Hale, 1992), i.e., sport performance enhancement. With sport performance enhancement, the focus is largely on the "Canon" (i.e., psychological skills training; Andersen, 2009), encompassing strategies such as goal-setting, self-talk, imagery, and relaxation (Weinberg & Williams, 2006). Also, 'The Canon' (Andersen, 2009) of sport psychology, a set of psychological skills (imagery, self-talk, relaxation, concentration, and goal setting) stemming from cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT; Beck, 1979), has generated much research evidence and has been widely adopted by practitioners. Furthermore, Perna, Neyer, Murphy, Oglivie, and Murphy (1995) addressed three primary approaches to sport psychology consultation, i.e., an educational model, clinical model, and cognitive-behavioral consultation model. As its primary objective, the educational model promotes teaching mental skills to athletes. In contrast, the clinical model, as the name suggests, encompasses a much more in-depth approach to assessment, diagnosis, and treatment for an athlete's presenting concern. Obviously, of the three frameworks presented by Perna et al., REBT would be most consistent with the cognitive-behavioral consultation model.

The three models highlighted by Perna et al. (1995) discussed the distinction between pure sport performance enhancement (educational); hybrid, i.e., combined clinical and educational; and clinical models of sport psychology service provision. The cognitive-behavioral consultation model, and 'the Canon' (Andersen, 2009), have chiefly been informed by Beckian Cognitive Therapy (Beck, 1979), with the role of REBT in developing and informing the concepts in the Canon somewhat overlooked. In fact, despite the apparent aforementioned suitability of REBT for use in sport settings, something recognized by Bernard (1985) over 30 years ago, REBT has not garnered the level of attention one might expect within the context of sport (Turner & Barker, 2013). The scarcity of the reported application of REBT in sport is likely due to a number of factors, but chiefly the concepts specific to REBT are often reported in sport literature without explicit reference to the theory from which they emerged, such as rationalization and restructuring (e.g., Thomas, Maynard, & Hanton, 2007), disputation, rational-emotive imagery, and positive thinking (Larner, 2008). Thus, although REBT concepts have filtered into the practices of sport psychologists, they have done so informally and somewhat esoterically by those with a keen interest, who have not published their work. Further, some sport psychologists,

and indeed service users such as coaches, athletes, and governing bodies, may be deterred by REBT's clinical connotations (Marlow, 2009).

In addition, there has been a suggestion that there are negative perceptions from some cognitive-behavioral therapists about REBT (e.g., Trower & Jones, 2001). Evidently, if traditional REBT and CT are to be more formally accepted in sport settings, the word "therapy" must be shed. Some researchers and practitioners have adopted the term "Smarter Thinking" to describe REBT as applied to performance settings such as sport, in order to relinquish the potentially negative connotations of REBT (Turner, 2014). Therefore, although the use of REBT in sport is just beginning to generate significant research, the ideas and concepts Ellis proposed can be found within current sport psychology traditions, albeit without the mention of Ellis or his contemporaries.

Coaching Defined

In sport, coaching is considered to be quite a broad activity involving socio-pedagogical and socio-cultural aspects, where athlete learning is seen as the fundamental aim, but the role of athlete socialisation cannot be overlooked (Cassidy, Jones, & Potrac, 2016). Most literature on sports coaching considers the athletes as the "coached", but in business it is common for leaders to be the recipients of coaching. Indeed, coaching can benefit individuals and sport teams, as well as managers and executives. Segers et al. (2011) provided several delineations of coaching (i.e., executive coaching, skills coaching, performance coaching and development or life coaching). Executive coaching essentially suggests a variant of coaching in which the executive is the coachee. Skills coaching requires an emphasis on specific behaviors, usually one or two primary skill areas. Conversely, performance coaching emphasizes an individual's specific performance potential, examining facets including job requirements, deficits, and distractors, with the ultimate goal of optimizing performance. Finally, development or life coaching adopts a comprehensive, holistic perspective, in which a greater emphasis is placed on an individual's thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and goals in order to enhance personal effectiveness and life satisfaction (Segers et al., 2011).

