First Steps in Using REBT in Life Coaching

by WINDY DRYDEN, Ph.D.
INTRODUCTION

Your basic goal as a life coach is to help your coachee identify, pursue and ultimately achieve her personal life objectives, not help her with her emotional problems per se. That is the role of the psychotherapist or counselor. You should only deal with your coachee’s emotional problem when it serves as a specific obstacle to her pursuing her personal objectives if she has become stuck in an unhealthy way of responding to adversity. If your coachee has many such problems, refer her to a psychotherapist or counselor so she can then engage in life coaching more productively. However, if your coachee can respond productively to this problematic emotion using her own resources, then let her do so and don’t intervene. (If you make such an intervention, you might be indicating to your coachee that she isn’t capable of dealing with such obstacles on her own, when she actually does have that capability.)

There are a number of approaches to helping coachees with their emotional problems in life coaching, and it is important that you understand something of the one I will be discussing in this book. This is known as Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). REBT is based on an old idea attributed to Epictetus, a Roman philosopher, who said that “Men are disturbed not by things, but by their views of things.” In REBT, we have modified this to say that “People disturb themselves about things by the rigid and extreme beliefs that they hold about these things.” Once they have disturbed themselves, they often try to get rid of their disturbed feelings in ways that ultimately only serve to maintain their problems.

When you use REBT in life coaching, you help your coachees identify, examine and change the rigid and extreme beliefs that,

1 It was decided by the toss of a coin that the coach would be male and the coachee female.
from an REBT perspective, underpin their emotional problems, and to develop alternative flexible and non-extreme beliefs. You will also help them examine the ways in which they have tried to help themselves that haven’t worked, and encourage them to develop and practice more effective, longer-lasting strategies.

In helping your coachees deal with their emotional problems, you will teach them a framework which helps them break down their problems into their constituent parts. You will also teach them a variety of methods for examining and changing their rigid and extreme beliefs, and various techniques to help them consolidate and strengthen their alternative flexible and non-extreme beliefs.

This step-by-step guide shows you how to deal with your coachee’s emotional problem when it prevents her from working toward her personal objectives, by using the theory and practice of REBT adapted to a coaching setting.

Windy Dryden

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Step 1

Determine whether your coachee has an emotional problem. If so, is she stuck or is she still able to pursue her personal objectives?

Does your coachee have an emotional problem?

The eight main problematic emotions that coachees experience when faced with life’s adversities are:

• anxiety
• depression
• shame
• guilt
• hurt
• anger
• jealousy
• envy

These are known as unhealthy negative emotions (UNEs) in REBT, and it is important to assess whether or not your coachee has an emotional problem. You do this by answering the following questions:

Is your coachee stuck?

Just because your coachee experiences a UNE about an adversity doesn’t justify your helping her with it. Many people experience UNEs temporarily without these feelings becoming emotional problems, and can resolve them on their own. It’s only when she gets bogged down and can’t move on in pursuing her personal objectives either by herself or with others’ help that she requires your intervention. So, intervene.
1. If there's been no change in her feelings despite extended attempts at:
   • self-help;
   • seeking informal help from others, and

2. If she has no plans to deal with this emotional problem in the future and it is likely to continue.

Is the emotional problem preventing her from pursuing her personal objectives?

Your coachee’s emotional problem won’t necessarily prevent her from pursuing the personal objectives she set with you earlier in the coaching process. If she’s stuck, it’s unlikely but not impossible that she will have the mental space to detach from the problem and pursue her objectives. If she can compartmentalize her emotional problem despite being stuck, and can keep working toward her personal objectives, you have three ways to go forward:

1. Keep helping her work toward her personal objectives without helping her deal with her emotional problem. Leave her to decide if and how she wants to tackle it.

2. Keep helping her work toward her objectives and offer to help her get unstuck with respect to the emotional problem. You recognize that you’re moving into a counseling role with her, and therefore your coaching contract with her may need to be renegotiated.

3. Keep helping her work toward her objectives and refer her to a counselor who will help her with her emotional problem.

Which of these options you choose depends on how you construe your coaching role, and on the views of your coachee. Some coaches choose not to take a counseling role and will therefore not take Option 2; others are happy to move from
coaching to counseling and back again. Any movement from coaching to counseling needs careful exploration with your coachee and explicit agreement with her. Finally, avoid switching from coaching to counseling with coachees who have particular difficulties handling situations where roles are ambiguous.

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**Step 2**

Elicit your coachee’s explicit agreement to target her emotional problem for change and establish a contingency plan if you fail to help her.

Developing a good working alliance between you and your coachee is vital to effective coaching. Such an alliance depends on you and your coachee (a) having a good bond, (b) having a shared view of the coaching process, (c) agreeing on her personal objectives goals, and (d) agreeing on what you are both going to do to help her achieve her objectives.

Consider what you both will do if your attempts to help her with her emotional problems are not successful. Making a contingency plan at this stage is good ethical practice.

1. Renegotiate your contract with your coachee from a coaching contract to a counseling contract. This means you will help her with this problem more intensively and with any other emotional problems she may have, and refer her to another coach when she’s ready to resume her pursuit of her personal objectives.

2. Refer her to a counselor who will work with her on this emotional problem until she’s ready to resume her coaching work with you.
Step 3

Formulate your coachee’s emotional problem using key elements of REBT’s “situational ABC framework.”

When you focus on an emotional obstacle to the pursuit of your coachee’s personal objectives in the context of coaching, you will only deal with a single specific problem. Otherwise, you will be involved in counseling, not coaching. Obtain a clear statement of this problem by formulating your coachee’s emotional problem:

1. **Situation** – Help her identify the situation in which she experiences her problem.

2. **A’** – The aspect of the situation she was most disturbed about. (You will do this in Step 8.)

3. **C’ (emotional)** – Help her identify one of the following major Unhealthy Negative Emotions (UNEs) she is experiencing: anxiety, depression, guilt, shame, hurt, unhealthy anger, unhealthy jealousy, unhealthy envy.

4. **C’ (behavioral)** – Help her identify the dysfunctional behavior she demonstrated in this situation, e.g., an overt action or action tendency.

5. **C’ (thinking)** – Help her identify the thinking she engaged in once her UNE emerged.

6. **Effect on coaching goals** – Help her specify the effect this emotional problem has on her overall coaching goals.
Step 4

Set your coachee’s goal with respect to her formulated problem using the same key elements of the “situational ABC framework.”

Helping your coachee to set a goal regarding her formulated target problem will give your work on her emotional problem a sense of direction, helping her see that change is possible, engendering a sense of hope, and increasing her motivation to engage in the REBT process. Use the following points to help her set a goal regarding her formulated target emotional problem.

1. **Situation** – Help her identify the situation in which she experiences her problem. This will be the same as she specified in her formulated target problem.

2. **‘A’** – Help her identify the theme of the problem. This will be the same as your coachee specified in her formulated target problem. You will do this in Step 8.

3. **‘C’ (emotional goal)** – Help her identify the healthy alternative to the major UNE she experienced. This is known as a “Healthy Negative Emotion” (HNE). This emotional goal should be negative because it is about an adversity, but it should also be healthy, as it will help her deal effectively with the adversity if it can be changed, or to adjust constructively to it if it can’t. This will be: concern (UNE: anxiety); sadness (UNE: depression); remorse (UNE: guilt); disappointment (UNE: shame); sorrow (UNE: hurt); healthy anger (UNE: unhealthy anger); healthy jealousy (UNE: unhealthy jealousy); healthy envy (UNE: unhealthy envy).
4. ‘C’ (behavioral goal) – Help her identify the functional alternative to the unconstructive behavior she demonstrated in her formulated target problem. Again, this might be an overt action or an action tendency.

5. ‘C’ (thinking goal) – If relevant, help her identify the realistic alternative to the distorted thinking she engaged in.

6. **Effect on coaching goals** – Help her specify the effect these goals (with respect to her emotional problem) are likely to have on her overall coaching goals.
Step 5

Assess the presence of a meta-emotional problem and decide with the coachee if this is to become the target problem.