Ivey, Ivey, and Zalaquett (2010) suggested that coaching, a type of strengths-based interviewing, could be used as an adjunct to traditional psychotherapeutic practice. They caution that coaching is not "counseling light" (p. 109), nor does it encompass self-declared competence as a coach. Various organizations outline certification and credentialing standards in order to become a coach, but such implementation is not necessarily universally used. For instance, within the United States, the term "life coach" has a particular negative connotation, as frequently individuals without adequate training misrepresent themselves and attempt to provide services for which they are not adequately trained.

Definition of REBC

Although there are several theoretical models of coaching noted above, the focus of the present chapter is on Rational Emotive Behavior Coaching (REBC), a model that has its origins in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). Coined and pioneered relatively recently by Kodish (2002)and Neenan and Dryden (2002), REBC encompasses the fundamental aspects of REBT, such as the ABCDE model, and extant research in sport have all used the ABCDE model as the key driver for the reported interventions (see Turner et al., 2016).

REBC Within the Context of Sport

As previously mentioned, within the cognitive-behavioral consultation model, Murphy and Jowdy (1992) suggested eight primary steps: (a) consultation orientation, (b) sport familiarization, (c) evaluation and assessment, (d) goal identification, (e) group intervention, (f) individual intervention, (g) outcome evaluation, and (h) reassessment of goals. It is important to note that the steps within the cognitive-behavioral consultation model are especially applicable within a coaching framework. In their 2014 article, Turner and Barker suggested completing a needs assessment in order to ascertain the appropriateness of REBC paralleling the evaluation phase of the cognitive-behavioral consultation model. If deemed an appropriate intervention, during the implementation phase, athletes are educated about the nature and structure of REBC before identifying the emotional and behavioral consequences (C), the adversity (A), and irrational beliefs (B). In the disputation (D) phase, irrational beliefs are challenged through the use of evidence, logic, and pragmatics, with the ultimate goal of facilitating the effective rational belief phase (E). In order to reinforce the effective new philosophy, both cognitive and behavioral homework assignments are incorporated and reviewed. Finally, there is a reinforcement phase that serves as a termination session before formally evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention (Turner & Barker, 2014).

In addition to the ABCDE model, the solution-focused coaching model (de Shazer, 1988) of GROW can also be successfully incorporated when intervening with teams and athletes. The GROW model is an acronym for: Goal, Reality, Options, and Will (GROW; Kauffman, 2008; Whitmore, 1996, 2004). The goal (G) refers to an individual's desired outcome. When generating goals, it is important to explore the individual's current reality (R) and specifically the strengths upon which the goal can be achieved. Options (O) encourages the individual to generate a list of potential strategies to be applied. Finally, the will (W) addresses the plan to act on goals, commit to a plan, implement changes, measure the success and refine changes. Given the ultimate goal of sport performance enhancement, the GROW model is one that is especially applicable within athletic settings.

According to REBT, there is a primary belief that can take the shape of a demand (irrational) or preference (rational). Secondarily, there are three related beliefs that can promote awfulizing (irrational) or anti-awfulizing (rational), low frustration tolerance (irrational) or high frustration tolerance (rational), and self-/other-depreciation (irrational) or self-/other-acceptance (rational; Dryden, 2009a, 2009b). As previously mentioned, the ultimate goal of REBT is to substitute previously maintained irrational beliefs with rational ones to facilitate healthy emotional and behavioral consequences (Ellis, 1991).

Within the context of sport, oftentimes players demand certain outcomes regarding their performances, e.g., "I must win," "I must break my PR," "I really ought to be the best in my sport," etc. Athletes may also have a tendency to awfulize, elaborating on their primary beliefs, e.g., "I must win; otherwise, it's terrible," "I must break my PR, and if not, it's awful," "It would be pathetic if I am not the best in my sport." Furthermore, they may also exhibit low frustration tolerance, telling themselves that they "can't stand it" if they were to lose, come short of their personal record, or not be #1 in their sport. Finally, athletes have a tendency to exhibit self-deprecating thoughts, particularly within the context of failure or loss, e.g., "When I don't win/break my record/come in second, I am a complete failure." In essence, the athlete internalizes an external behavior, making it more about who (s)he is as a person, rather than accepting it as a behavioral outcome.