Assess the existence of her meta-emotional problem.

When your coachee has an emotional problem she may focus on this problem and disturb herself about it. You should assess the existence of her meta-emotional problem (an emotional problem about an emotional or behavioral problem). Ask her, e.g.,

“How do you feel about …?” [state her original emotional/behavioral problem]

If she has a meta-emotional problem, decide if you need to deal with this before you both focus on her original problem. Suggest to her that you both focus on her original emotional/behavioral problem unless

• she wants to work on her meta-emotional problem first;
• her meta-emotional problem interferes with her focusing on her original emotional/behavioral problem in the session;
• her meta-emotional problem interferes with her working on her original emotional/behavioral problem in her life.

Both of you should agree on which problem (the original or her meta-emotional problem) to work on first. If you target her original problem and help her with this effectively, you may not need to help her with her meta-emotional problem, if she is able to resume work on her coaching goal without doing so.
Step 6

Help your coachee select a concrete example of this problem.

Working with a concrete example will provide you both with specific information about your coachee’s ‘A’ and ‘C’ to help you identify a specific irrational belief at ‘B.’ If her problem is specific enough anyway, you may skip this step. If not, ask her:

“Can you give me a concrete example of this problem?”

A concrete example is one occurring in a specific situation at a specific time with a specific person or persons, and could be a future situation she anticipates. If she finds it difficult to select such an example, you can suggest she pick an example which is fresh in her mind, which might be:

- recent
- vivid
- typical
- future

It may seem strange to talk about a future example of her problem, but it is not really so strange. She may imagine a future scenario and disturb herself about it because she brings to that future event a disturbance-creating irrational belief.
Step 7

Identify ‘C’

Start with the emotional ‘C’

Sometimes the UNE may not have been specified in formulating the coachee’s emotional problem, and it is only when she discusses a specific example of the problem that the relevant UNE becomes clear. ‘C,’ the consequences of her irrational beliefs (IBs) about ‘A,’ can be emotional, behavioral and cognitive. You should assess your coachee’s major UNE in the selected example. If she experiences several, help her select the main one and identify the associated behavior.

Starting with ‘C,’ particularly her major UNE, will help you identify her ‘A’ by indicating the likely theme of ‘A’ (see Appendix 1 on page 60). For instance, if she says she feels anxious, the theme of “threat” may be present in her ‘A.’ Ask her to identify how she felt in the situation. Help her select one UNE and, if she felt several, help her identify the main one. You can ask:

“How did you feel when . . . [state the situation]?”

She may state that her emotional ‘C’ is negative and unhealthy. However, if you encounter the following, here is what I suggest you do.

1. Your coachee’s emotional ‘C’ is vague.

She may say she “feels” bad or upset. Such expressions are unclear: you still don’t know her negative emotional ‘C,’ or even whether it is unhealthy or healthy. If so, help her be more specific about her feelings.
2. You’re not sure if your coachee’s negative ‘C’ is healthy or unhealthy.

If you are not sure whether your coachee’s stated emotion is a UNE, or if she is vague about her feelings, you can simply refer to Appendix 1 (p. 60) and you will see that, apart from the different names given to UNE/HNE pairs, each emotion within a pairing (e.g., anxiety and concern) is associated with different behaviors (i.e., overt actions and action tendencies) and subsequent thinking. You may thus deduce your coachee’s emotion by discovering how she acted in the situation under assessment and/or how she thought after her feelings had “kicked in.”

3. Your coachee’s stated emotional ‘C’ is really an inference.

An inference is an interpretation your coachee made about her situation, relating to her emotional response, but which went beyond the data at hand. These “inferences as emotions” often turn out to be your coachees’ ‘A’s,’ e.g.,

- “I felt rejected”
- “I felt wronged”

Neither of these represents a coachee’s emotional ‘C,’ but are inferences. When she says she “felt wronged,” for example, she means that the person in the example of her emotional problem acted in a way that transgressed one of her rules. She may well have experienced an emotion about “being wronged” which is a UNE (i.e., negative and unhealthy), but you should help her be explicit about this. Thus, when your coachee offers you an inference instead of an emotion in response to your enquiry about her emotional ‘C,’ treat her response as an inference and ask her how she felt about it. When your coachee gives you an inference instead of an emotion, remember to use the inference to identify the emotional ‘C’; resist the temptation to question the inference.
Ask for behavioral and/or thinking ‘C’s’ and infer the emotional ‘C.’

If she continues to struggle to give you an emotional ‘C,’ you can temporarily bypass this and infer the emotion from her behavior (overt action and action tendency) or her subsequent thinking. Before doing so, familiarize yourself with Appendix 1.

• Ask her to imagine she’s in the situation she selected in which she experienced her emotional problem.

• Assess how she acted in this situation or what she felt like doing but didn’t do.

• If necessary, ask her what thoughts she had after her yet-to-be-identified feelings had “kicked in.”

• Form a hypothesis concerning what her emotional ‘C’ could have been, given her behavioral ‘C’ and/or thinking ‘C.’

• Ask her to consider and respond to this hypothesis.
Step 8

Identify ‘A’

Remember: ‘A’ is the inference the coachee makes about the situation that triggers ‘B’

Remember that ‘A’ is the most relevant part of the situation that triggered your coachee’s iB at ‘B,’ which largely determined her UNE at ‘C.’

Use the standard question in assessing ‘A’:

“What were you most . . . about [state the coachee’s ‘C’] when . . . [state the situation]?”

Use Windy’s “magic question”:

If the above question does not yield the ‘A’,

1. Focus on the “situation” your coachee has described.

2. Ask what one thing would remove or significantly diminish the UNE she felt at ‘C’; the opposite to this is her ‘A.’

Encourage your coachee to assume temporarily that ‘A’ is true.

If your coachee’s ‘A’ distorts reality, resist the temptation to question ‘A.’ Instead, encourage her to assume that ‘A’ is correct in order to help her identify more accurately the iBs about the ‘A’ that led to her feelings at ‘C.’ Later (see Step 21), you can check whether ‘A’ was true. She may want to question ‘A’ rather than identify her iBs at ‘B.’ Go along with this, but only after making several attempts to show her the importance of identifying iB. If
these fail, not questioning ‘A’ would threaten the working alliance you have with her. If you need to question ‘A,’ proceed straight to Step 21.

Avoid pitfalls in assessing ‘A’

1. Don’t obtain too much detail about the situation surrounding ‘A.’ Abstract the salient theme or summarize your understanding of ‘A.’ Interrupt her tactfully, re-establishing an REBT-driven assessment focus if she begins to discuss the situation at length, e.g., “What was it about the situation you were most disturbed about?”

2. Do not assume that the first inference she offers you is her ‘A.’ Ask for other inferences she might have made in the situation, then apply “Windy’s magic question” (see p. 12) to identify her ‘A.’

3. Do not accept an ‘A’ unless it reflects the theme associated with the UNE you have already assessed.
Step 9

Elicit your coachee’s emotional goal in the specific example being assessed.

Help her understand that changing her emotional ‘C’ increases her chances of effecting change in ‘A’ if it can be changed.

Encourage her to set personal objectives to give the coaching work a positive direction. In dealing with her emotional problem, there are two places to set goals which give this “overcoming obstacles” work a forward-looking thrust: in Step 4, and also here (in Step 9), after you have assessed the ‘A’ and ‘C’ elements of her specific example of her formulated problem.

- Do help her specify a Healthy Negative Emotion (HNE) in response to the situation in which the adversity at ‘A’ occurred (or is likely to occur).
- Do help her specify a constructive behavioral response to this ‘A’.
- Don’t help her set goals outside her direct control (e.g., a change in the behavior of another person).

When attempting to elicit a goal from her with respect to her selected specific example of her target problem, she may keep wishing to change the adversity at ‘A.’ I will focus on the situation where she wishes to change the behavior of another person involved in the specific example.