If an athlete exhibits a high level of these irrational primary and secondary beliefs, REBT would be an optimal intervention because, through disputation, it would assist the athlete in developing more rational beliefs. For instance, "I must win" could be replaced with "Although I want to win this match, I don't necessarily have to win." Rather than thinking "I must win; otherwise, it's terrible," an athlete could instead think "I want to win, but if I don't, it's not terrible." Similarly, "I must break my PR, and if not, it's awful," could be replaced with "I would really like to break my PR, but if I don't, it's not awful." "It would be pathetic if I am not the best in my sport" could be replaced with "I would like to be the best in my sport, but if I'm not, it's not pathetic." Rather than telling themselves that they "can't stand it" if they were to lose, come short of their personal record, or not be #1 in their sport, they could acknowledge their desire to succeed, but acknowledge that it is still tolerable if they don't. Finally, in order to promote self-acceptance, the thought "When I don't win/break my record/come in second, I am a complete failure" could be substituted with "When I fall short of my goals, it's unfortunate, but that does not mean I am a complete failure."

The Use of REBC-Based Assessment Tools Within the Sport Setting

To ascertain the degree to which an individual maintains irrational beliefs, an assessment tool such as the Shortened General Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (SGABS; Linder, Kirkby, Wertheim, & Birch, 1999) could be incorporated.

Turner and Barker (2014) discussed the use of this tool as a means to determine the degree to which athletes maintained irrational beliefs in order to determine the goodness of fit for REBC intervention. However, it is important to note that the SGABS is not a contextually valid measure within sport, and as such, its reliability in marking changes in irrational beliefs in sport cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, recently the irrational Performance Beliefs Inventory (iPBI; Turner et al., 2016) has been developed as a brief (28-item) psychometric for use in performance settings such as sport. Guided by recommendations for the development of irrational beliefs measures (Terjesen, Salhany, & Sciutto, 2009), and building on extant psychometrics, the iPBI reflects current manifestations of REBT theory (e.g., Dryden, 2015)and measures only beliefs, not emotional and or behavioural outcomes. Specifically, the iPBI assesses the four core irrational beliefs (primary beliefs, low-frustration tolerance, awfulizing, and depreciation). The ability to accurately measure irrational beliefs in athletes can help to identify risk factors for dysfunctional emotions and maladaptive behaviours, and assess REBT effectiveness in athletes. In REBT the chief aim is to reduce irrational beliefs in favor of rational beliefs, and therefore the iPBI needs to be sensitive enough to detect changes. For example, one recent study showed how a five-session REBT intervention was met with significant reductions in irrational beliefs as measured using the iPBI (Deen, Turner, & Wong, 2017). However, the evidence for the use of the iPBI in athletes is in its infancy, and important additional validity studies must take place to ensure the suitability of the iPBI across sporting contexts and athlete demographics.

When incorporating REBC with athletes, it is important to generate a thorough case conceptualization informed by a needs assessment, which can be derived from the ABC model. In working with coaches, athletes, and teams, it is beneficial to pay attention to the language they use when describing various sport-specific events. Frequent use of the words "must," "ought," and "should" could all signify a potentially high level of irrational beliefs. Furthermore, there are several fundamental considerations that must be taken into account when using REBC with athletes and teams.

Important Considerations for Implementing REBC in Sport

The provision of effective sport psychology services requires the detailed consideration of What, Why, When, Where, hoW, and vitally, Who requires the service (i.e., 6 Ws). For the purposes of this chapter, we will use REBC as our "What," and hereafter discuss the other 5 Ws. The consideration of these 5Ws would occur prior to undertaking intervention work with an athlete or group of athletes, and where the context permits, may include observations of the performance environment to gain a deeper understand of the parameters within which work may be conducted.

Why. The Why of using REBC with athletes should be answered by an appropriate and detailed needs analysis with the athlete (s). The most important criteria for

using REBC is whether or not the athlete harbors irrational beliefs, and to what extent these irrational beliefs are causing maladaptive emotions and behaviors. An important part of this needs analysis of course includes a full assessment of the athlete's As, Bs, and Cs, skills that can be developed and refined by continued development in using REBC as a practitioner and by reading the many guidance books available (see "Suggested Reading" at the end of the chapter).