1. Help her see the difference between changing another person and influencing that person.

   Help her understand that were you to accept the goal of changing the other person, you would be encouraging her
to change something outside her direct control. Rather, help her see that the other person’s behavior is under their direct control. If she accepts this, show her it doesn’t mean there’s nothing that she can do; that she can certainly influence that person to change and that, as such attempts to influence the other person are under her direct control, they are acceptable behavioral goals.

2. Help her understand that influencing another person is best done when she isn’t emotionally disturbed.

Once she has set “attempts to influence the other person” as her behavioral goal, ask whether her influence behaviors are more likely to be successful if she is emotionally disturbed or emotionally healthy. Most coachees see that being emotionally healthy increases their chances of persuading the other person to change – without, of course, guaranteeing this.

Elicit your coachee’s emotional goal based on explaining what you’re looking for.

(a) Review your coachee’s example under the heading, “Problem-based Situational ABC.”

(b) Explain that the situation will not change.

(c) Encourage her to continue assuming her ‘A’ was correct, since she was reacting to it as though it were true in the specific example of her emotional problem.

(d) Help her see the only things she can change are her emotional and behavioral ‘C’s’ and her thinking ‘C’ (if you have also identified this).

(e) Have her focus on her problematic behavioral response to ‘A.’ Ask her what the consequences of her overt behavior, or the impact of suppressing her action tendencies, would be.
Once she recognizes that both of these may have negative consequences, ask her to specify an alternative functional behavioral response, one which would be (1) realistic, (2) healthy, and (3) acceptable to her.

(f) You may now help her construct an emotional goal which should be realistic, healthy and acceptable to her and which accompanies her new behavioral response.

(g) Summarize all this in another “Situational ABC” (headed “Goal-oriented Situational ABC”) and put this next to the “Problem-based Situational ABC.”
Step 10

Help your coachee understand the B-C connection.

Three ways of making the ‘B’–‘C’ connection:

You have now identified:

• the situation in which the emotional problem occurred;
• your coachee’s disturbed emotion and unconstructive behavior, all of which occur at ‘C’;
• what she found most disturbing in the situation, i.e., her adversity at ‘A’;
• her emotional and behavioral goals which represent realistic, healthy ways of responding, to which she is willing to commit.

By helping her understand the ‘B’–‘C’ connection, you help her understand that the adversity she was/will be facing at ‘A’ doesn’t determine her responses at ‘C’; the beliefs she holds about the adversity underpin these responses.

1. Ask your coachee whether ‘C’ is determined by ‘A’ or ‘B’.

At first, you merely ask her whether she thinks her UNE at ‘C’ is determined by the adversity at ‘A’ or by her beliefs at ‘B.’ If her answer shows she understands the ‘B’–‘C’ connection, proceed to the next step. If not, use the “100 person technique.”

2. The 100 person technique.

Ask your coachee: would 100 people of her age and gender all experience the same UNE toward the same adversity? If, hopefully, she says “no,” ask what would determine their
different feelings about the same adversity. Work with her until you have helped her understand the ‘B’–’C’ connection.

3. The theory-driven ‘B’–’C’ technique

In this method, you teach the REBT view that your coachee’s UNE is largely determined by her irrational belief (iB), and her HNE alternative is determined by her alternative rational belief (rB). If she understands the iB–UNE connection and the rB–HNE connection, she will also understand the more general ‘B’–’C’ connection. I favor theory-derived interventions in REBT because they are time-efficient. Coachees seem to understand more quickly with theory-derived interventions than with more open-ended interventions.
Step 11

Identify iBs, teach rBs and make appropriate connections with C.

You are ready to help your coachee (i) identify the iBs (at ‘B’) underpinning her UNE at ‘C’; (ii) make the iB-‘C’ connection; and (iii) understand the alternative rBs underpinning her emotional goals (the rB-emotional goal connection). In identifying your coachee’s beliefs, use the following framework.

**Irrational and Rational Beliefs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irrational Beliefs (iBs)</th>
<th>Rational Beliefs (rBs)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-Dogmatic Preference</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X must (or must not) happen.</td>
<td>I would like X to happen (or not happen), but it doesn’t have to be the way I want it to be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awfulizing Belief</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-Awfulizing Belief</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be terrible if X happens (or doesn’t happen).</td>
<td>It would be bad, but not terrible if X happens (or doesn’t happen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discomfort Intolerance Belief</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discomfort Tolerance Belief</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t bear it if X happens (or doesn’t happen).</td>
<td>It would be difficult to bear if happens (or doesn’t happen), but I could bear it and it would be worth it to me to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depreciation Beliefs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Acceptance Belief</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If X happens (or doesn’t happen), I’m no good, you’re no good, life is no good.</td>
<td>If X happens (or doesn’t happen), it doesn’t prove I’m no good, you’re no good, life is no good. Rather – I, you, and life are a complex mixture of good, bad, and neutral.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
When identifying your coachee’s irrational beliefs (iBs), help her identify her rigid demand and the one secondary iB that accounted for her UNE in the selected example. Then help her identify the non-dogmatic preference and the one secondary rB that will help her to achieve her goal’s secondary iB.

**Identify the rigid demand, teach the non-dogmatic preference and make the appropriate connections with ‘C’ and the emotional goal.**

There are several strategies to assess demand and non-dogmatic preference:

1. **Open-ended enquiry**
   In this strategy, you ask questions such as, “What were you telling yourself about your boss breaking his promise to you that led you to feel unhealthily angry?” Because she may not give you the iB you are looking for, I do not recommend this method.

2. **Theory-driven enquiry**
   In this strategy, you use REBT theory to inform your questions to the coachee, e.g.,
   
   • “*When you were in the situation where . . . [state situation], what demand did you make about [‘A’] that led you to feel [UNE] at ‘C’?*”
   
   • “*When you were in the situation where . . . [state situation], what preference rather than demand would you have had about [‘A’] to make yourself . . . [HNE], rather than . . . [UNE]?*”

   Ask her to restate the demand and non-dogmatic preference in her own words.
3. Theory-driven choice enquiry

In this approach you:

• remind her that it is important to her that the adversity at 'A' doesn’t happen;
• show her she is either holding a demand (iB) or a non-dogmatic preference (rB) about the adversity;
• ask her whether, when she feels her UNE at 'C', she is holding the demand (iB) or the non-dogmatic preference (rB);
• work with her until she understands that her UNE is underpinned by the demand (iB);
• imagine her holding the non-dogmatic preference (rB) and ask her how this would change her emotion.
• work with her until she understands the link between her non-dogmatic preference (rB) and her emotional goal.

This approach differs from the theory-driven enquiry approach by keeping the rBs and iBs together; the coachee is asked to choose which one underpins her emotional problem and which underpins her emotional goal. In the theory-driven enquiry approach, the iB is introduced first before the rB. I recommend the theory-driven choice enquiry strategy because it helps your coachee see that a rigid iB underpins her emotional problem and that a flexible rB underpins her emotional solution.

Identify extreme beliefs and teach non-extreme beliefs.

Having identified your coachee’s demand and related non-dogmatic preference, you can teach her the other three iBs and alternative rBs and ask her to choose the one other iB that best accounted for her UNE at 'C' (and by implication the alternative rB that will help her achieve her goals).
Step 12

Elicit your coachee’s commitment to pursue her emotional and/or behavioral goals; help her see that changing her iBs is the best way of doing this.

Dealing with your coachee’s doubts, reservations and objections to committing herself to her emotional goals.

Your coachee may think the HNE is not sufficiently strong to be an acceptable response to her ‘A.’ Show her that HNEs can vary in strength according to the strength of her non-dogmatic preference.

Dealing with her wish to change ‘A’:

When you ask her to commit herself to pursuing her emotional goals about ‘A,’ she may still say she wants to change ‘A’ first. If so, explain to her that the best time to change ‘A’ is when she is not disturbed about ‘A,’ and that this disturbance will interfere with her change attempts. Once she understands this, and that the best way to be undisturbed about ‘A’ is by thinking rationally about it, she is ready to question her iBs about ‘A.’
Step 13

Question both iBs and rBs: Choosing a strategy.

When you question your coachee’s beliefs (irrational and rational), your goal is to help her see that her iBs are irrational and her rBs are rational. This is known as “intellectual insight,” because even though she understands this point, she doesn’t yet have a deep enough conviction in it to the extent that it influences her feelings and behavior for the better. This “emotional insight” will come about later in the process, when you help her strengthen her conviction in her rB, and weaken her conviction in her iB. For your coachee to achieve such intellectual insight, she has to question both her iBs and her rB.

Characteristics of Irrational and Rational Beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irrational Beliefs</th>
<th>Rational Beliefs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rigid or extreme</td>
<td>Flexible or non-extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illogical</td>
<td>Logical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads to unconstructive results</td>
<td>Leads to constructive results</td>
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Question her demand and non-dogmatic preference (unless there’s good reason not to) and the one other iB and rB she sees as the most appropriate derivative from the demand and non-dogmatic preference, respectively.
Strategies in questioning the coachee’s iB and rB

As time is often at a premium in life coaching, you should help her question one iB and one rB at a time, but my preferred strategy is to do these together (Steps 14-17).

Help your coachee question separately her demand/non-dogmatic preference and the one other iB/rB she resonates with.

As you proceed with questioning her beliefs, you should note which points she finds particularly persuasive concerning seeing that her iBs are irrational and her rBs are rational. Note these arguments and capitalize on them as you proceed.
Step 14

Question a demand and a non-dogmatic preference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand</th>
<th>Non-dogmatic preference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X must occur</td>
<td>It’s important to me that x occurs, but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(regretfully) it doesn’t have to occur just</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>because I want it to.</td>
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Use three main questions: the empirical, logical and pragmatic questions. Ask which belief the coachee wants to strengthen, which she wants to weaken, and why. Help her focus on her demand and non-dogmatic preference alternative. Have her write it down as above or write it yourself on a whiteboard. Ask the three questions (the order is a guide; other orders are fine).

The empirical question

*Which of the following beliefs is true, which is false, and why?*

Demand (iB): “X must occur.”

Non-dogmatic preference (rB): “It’s important to me that x occurs but, regretfully, it doesn’t have to occur just because I want it to.”

Help your coachee see that:

* a rigid demand is inconsistent with reality; to be true, the demanded conditions would already have to exist when they do not; or as soon as the coachee makes her
demand, these demanded conditions would have to come into existence. Both positions are inconsistent with reality.

• a non-dogmatic preference is true since its two components are true: she can prove she has a particular desire; give reasons why she wants what she wants; and prove she doesn’t have to get what she desires.

If she replies otherwise, help her through discussion to see why her answer is incorrect and help her accept the correct answer.

The logical question

Which of the following beliefs is logical, which is illogical, and why?

Demand (iB): “It’s important to me that x occur, and therefore it must occur.”

Non-dogmatic preference (rB): "It’s important to me that x occur but, regretfully, it doesn’t have to occur just because I want it to.”

Help her see that her demand is based on the same desire as her non-dogmatic preference, but she transforms it thus:

“It’s important to me that x occurs . . . and therefore it must occur.”

Show her this belief has two components. The first (“It’s important to me that x occurs . . .”) is not rigid; the second (“. . . and therefore it must occur”) is rigid. Her rigid demand isn’t logical, since one can’t logically derive something rigid from something that isn’t rigid. The template in Figure 1 illustrates this visually.
Desire (non-rigid)

It's important to me that $x$ occurs...

Demand (rigid)

...and therefore it must occur

Non-Dogmatic Preference (non-rigid)

...but regretfully it doesn't have to occur because I want it to

Figure 1
Your coachee’s non-dogmatic preference is:

“It’s important to me that x occurs, but – even though I might not like it – it doesn’t have to occur just because I want it to.”

Her non-dogmatic preference is logical since both parts are flexible. The second component logically follows from the first. Again, the template in Figure 1 (on p. 27) illustrates this visually. If she replies otherwise, help her via discussion to see why her answer is incorrect, and help her accept the correct answer.

The pragmatic question

Which of the following beliefs leads to largely good results, which leads to largely poor results, and why?

Demand (iB): “X must occur.”

Non-dogmatic preference (rB): “It’s important to me that x occur but, regretfully, it doesn’t have to occur just because I want it to.”

Help your coachee acknowledge that her demand leads to unhealthy results, while her non-dogmatic preference leads to healthier results. Use the information she provided when you discussed the iB-C, rB-emotional goal connections (see Step 11). If she thinks her demand leads to healthier consequences than her non-dogmatic preference, help her to see why she’s likely to be wrong.

Assess the coachee’s commitment to belief change

Assess your coachee’s commitment to changing her belief by asking:

“Which belief do you want to strengthen, which do you want to weaken, and why?”

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She should indicate her wish to strengthen her conviction in her non-dogmatic preference, weaken her conviction in her demand, and give coherent reasons why, based on her problematic feelings and behavior and her goals for change. If she replies otherwise, discover the reasons why and work with her until she states a genuine commitment to the non-dogmatic preference. Ask whether she has any doubts, reservations and objections to strengthening her non-dogmatic preference and weakening her demand. If she has, respond to them with tact until she has relinquished her reservations (Dryden, 2001). [See References, p. 68.]
Step 15

Question an awfulizing belief and a non-awfulizing belief.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awfulizing Belief</th>
<th>Non-Awfulizing Belief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It would be terrible if x occurs.</td>
<td>It would be bad if x occurs, but it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>would not be terrible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When questioning your coachee’s awfulizing and non-awfulizing beliefs, use the same questions you used to question her demands and non-dogmatic preferences: *i.e.*, the empirical, logical and pragmatic question. Ask which belief she wants to strengthen, which she wants to weaken and why. Help her focus on her awfulizing and non-awfulizing belief alternative. Have her write it as above or write it yourself on a whiteboard. Ask the three questions:

**The empirical question**

*Which of the following beliefs is true, which is false, and why?*

**Awfulizing belief (IB):** “It would be terrible if x occurs.”

**Non-awfulizing belief (rB):** “It would be bad if x occurs, but not terrible.”

Help your coachee see that in holding her awfulizing belief, she believes that:

- nothing could be worse;
- the event in question is worse than 100% bad, and
- no good could possibly come from this bad event.
Help her see that all three convictions are inconsistent with reality and that her non-awfulizing belief is true, as it stems from the idea that:

- things could always be worse;
- the event in question is less than 100% bad, and
- good could come from this bad event.

If she replies otherwise, help her to see why her answers are incorrect and to accept the correct answer.

The logical question

**Which of the following beliefs is logical, which is illogical, and why?**

**Awfulizing belief (IB):** “It would be bad if x occurs . . . and therefore it would be terrible.”

**Non-awfulizing belief (rB):** “It would be bad if x occurs . . . but it would not be terrible.”

Help her see that her awfulizing belief is illogical; her non-awfulizing belief is based on the same evaluation of badness as her non-awfulizing belief, but she transforms this as follows:


“It would be bad if x occurs . . . and therefore it would be terrible.”

Show her that her awfulizing belief has two components. The first (“It would be bad if x occurs . . .”) is non-extreme; the second (“. . . and therefore it would be terrible”) is extreme. Help her see that her awfulizing belief is illogical, since one cannot logically derive something extreme from something that is not extreme. Figure 2 on the following page illustrates this idea visually.
Figure 2

Evaluation of Badness (non-extreme)

- It would be bad if x occurs...

Awfulizing Belief (extreme)

- ...and therefore it would be terrible.

Non-Awfulizing Belief (non-extreme)

- ...but it would not be terrible.
Your coachee’s non-awfulizing belief is as follows:

"It would be bad if x occurs . . . but it would not be terrible."

Encourage her to see that her non-awfulizing belief is logical since both parts are non-extreme; thus the second component logically follows from the first. Again, refer to the template in Figure 2 which illustrates this concept visually, if necessary.

The pragmatic question

Which of the following beliefs leads to largely good results, which leads to largely poor results, and why?