As part of assessing the athletes Bs, it is also beneficial to include one of the many psychometrics available that measure irrational beliefs. With athletes, the iPBI (Turner et al., 2016) is recommended due to its contextual validity, but broader measures that provide more complete assessments are available (e.g., The Attitudes and Belief Scale-2, ABS-2; DiGiuseppe, Leaf, Exner, & Robin, 1988), but take longer to complete for the athlete. For the iPBI, athletes who score above the norm average for any of the four core irrational beliefs (see Turner et al., 2016) are considered suitable for REBC intervention work. It is important that the practitioner recognize when to use, and when to not use, REBC with athletes. As previously mentioned, practitioners can draw on the wealth of literature surrounding "the Canon" (Andersen, 2009) to assist athletes who do not present with irrational beliefs.

Finally, a big part of the Why assumes that the practitioner is trained in the use of REBC. That is, if one asked the question "why not use REBC?" an important answer would be "because I am not trained in REBC." We encourage practitioners to train in REBC and to engage in continuing professional development to maintain their REBC competencies.

When. Much of the REBC research has employed single-case designs (Turner et al., 2016), whereby the intervention is applied after sufficient baseline data has been collected on the target variables (e.g., irrational beliefs, anxiety). Single-case guidelines stipulate that the intervention should be applied when baseline data, collected over at least 8 weeks, is stable (Barker, McCarthy, Jones, & Moran, 2011). However, there are some ethical implications here. Making an athlete wait for a long period of time prior to administering an intervention is perhaps unethical, and in reality, does not fit with how practitioners work in the sporting environment. While REBC should not be rushed into, it is the practitioner's prerogative to decide how important the baseline period is vs. the severity and urgency of the athlete's need for help. Another consideration of the "When" of REBC is the schedule for service provision. Guidelines from the research (Turner & Barker, 2014) suggest that once per week is sufficient as this allows for consistent meetings, ensures momentum in the work being done, and also allows enough time homework assignments to be executed. The reported duration of REBC used in sport varies, but generally five to seven sessions are used (e.g., Wood et al., 2016). This will depend on the nature of the athlete's issue (s) and closer to ten sessions might be more realistic to ensure that REBC is fully integrated into the athlete's approach to their sport.

Where. In sport, one cannot assume that a suitable room will always be available for REBC work. Practitioners may find that they need to be creative and opportunistic when it comes to applying REBC in a sport environment where private spaces are not always easily afforded for one-to-one work. A sport psychologist

will often work, for example, in locker rooms, court side, rest areas, buses, trains, and hotel lobbies, and also via Skype and phone calls. This arrangement obviously poses challenges in terms of how practitioners communicate REBC concepts, and also, can limit the depth of the conversation, especially if conducted in a relatively open space. The practitioner must learn to be flexible in their approach to REBC to choose the appropriate places and times to conduct more complex REBC activities with athletes.

How. In many ways, the "How" of REBC in sport depends on the other "Ws" and is informed by the training a practitioner has completed and guidance obtained from the literature. But here, we are referring to the broader practicalities of applying REBC in sport, such as the mode and communication strategies one might use. Regarding format, in group-settings with sports teams, as well as an educational approach, is often preferred. The rationale is because group educational REBC is more cost- and time-effective for sporting organizations, and if done well, can yield comparable results to one-to-one REBC. However, short-term group education is likely to produce short-term changes in irrational beliefs (Turner, Slater, & Barker, 2014) compared to longer term REBC education (Turner, Slater, & Barker, 2015). When delivering group-educational REBC, practical and interactive activities are recommended, such as the badness scale and flipchart-based diagram drawing (Turner & Barker, 2014). Also, facilitating discussion between athletes on core components of REBC works well. This might include a conversation about As, Bs, and Cs, and disputation at a group level can be particularly lively. One recent study (Vertopolous & Turner, 2017) used group sharing at the end of an REBC-education program to allow the athletes to speak to the group about how they have used the ABCDE model in their performances. Therefore, if group-level REBC-education is deemed to be the most suitable mode of delivery with a team, being creative is key, so that the session is engaging, but also impactful.

To provide tailored support to athletes using REBC, one-to-one modes of delivery are preferred, and as such the majority of literature in sport reports the effects of one-to-one REBC with athletes (See Turner et al., 2016). But even within a one-to-one mode of delivery, the use of drawing to illustrate the ABCDE model is useful, and practical activities such as the badness scale are interactive and impactful. Also, the nature of many sports means that practitioners are not always able to consult with the athlete in person, and therefore a range of synchronous communication methods are also used. This includes phone calls, and even better, video calls (Cunningham & Turner, 2016). Many athletes spend considerable time travelling to events to compete, and the ability to provide support even when you cannot physically meet is vital for maintaining momentum in one-to-one work.