Awfulizing belief (iB): “It would be terrible if x occurs.”
Non-awfulizing belief (rB): “It would be bad if x occurs . . . but it would not be terrible.”

Help her acknowledge that her awfulizing belief leads to unhealthy results, while her non-awfulizing belief leads to healthier results. Use the information she provided when you discussed the iB-‘C’, rB-emotional goal connections (see Step 11). If she thinks her awfulizing belief leads to healthier results than her non-awfulizing belief, help her to see why she is likely to be wrong.

Assess the coachee’s commitment to belief change

Assess your coachee’s commitment to changing her belief by asking, e.g.,

“Which belief do you want to strengthen and which do you want to weaken and why?”

After questioning, she should indicate that she wishes to work to strengthen her conviction in her non-awfulizing belief and weaken her conviction in her awfulizing belief, and give coherent
reasons for her answer. If she replies otherwise, discover the reasons for it and work with her until she states a genuine commitment to her non-awfulizing belief. It is worth asking her whether she has any doubts, reservations and objections to strengthening her non-awfulizing belief and weakening her awfulizing belief demand. If she has, respond to them with tact, until she has relinquished her reservations (Dryden, 2001). [See References, p. 68.]
Step 16

Question a discomfort intolerance belief and a discomfort tolerance belief.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort Intolerance Belief</th>
<th>Discomfort Tolerance Belief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I could not bear it if x were to occur.</td>
<td>It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur, but I could bear it, and it would be worth it to me to do so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When questioning your coachee’s Discomfort Intolerance Belief and Discomfort Tolerance Belief, use the tripartite questioning approach: the empirical, logical and pragmatic question. Following this, ask which belief she wants to strengthen, which she wants to weaken, and why. Suggest she focus on her discomfort intolerance belief and discomfort tolerance alternative. Have her write it as above or write it yourself on a whiteboard. Ask the three questions:

**The empirical question**

*Which of the following beliefs is true and which is false and why?*

- **Discomfort intolerance belief (iB):** “I could not bear it if x were to occur.”
- **Discomfort tolerance belief (rB):** “It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur, but I could bear it, and it would be worth it to me to do so.”
According to REBT theory, a discomfort tolerance belief is true; a discomfort intolerance belief is false. When questioning her discomfort intolerance belief, help her see that when she holds this attitude, she believes *at the time* that:

- I will die or disintegrate if the frustration or discomfort continues to exist;
- I will lose the capacity to experience happiness if the frustration or discomfort continue to exist.

Help her see that both these convictions are inconsistent with reality; that her discomfort tolerance belief is true, since this is made up of the following ideas:

- I will struggle if the frustration or discomfort continue to exist, but I won’t die or disintegrate;
- I won’t lose the capacity to experience happiness if the frustration or discomfort continue to exist, although this capacity will be temporarily diminished, and
- the frustration or discomfort is worth tolerating.

If her answers vary with the above, help her to see why her answers are incorrect, and help her accept the correct answer.

**The logical question**

Which of the following beliefs is logical and which is illogical and why?

**Discomfort intolerance belief (iB):**  “It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur, and therefore I could not bear it.”

**Discomfort tolerance belief (rB):**  “It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur, but I could bear it, and it would be worth it to me to do so.”

Help her see that her discomfort intolerance belief is illogical; her discomfort tolerance belief logical. Show her that her discomfort
intolerance belief is based on the same idea of struggle as her discomfort tolerance belief, but she transforms this as follows:

“It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur… and therefore I could not bear it.”

Show her that her discomfort intolerance belief has two components. The first (“It’s hard for me to bear it that my boss broke his promise to promote me”) is non-extreme; the second (“and therefore I could not bear it”) is extreme. Help her see that her discomfort intolerance belief is illogical, since one cannot logically derive something extreme from something that isn’t extreme. If necessary, use the template in Figure 3 (on page 39) to illustrate this visually.

Your coachee’s discomfort intolerance belief is as follows:

“It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur… but I could bear it and it would be worth it to me to do so.”

Encourage her to see that her discomfort tolerance belief is logical since both parts are non-extreme; thus the second component logically follows from the first. Use the template in Figure 3 to illustrate this visually if necessary.

The pragmatic question

Which of the following beliefs leads to largely good results and which leads to largely poor results, and why?

Discomfort intolerance belief (iB): “I could not bear it if x were to occur.”

Discomfort tolerance belief (rB): “It would be difficult for me to bear it if x were to occur, but I could bear it, and it would be worth it to me to do so.”
Help her acknowledge that her discomfort intolerance belief leads to unhealthy results for her, while her discomfort tolerance belief leads to healthier results. As you do so, use the information she provided when you discussed the iB-C; rB-emotional goal connections if you need to (see Step 11).

**Assess the coachee’s commitment to belief change**

Ask, for example:

“Which belief do you want to strengthen and which do you want to weaken and why?”

After questioning, she should indicate that she wishes to work to strengthen her conviction in her discomfort tolerance belief and weaken her conviction in her discomfort intolerance belief, and give coherent reasons for her answer. If she replies otherwise, discover why and work with her until she states a genuine commitment to her discomfort tolerance belief.

As part of assessing such commitment, ask her again whether she has any doubts, reservations and objections to strengthening her discomfort tolerance belief and weakening her discomfort intolerance belief. If so, respond to them with tact until she has relinquished her reservations (Dryden, 2001). [See References, p. 68.]
Figure 3

Discomfort Tolerance Belief (non-extreme)

...but I could bear it and it would be worth it to me to do so

Discomfort Tolerance Belief (extreme)

...and therefore I could not bear it

Struggle Belief (non-extreme)

It would be difficult for me to bear it if were to occur...
Step 17

Question a Depreciation Belief and an Acceptance Belief.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depreciation Belief</th>
<th>Acceptance Belief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If X happens (or does not happen), I am no good, you are no good, life is no good.</td>
<td>If X happens (or doesn’t happen), it doesn’t prove I’m no good, you are no good, life is no good. Rather, I am a FHB (Fallible Human Being), you are a FHB, and life is a complex mixture of good, bad and neutral.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question your coachee’s depreciation and acceptance beliefs, using the empirical, logical and pragmatic question. Ask which belief she wants to strengthen, which she wants to weaken and why. Suggest that she focus on (in this case) her “I could not bear it if x were to occur” other-depreciation belief and her other-acceptance belief alternative, and write it as above or write it yourself on a whiteboard. Ask the three questions.

The empirical question

Which of the following beliefs is true, which is false, and why?

Other-depreciation belief (IB): “It’s bad that x did y. Therefore x is bad for doing so.”

Other-acceptance belief (rB): “It’s bad that x did y, but he’s not bad for doing so. He’s a fallible human being who acted badly.”

According to REBT theory, an acceptance belief is true; a depreciation belief false.
1. **Questioning your coachee’s person-depreciation (self- or other-) belief.**

Help her see that when she holds a person-depreciation (self- or other-) belief, she believes at the time that:

- a person (self or other) can legitimately be given a single global rating that defines their essence; the worth of a person is dependent upon conditions that change (e.g., my worth goes up when I do well and goes down when I don't do well);

- a person can be rated on the basis of one of his or her aspects.

Help her see that these convictions are inconsistent with reality and that her person-acceptance (self- or other-) belief is true since this is made up of the following:

- A person cannot legitimately be given a single global rating that defines their essence. Their worth, as far as they have it, is not dependent upon conditions that change (e.g., “My worth stays the same whether or not I do well”).

- It makes sense to rate discrete aspects of a person, but doesn’t make sense to rate a person on the basis of these discrete aspects.

2. **Questioning your coachee’s life-depreciation belief.**

Help her see that when she is holding a life-depreciation belief, she believes at the time:

- the world can legitimately be given a single rating defining its essential nature; the world’s value varies according to what happens within it (e.g., the world’s value rises when something fair occurs and falls when something unfair happens).

- the world can be rated on the basis of one of its aspects.
Help her see that these convictions are inconsistent with reality and that her life-acceptance belief is true, since this is made up of the following:

- The world cannot legitimately be given a single rating defining its essential nature. The world's value doesn't vary according to what happens within it (e.g., its value stays the same whether fairness exists at any given time or not).

- It makes sense to rate discrete aspects of the world, but doesn't make sense to rate the world on the basis of these discrete aspects.

If her answers are at variance with the above, help her to see why her answers are incorrect and to accept the correct answer.

The logical question

**Which of the following beliefs is logical and which is illogical and why?**

**Other-depreciation belief (IB):** “It's bad that $x$ did $y$ and therefore he is bad for doing so.”

**Other-acceptance belief (rB):** “It's bad that $x$ did $y$, but he's not bad for doing so. He is a fallible human being who acted badly.”

Help her see that her depreciation belief is illogical, while her acceptance belief is logical. Thus, her other-depreciation belief has two components. The first (“It’s bad that $x$ did $y$”) is an evaluation of a part of her experience, while the second (“he is bad for doing so”) is an evaluation of the whole of $x$'s “self.” As such, she is making the illogical part-whole error where the part is deemed illogically to define the whole. Encourage her to see that her other-acceptance belief is logical because it shows that the ‘self’ of the other is complex and incorporates a bad event.
In holding her other-acceptance belief, she avoids making the part-whole error.

**The pragmatic question**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following beliefs leads to largely good results, which leads to largely poor results, and why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other-depreciation belief (iB):</strong> “It’s bad that x did y. Therefore he’s bad for doing so.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other-acceptance belief (rB):</strong> “It’s bad that x did y, but he’s not bad for doing so. He’s a fallible human being who acted badly.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Help her acknowledge that her depreciation belief leads to unhealthy results, while her acceptance belief leads to healthier results. As you do this, use the information she provided when you discussed the iB-‘C’, rB-emotional goal connections if you need to (see Step 11).

**Assess the coachee’s commitment to belief change**

Ask her:

“Which belief do you want to strengthen, which do you want to weaken, and why?”

She should indicate her wish to work to strengthen her conviction in her acceptance belief and weaken her conviction in her depreciation belief and give coherent reasons. If she answers otherwise, discover why and work with her until she states a genuine commitment to her acceptance belief. Ask her again whether she has any doubts, reservations and objections to strengthening her discomfort tolerance belief and weakening her discomfort intolerance belief. If so, respond to them with tact, until she has relinquished her reservations (Dryden, 2001). [See References, p. 68.]
Step 18

Help the coachee to strengthen her conviction in her rBs and weaken her conviction in her iBs.

There are two types of insight in REBT: intellectual and emotional insight. When your coachee has intellectual insight, she understands why her iBs are irrational and her rBs are rational, but this insight has little impact on her feelings and behavior. However, when she has emotional insight, this understanding has great impact on her feelings and behavior. When she has intellectual insight into her iBs and rBs, she can “talk the talk,” but when she has emotional insight, she can “walk the talk”! Explain to her what she needs to do to move from intellectual insight to emotional insight.

Explain the process of change.

Explain to your coachee that while she may have preferred something to happen (or not happen), it doesn’t have to happen (or not happen), and if she understands what you say but doesn’t believe it, encourage her to see that she needs to practice the new belief and act on it (“walk the talk”) while tolerating the discomfort, and as she does it, her conviction in it will grow.

Techniques to help your coachee gain conviction in her rBs

1. Attack-response (or zig-zag) technique.

Your coachee can strengthen her conviction in a rB by responding persuasively to attacks on it (Dryden, 2001). [See References, p. 68.]
Instructions to give your coachee in completing a written attack-response form:

(a) "Write down your specific rB and present level of conviction in it on a 100% point scale (0% = no conviction, 100% = total conviction)."

(b) "Write down an attack on this in the form of a doubt, reservation or objection; include an explicit iB (e.g., demand, awfulizing belief, discomfort tolerance belief or depreciating belief). Make this attack as genuine as possible: the more it reflects your beliefs the better."

(c) "Respond to each element of this attack as fully as possible, including iB statements and distorted or unrealistic inferences framed in the form of a doubt, reservation or objection to the rB. Do so as persuasively as possible and write down your response."

(d) "Continue until you have answered all your attacks and can't think of any more. Keep your focus on the rB you're trying to strengthen. If you find this difficult, make your attacks gently at first. When you can respond to these attacks easily, make them more biting. Work in this way until you're making really strong attacks. Make them as if you really want to believe them. When you respond, throw yourself into it to demolish the attack. The purpose of this exercise is to strengthen conviction in your rB, so it's important that you stop only when you have answered all your attacks. If you make an attack you can't respond to, stop the exercise and raise the matter with me in your next session."

(e) "When you have answered all your attacks, re-rate your level of conviction in your rB, using the 0–100% scale. If you succeed in responding persuasively to your attacks, this rating will go up appreciably."

If it hasn't increased or only increases a little, discuss this with her so you can both discover what is preventing an increase in rB conviction.
2. Rational-emotive imagery (REI)

This imagery method is designed to help your coachee practice changing her specific iB to its rational equivalent while imagining what she is most disturbed about in the specific situation in question. Help her understand that this method will strengthen her conviction in her new rBs.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING REI**

Adapted from Albert Ellis's 1974 version. [See References on page 68.]

(a) "Take a situation in which you disturbed yourself, identifying which aspect you were most disturbed about."

(b) "Close your eyes, imagine the situation as vividly as possible, focusing on the adversity at ‘A’."

(c) "Allow yourself to experience fully the UNE you felt at the time while still focusing intently on the ‘A’. Ensure the UNE is one of the following: anxiety, depression, shame, guilt, hurt, unhealthy anger, unhealthy jealousy, unhealthy envy."

(d) "Really experience this disturbed emotion for a moment or two; then change your emotional response to a HNE, while focusing intently on the adversity at ‘A’.

Don’t change the intensity of the emotion, just the emotion itself. If your original UNE was anxiety, change it to concern. Change depression to sadness; shame to disappointment; guilt to remorse; hurt to sorrow; unhealthy anger to healthy anger; unhealthy jealousy to healthy jealousy; unhealthy envy to healthy envy. Change the UNE to its healthy equivalent, but keep the level of intensity of the new emotion as strong as the old emotion. Keep experiencing this new emotion for about five minutes, while focusing on the adversity at ‘A’. If you go back to the old UNE, bring back the new HNE.”
After five minutes, ask your coachee how she changed her emotion. Ensure she changed her emotional response by changing her specific iB to its healthy alternative. If she didn’t (e.g., if she changed her emotion by changing the ‘A’ to make it less negative or neutral or by holding an indifference belief about the ‘A’), suggest that she do the exercise again. Keep doing this until she has changed her emotion only by changing her specific unhealthy belief to its healthy alternative. Encourage her to practice REI several times a day and to aim for 30 minutes’ daily practice when she is not doing any other therapy homework.

3. Suggest that your coachee rehearse her rBs while acting in ways consistent with these beliefs.

Perhaps the most powerful way of helping her strengthen her target rB is to encourage her to rehearse it while facing the relevant adversity at ‘A’ and acting in ways consistent with this rB.

End a coaching session by negotiating a homework assignment that helps her implement the above principle, based on the work you have already done in the session. Remember the following equation when negotiating a behavioral homework assignment:

Face adversity at ‘A’ + rehearse rB + act in ways consistent with rB.
Step 19

Negotiate homework assignments.

While homework assignments are traditionally negotiated at the end of coaching sessions, they can be agreed upon earlier. Ensure the coachee understands what she is going to do at the end of the session.

Principles in negotiating assignments

1. **Use a term for assignments acceptable to your coachee.**
   
   While the generic term for a task your coachee carries out between sessions is “homework assignment,” some coachees respond negatively to the term, since it reminds them of school with its negative connotations. If so, use a more acceptable term.

2. **Negotiate assignments with your coachee. Do not assign them unilaterally.**
   
   Coaching is based on a collaborative relationship between coach and coachee, reflected in your stance toward assignments. Negotiate assignments with her rather than assigning them unilaterally.