Who. The extant REBC in sport literature has seen REBC applied with both youth and adult, male and female, elite and sub-elite, athletes, from various sports such as archery (Wood, Barker, Turner, & Sheffield, 2017), ten-pin bowling (Marlow, 2009), cricket (Turner & Barker, 2013), football (Bernard, 1985), martial arts (Cunningham & Turner, 2016), squash (Deen et al., 2017), table tennis (Si & Lee, 2008), soccer (Turner et al., 2015). Research also shows that REBC can be used effectively within both Eastern (Deen et al., 2017) and Western

(Vertopolous & Turner, 2017) cultures, and is also effective with disabled athletes (Wood et al., 2017). Therefore, REBC is applicable across a broad range of athletes, so long as the methods used to deliver the work fit the population. Age is perhaps the most important factor that changes the way in which REBC is delivered most significantly. One idea that is often forgotten about REBC is that it fundamentally relies on meta-cognition (i.e., the ability to think about thoughts; Kuhn & Dean, 2004), and therefore the athlete's meta-cognitive ability should be considered, if not assessed. Younger athletes are unlikely to have the meta-cognitive ability of older athletes because meta-cognitive ability improves with age (Kuhn & Dean, 2004) therefore typically, with younger athletes more time is spent on connecting B-C, and weakening the A-C connection. That is, significant time is spent at the start of REBC helping the young athlete to understand that thoughts and beliefs drive emotions, and that particular thoughts and beliefs may be problematic for long-term athletic performance. That's not to say that older athletes already have an awareness of the B-C connection and problematic beliefs, and therefore even with older performers, time is spent at the start of the work to assess and work with their meta-cognitive ability. Of course, using REBC should be considered on a case-by-case basis; using the 6 Ws framework, consider the following case illustration using REBC with a female collegiate coxswain (on a rowing team, the appointed teammate in charge of navigation and steering of the boat) in her senior year of competition.

REBC Case Illustration

Who. Susan Rowe, a 21 year-old, senior Division I collegiate coxswain for the rowing team was self-referred for sport psychology services after she was recently demoted from her starting position and was replaced by the freshman second-string coxswain. Susan expressed a high level of disappointment in herself and frustration with the coach's decision to demote her. Furthermore, she endorsed a history of both generalized anxiety and sport performance anxiety, for which she previously sought the services of a sport psychologist during her junior year of high school. She indicated that her previous sport psychologist used cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and she found the interventions to be very effective. She specifically recalled being taught thought stopping and cognitive reframing techniques and acknowledged them as helpful, but indicated an interest in trying something similar, yet novel. In her team role as coxswain, she maintained a high level of responsibility in providing direction to her teammates who physically row the boat, and such a position requires effective shifting of attention, quick decision making, adaptability, and emotional regulation. Immediately preceding the referral, Susan explained that she noticed herself becoming increasingly frustrated with herself, her coach, and her teammates. She acknowledged engaging in a high level of self-depreciation (e.g., "I suck"), awfulizing (e.g., "It's terrible that Cassie, a freshman, passed me, a senior,

up for the starting position"), and demandingness (e.g., "The coach should give me my position back"). Behaviorally, she noted that she began yelling at her teammates, experiencing difficulty with decision-making, and becoming frustrated during practice and competition. Emotionally, she indicated that her sport performance anxiety resurfaced and described herself as feeling "keyed up" and "on edge." Susan sought sport psychology services in order to more effectively manage her performance anxiety, with the hopes of re-earning her starting position as coxswain.

What. REBC was arrived at as an appropriate intervention for the athlete, as she possessed: a high level of irrational beliefs, particularly regarding her efficacy as a coxswain (primary beliefs); low frustration tolerance with regard to her rowing team's behavior and her coach's decisions; awfulizing after her recent demotion from having the starting position; and a high level of self-depreciation. Most notably, these irrational beliefs resulted in maladaptive emotional (e.g., anxiety) and behavioral consequences (e.g., yelling at teammates). Specific REBC interventions included Socratic questioning, applied cognitive disputation, skills training, rational coping statements, and between-session practice of these statements. Through the use of REBC, my ultimate goal was to facilitate the development of Unconditional Self-Acceptance and Unconditional Other Acceptance (USA; UOA; Ellis, 2000) within Susan.