3. **Allow time in the session to negotiate assignments.**
   
   Time is at a premium in coaching sessions. You have much to do in helping your coachee address her emotional problem effectively. You may reach the end of the session and realize you haven’t negotiated a relevant assignment with her. To avoid this, prioritize negotiating assignments in your mind, and use a visible prompt as a reminder during the session. Allocating the last ten minutes to such negotiation is a good rule of thumb.
4. **Ensure assignments follow logically from session work**

   The assignment should provide a logical bridge between session work and what she has agreed to do between sessions.

5. **Ensure your coachee clearly understands the assignment.**

   If she doesn’t understand what she has agreed to do, she’s unlikely to do it.

6. **Ensure assignments are relevant to your coachee’s dealing effectively with her emotional problem.**

   If she doesn’t understand how the assignment will help her achieve her emotional goals and deal effectively with her emotional problem, she will be less likely to do the task.

7. **Ensure the type of assignment you negotiate with your coachee is relevant to the stage reached by both of you on her emotional problem.**

   There are several types of assignments, and it’s important that what she agrees to do is relevant to where you have got to in dealing with her emotional problem. Thus, reading assignments are best suited to helping her understand more about her emotional problem; cognitive assignments are best in giving her practice at questioning her beliefs; and cognitive-behavioral assignments are best for helping her act on her rB while simultaneously rehearsing it.

8. **Employ the “challenging but not overwhelming” principle in negotiating assignments.**

   If you ask your coachee to do something that is beyond her, she won’t do it. If you ask her to do something too easy, she will gain little therapeutic value. However, if you suggest she does something she can do, but which will be difficult for her, she is likely to do it and gain from doing so.
9. Introduce and explain the “no-lose” concept of assignments.
   The “no-lose” concept points to the fact that when your coachee does an assignment successfully, she gains from doing so; but if she fails, it provides an opportunity to learn more about obstacles to change, so you can both effectively address such obstacles. The latter should be stressed when your coachee feels discouraged in failing to do an assignment.

10. Ensure your coachee has the skills to undertake the assignment.
    If she doesn’t have the required skills to do her homework, it’s unlikely she will do this, or will do it poorly. If so, teach her these skills before suggesting she implements the assignment.

11. Ensure your coachee thinks she can do the assignment.
    Your coachee may have the skills to do the assignment, but may think she can’t do it. Encourage her to use imagery rehearsal in the session, where she pictures herself successfully completing the assignment, and to practice this technique between sessions before doing the task in actuality. Such imagery rehearsal may help her see that she can do what she previously thought she couldn’t do.

12. Elicit a firm commitment to carry out the assignment.
    It’s sometimes useful for your coachee to make a commitment to do an assignment. This may be with herself, with you, or with a friend. If doing so increases the chances that she will carry out the assignment, it’s a useful technique.

13. Help your coachee specify when, where and how often she will carry out the assignment.
    Hitherto, I have stressed the value of being specific as you assess your coachee’s emotional problem and intervene accordingly. This principle is also useful in homework nego-
tiation and, if the assignment warrants it, encourage her to specify when, where and how often she’ll do the task. In my experience, encouraging coachees to be specific reduces the chances that they will say that they didn’t do the assignment because they didn’t have time or opportunity to do so.

14. Help her rehearse the assignment during the session.
   If you have time, encouraging your coachee to rehearse the assignment in the session can be valuable. Rehearsal may be mental (she pictures herself carrying out the assignment in her mind’s eye) or behavioral (she role-plays with you what she has agreed to do when that involves another person). In the latter case, you may need to know a little about the other person if you are to play his/her role plausibly. Encourage her to practice her role before and during the rehearsal.

15. Elicit from the coachee potential obstacles to homework completion and problem-solve these obstacles.
   The more you encourage her to identify potential obstacles to doing a negotiated assignment and either help her circumvent such obstacles or neutralize them, the more she’s likely to do the assignment. Unidentified obstacles will prevent her from carrying out her assignment.

16. Encourage your coachee to make and retain a written note of the assignment and its relevant details.
   Medical studies show that when the patient is given a written note by the physician of what medication to take, when and how often, this increases patient compliance with the medication. This is useful in coaching too: encourage your coachee to make a written note of the assignment and related issues (e.g., time, place and frequency). Make a written note of this in your notes. Check that you both have an accurate record of the negotiated assignment if you suspect this may not be the case.
Step 20

Review homework assignments.

Negotiating suitable assignments shows your coachee that they are an integral part of dealing with her emotional problem. However, you can undermine this if you fail to review them at the beginning of the following session. Unless there is very good reason not to (e.g., she's in a state of crisis), it is good coaching practice to review the assignment at the outset of the next session and devote sufficient time to the review to underscore its importance.

Principles in reviewing assignments with your coachee

1. Check whether the assignment was done as negotiated.

When your coachee reports that she carried out the assignment, check when you review the assignment whether she did it as negotiated. She may have changed the nature of the assignment and thus lessened the therapeutic potency of the assignment. She may not have faced the critical aspect of the situation she has agreed to face (in REBT parlance, she hasn’t faced the ‘A’).

For example, suppose she has a fear of being rejected by a particular man. She is pleased with the result of her session and assignment, and when she asks the man if he wants to go to coffee with her, he accepts her invitation. However, you know that her ‘A’ was asking the man for a date. Since they are colleagues, they often go out for coffee anyway, and the man wouldn’t have seen this as a “date.” From a therapeutic point of view, she hasn’t faced the ‘A’ she agreed to face, i.e., the prospect of a date. She “played it safe.”
How to respond when your coachee has changed the nature of her homework.

Step I  Encourage her by saying you were pleased she did the assignment.

Step II  Explain how, in your opinion, she changed the assignment. Remind her of the exact nature of the task as negotiated by the two of you in the previous session. In doing so, if indicated, remind her of the purpose of the assignment which dictated its precise form.

Step III  If she made a genuine mistake in changing the nature of the assignment, invite her to redo it, but as previously negotiated. If she agrees, ensure she keeps a written reminder of the assignment and ask her to guard against making further changes to it. Review the assignment in the following session. If she doesn’t agree to do the assignment, explore and deal with her reluctance.

Step IV  If the change she made to the assignment appears to be motivated by the presence of an implicit iB, identify and deal with this belief. Again invite her to redo the assignment as previously negotiated, urging her to guard against making further changes to the assignment. Alternatively, modify the assignment in a way that takes into account the newly discovered obstacle.

2. Review what your coachee learned from the assignment.

Ask your coachee what she learned from the assignment. If she learned what you hoped she would learn, acknowledge that she did well and move on. If she didn’t, you should address this issue. In particular, help her learn the appropri-
ate point and to choose another assignment that will help her learn the point experientially, not just cognitively.

3. **Capitalize on your coachee’s success.**

   When she has successfully done her homework and learned what you hoped she would learn, reinforce her achievement, suggesting she build on her success by choosing a more challenging assignment next time, if appropriate.

4. **Responding to your coachee’s homework “failure.”**

   When coachees have done the homework but it has turned out poorly, they often say they did the assignment but “it didn’t work.” (The word “failure” is in quotes because there’s much to learn from this situation). When you encounter so-called “failure,” remind your coachee of the “no-lose” nature of assignments and investigate the factors involved. Ask for a factual account about what happened. Once you have identified the factors accounting for the “failure,” help her deal with them, endeavoring to renegotiate the same or a similar assignment. Here is an illustrative list of common reasons for homework “failure” and possible therapeutic responses:

   - **Problem:** Your coachee implemented certain, but not all elements of the assignment, e.g., she did the behavioral aspect of the assignment, but didn’t practice new rational beliefs. She therefore experienced the same UNEs associated with the target problem.

     **Response:** Suggest she remember to rehearse her rBs before the behavioral part of the task. Use in-session imagery technique if required.

   - **Problem:** The assignment was “overwhelming, rather than challenging” for her at this time.
Response: Encourage her to see this as good feedback; recalibrate the assignment so it is “challenging” rather than “overwhelming.”

• Problem: She began to do the assignment but stopped after experiencing discomfort which she believed she couldn’t tolerate.