Why. Because Susan's irrational beliefs resulted in maladaptive emotions, namely anxiety, and maladaptive behaviors, namely yelling and compromised decision-making, REBC was determined to be an appropriate intervention. For the purpose of this case illustration, the activating event (A) of her recent demotion will be the primary focal point. Unfortunately, at the time of my work with Susan, a sport-specific measure of irrational beliefs, such as Turner et al.'s (2016) iPBI, was not available. However, given the evidence of the four core irrational beliefs (see Turner et al., 2016), i.e., primary beliefs, low frustration tolerance, awfulizing, and depreciation, within Susan's intake and subsequent sessions, Susan was deemed an appropriate candidate for REBC. In addition to the acknowledgment of several irrational beliefs, Susan endorsed experiencing resultant maladaptive behavioral and emotional responses and expressed a desire to replace them with more adaptive responses. Furthermore, Susan had previous experience with CBT and was highly self-aware regarding her beliefs' subsequent impact on her emotions and behaviors.

When. Susan sought out sport psychology services during the Spring semester of her senior year, which was shortly after the onset of her competitive rowing season. I spent two sessions completing the intake assessment and needs analysis. Given the evidence I had for the presence of the core irrational beliefs (see Table below), I opted to begin the orientation phase to REBC during the third session and implemented REBC interventions for the remaining nine sessions. I determined that two sessions were enough to collect baseline data, given her previous work with a sport psychologist from a cognitive-behavioral framework, as well as Susan's psychological mindedness and self-awareness. I met with Susan on an approximate weekly basis for 12 sessions total.

Susan's Core Irrational Beliefs

Core irrational belief type	Specific examples within Susan
Primary belief	"Things never go my way"
Low frustration tolerance	"I can't stand the fact that Cassie replaced me"
Awfulizing	"It's awful how the Coach demoted me"
Depreciation (self and other)	"I suck" "My teammates suck"

Where. When providing sport psychology services, one cannot assume that an appropriate venue will always be available; however, in my work with Susan, I was fortunate to be able to have weekly 50-min sessions at the university's counseling center. We met in my office, which was quiet, private, and comfortable. It was an appropriate environment to be able to provide psychoeducation, review Susan's homework (typically between-session practice or completion of REBT self-help forms), and engage in both didactic and Socratic disputation.

How. In my work with Susan, I had approximately weekly individual sessions that were 50 min in duration. Below is a general outline of the structure and content of sessions within the 3-month time frame of my REBC work with her:

Session	Purpose/target	REBC/counseling interventions used
1	Intake assessment; needs assessment	Information gathering, active listening, rapport building
2	Obtaining baseline data/ observations, treatment planning	Information gathering, active listening, rapport building, Socratic questioning
3	REBC orientation/ introduction	Education, skills training, Socratic questioning
4	Target: recent demotion	Education, ABCs, REBT self-help form, didactic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice
5	Target: attitude towards coach	Education, ABCs, REBT self-help form, didactic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice
6	Target: attitude toward teammates	Education, ABCs, REBT self-help form, didactic and Socratic dialogue rational coping statements, between session practice
7	Target: attitude toward self	ABCs, didactic and Socratic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice
8	Target: frustration tolerance	ABCs, didactic and Socratic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice
9	Target: anxiety management	ABCs, didactic and Socratic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice
10	Target: decision making	ABCs, didactic and Socratic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice

Session	Purpose/target	REBC/counseling interventions used
11	Target: acceptance (UOA/USA)	Education on UOA/USA; ABCs, didactic and Socratic disputation, rational coping statements, between session practice
12	Target: wrap-up; generalization	Continued psychoeducation on UOA/USA; skills training

While a detailed description of every REBC intervention incorporated in my work with Susan goes beyond the scope of this chapter, I would like to provide a brief overview of the progressive nature of my REBC work with Susan, as well as offer some reflections as to the overall effectiveness of the REBC intervention. Essentially, the first three sessions were largely for information gathering and rapport building, as well as orienting Susan to the philosophy and practice of REBC. Pragmatically, in the initial stages of REBC, the practitioner should ensure that (s)he has gathered sufficient data to complete the needs analysis and plan for intervention. Sessions 4–11 were largely the working phase of REBC. Commonly incorporated REBC interventions were education on the influence of our thinking on our reactions, ABCs, didactic and Socratic disputation, rational coping statements, and between session practice. In Session 4, Susan created what she referred to as an "I CAN," which was a self-affirming, self-decorated coffee can in which she wrote and placed a minimum of one new rational coping statement per week and practiced it. The "I CAN" rational coping statements and the completion of REBT self-help forms served as the primary between session practice. In addition, Susan and I worked to comprise a peak performance visualization script that she listened to weekly as a means to affirm the rational coping statements and visualize optimal sport performance. Sessions 11 and 12 largely emphasized the facilitation of Unconditional Other Acceptance (UOA) and Unconditional Self-Acceptance (USA), as well as generalization of skills learned and the development of more rational beliefs.

Regarding the effectiveness of the REBC intervention, due to limited resources at the counseling center, formalized quantitative measures were not incorporated pre- and post-coaching. Thus, the majority of the insights gleaned regarding the effectiveness of REBC were largely anecdotal and through qualitative report. In terms of specific behavioral observations, I identified the following: self-reported reduction in anxiety and maladaptive behaviors (e.g., yelling); attendance of every session punctually; active participation in session; consistent compliance with homework and between session practice; self-reported increased frustration tolerance at practice and competition; decreased demandingness and awfulizing; and consistent motivation/engagement throughout the sessions. Furthermore, her decision-making abilities improved, as well as her ability to effectively regulate her emotions. She also indicated that since implementing REBC, she was able to refrain from yelling at her teammates. Susan also stated that she was better able to remain focused at practice and actively participated. And while Susan did not regain her

starting position in the tenure of my work with her, her frustration tolerance and acceptance regarding the situation increased significantly. She accepted her role on her team and shifted her focus to one of gratitude rather than resentment.

What I Have Learned: Dos and Don'ts in REBC Coaching

In order to illustrate some of the most salient lessons gleaned from using REBC within the context of sport, see the following table:

Do's	Don't's
Adopt an empathic, collaborative approach in your work with athletes/teams	Abruptly begin with the education phase of REBC
Pay attention to the language of athletes and coaches	Impose your own inferences or assumptions onto the athlete/team's presenting issue
Assess for the presence of irrational beliefs within the athletes/coaches	Disregard the assessment phase
Use appropriate, normed, standardized assessments when available	Blindly apply REBC with all teams, athletes, and coaches for all presenting concerns/issues
Provide adequate education on the philosophy and techniques of REBC	Hastily rush through the education phase of REBC
Make appropriate, sport specific changes to the language of REBC (e.g., "smarter thinking; Turner, 2014)	Rigidly adhere to all terminology, language, and concepts of REBC if it does not appear to be particularly relevant to the coach/team/ athletes
Incorporate adequate disputation through the use of evidence, logic, and pragmatics	Use inadequate disputation when challenging a coach/team/athlete's irrational beliefs
Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of your approach and make modifications when necessary	Assume that your REBC interventions are effective without tangible evidence
Reinforce the athlete/team/coaches' effective new philosophy	Neglect the reinforcement phase
Be patient with the process of REBC	Enforce your own irrational beliefs regarding the process of REBC
Be patient with yourself in the process of REBC	Enforce your own irrational beliefs regarding your ability to effectively intervene with REBC

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter sought to examine the relevance and effectiveness of REBC within the context of sport. More specifically, the evolution of REBT to REBC was highlighted, describing relevant concepts, theories, and practices. Furthermore, the development, empirical support and implementation of REBC for athletes and sport teams was discussed, highlighting the 6 Ws. Finally, practical strategies were provided (i.e., "Do's and Don't's") for the successful implementation of REBC in the sport setting. In sum, while the application of REBC to sport has been a relatively recent trend, the existing empirical research shows promise for its overall

effectiveness. However, more research is warranted in order to ascertain its effectiveness and generate standards of best practices for the use of REBC with sport teams, coaches and athletes.

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Online Resources

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