Response: Help her formulate an appropriate discomfort tolerance belief; suggest she rehearses this next time it happens.

• Problem: She practiced the wrong rBs during the assignment.

Response: Ascertain the reason for this; suggest a suitable remedy. Suggest she write the correct belief on a card and take it with her to review in relevant situations.

• Problem: She practiced the right rBs, but did it weakly so her UNEs predominated.

Response: Suggest she be more forceful with herself in rehearsing rBs. Model this in session if necessary.

• Problem: She began the assignment but forgot what she was supposed to do.

Response: Suggest she consult a written record of the assignment. If she “forgets” to do so, the obstacle needs further assessment.

• Problem: She began the assignment but gave up because she didn’t experience immediate benefit from it.

Response: Help her see that while such benefit would be nice, it isn’t necessary or likely. Help her take a longer-range view of such benefit.
• **Problem**: She began the assignment, but gave up soon after when she realized she didn’t know what to do. This happens particularly with written ‘ABC’ assignments.

**Response**: Give her a set of written instructions (Dryden, 2001). [See References on page 68.]

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• **Problem**: She began the assignment but encountered another ‘A’, which triggered a new undiscovered iB, which led her to abandon the assignment.

**Response**: Suggest that if this happens again, she look for and challenge the new rB before returning to the agreed task.

---

5. **Dealing with the situation if your coachee hasn’t done the assignment.**

Although you may have taken care in negotiating an assignment, instituting all safeguards discussed above, she may still not carry it out. If so, ask her for a factual account of the situation where she contracted to do the assignment but didn’t do it, reminding her of the “no-lose” concept of assignments; identify and deal with factors accounting for her not doing the assignment and then renegotiate the same or a similar assignment. As you investigate these factors, be aware that you may have failed to institute one or more safeguards reviewed above. If so, and your failure accounts for your coachee not carrying out the assignment, take responsibility for this omission, disclose this to her, institute the safeguard and renegotiate the assignment. However, if the reason why she didn’t do the assignment can be attributed to a factor in her that you couldn’t have foreseen, help her deal with it and again renegotiate the same or similar assignment.
Step 21

Revisit and question ‘A’ if necessary.

How to question ‘A’
Help your coachee question ‘A’ by returning to it and asking whether this was the most realistic way of looking at the situation. This doesn’t mean she can know for certain that her ‘A’ was true or false, for there’s rarely any absolute, agreed way of viewing an event. What it does mean is that your coachee can weigh up all the evidence available to her about the situation and make the “best bet” about what happened.

1. **Encourage your coachee to go back to her ABC, focusing on what she wrote under the heading “Situation.”**
   Ask whether what she listed under ‘A’ was the most realistic way of viewing the situation, given all the evidence. This involves her considering the inference she made that formed ‘A’, considering alternative inferences, evaluating all possibilities, and choosing the most realistic inference.

2. **Other questions you can ask your coachee about ‘A’**
   - 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 you view (are you viewing) the situation realistically? If not, how could you have viewed (can you view) it more realistically?
   - If you asked someone whom you could trust to give you an objective opinion about the truth or falsity of your inference about the situation at hand, what would they say to you and why? How would they encourage you to view the situation instead?
• If a friend told you they had faced (were facing or were about to face) the same situation as you faced and made the same inference, what would you say to him/her about the validity of their inference and why? How would you encourage them to view the situation instead?
APPENDICES
### Anxiety vs. Concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Irrational | Anxiety | • You avoid the threat  
• You withdraw physically from the threat  
• You ward off the threat (e.g., by rituals or superstitious behavior)  
• You try and neutralize the threat (e.g., by being nice to people you are afraid of)  
• You distract yourself from the threat by engaging in other activity  
• You keep checking on the current status of the threat, hoping to find that it has disappeared or become benign  
• You seek reassurance from others that the threat is benign  
• You seek support from others so that if the threat happens they will handle it or be there to rescue you  
• You over-prepare in order to minimize the threat happening or so that you are prepared to meet it (n.b., it is the over-preparation that is the problem here)  
• You tranquilize your feelings so that you don’t think about the threat  
• You overcompensate for feeling vulnerable by seeking out an even greater threat to prove to yourself that you can cope | Threat-elaborating thinking:  
• You overestimate the probability of the threat occurring  
• You underestimate your ability to cope with the threat  
• You ruminate about the threat  
• You create an even more negative threat in your mind  
• You magnify the negative consequences of the threat and minimize its positive consequences  
• You have more task-irrelevant thoughts than in concern |
| Rational | Concern | • You face up to the threat without using any safety-seeking measures  
• You take constructive action to deal with the threat  
• You seek support from others to help you face up to the threat, and then take constructive action by yourself rather than relying on them to handle it for you or to be there to rescue you  
• You prepare to meet the threat, but do not over-prepare | Safety-seeking thinking:  
• You withdraw mentally from the threat  
• You try to persuade yourself that the threat is not imminent and that you are “imagining” it  
• You think in ways designed to reassure yourself that the threat is benign or if not, that its consequences will be insignificant  
• You distract yourself from the threat, e.g., by focusing on mental scenes of safety and well-being  
• You over-prepare mentally in order to minimize the threat happening, or so that you are prepared to meet it (n.b. – once again, it is the over-preparation that is the problem here)  
• You picture yourself dealing with the threat in a masterful way  
• You overcompensate for your feeling of vulnerability by picturing yourself dealing effectively with an even bigger threat |

**You are facing a threat to your personal domain.**
## Depression\(^1\) vs. Sadness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adversity</th>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Subsequent Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| You have experienced a loss from the sociotropic and/or autonomous realms of your personal domain. | Irrational | Depression | • You withdraw from reinforcements  
• You withdraw into yourself (particularly in autonomous depression)  
• You become overly dependent on and seek to cling to others (particularly in sociotropic depression)  
• You bemoan your fate or that of others to anyone who will listen (particularly in pity-based depression)  
• You create an environment consistent with your depressed feelings  
• You attempt to terminate feelings of depression in self-destructive ways | • You see only negative aspects of the loss, failure or undeserved plight  
• You think of other losses, failures and undeserved plights that you (and in the case of the latter, others) have experienced  
• You think you are unable to help yourself (helplessness)  
• You only see pain and blackness in the future (hopelessness)  
• You see yourself being totally dependent on others (in autonomous depression)  
• You see yourself as being disconnected from others (in sociotropic depression)  
• You see the world as full of undeservedness and unfairness (in plight-based depression)  
• You tend to ruminate concerning the source of your depression and its consequences |
| You have experienced a failure within the sociotropic and/or autonomous realms of your personal domain. | Rational | Sadness | • You seek out reinforcements after a period of mourning (particularly when your inferential theme is loss)  
• You create an environment inconsistent with depressed feelings  
• You express your feelings about the loss, failure or undeserved plight and talk in a non-complaining way about these feelings to significant others | • You are able to recognize both negative and positive aspects of the loss or failure  
• You think you are able to help yourself  
• You look to the future with hope |
| You or others have experienced an undeserved plight. | | | |

\(^1\)Depression here refers to non-clinical depression
## Guilt vs. Remorse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have broken your moral code.</td>
<td>Irrational</td>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>• You escape from the unhealthy pain of guilt in self-defeating ways</td>
<td>• You conclude that you have definitely committed the sin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You beg forgiveness from the person you have wronged</td>
<td>• You assume more personal responsibility than the situation warrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You promise unrealistically that you will not &quot;sin&quot; again</td>
<td>• You assign far less responsibility to others than is warranted</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You punish yourself physically or by deprivation</td>
<td>• You dismiss possible mitigating factors for your behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Remorse</td>
<td>• You face up to the healthy pain that accompanies the realization that you have acted wrongly</td>
<td>• You only see your behavior in a guilt-related context and fail to put it into an overall context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You ask, but do not beg, for forgiveness</td>
<td>• You think that you will receive retribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have failed to live up to your moral code.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You understand the reasons for your wrongdoing and act on your understanding</td>
<td>• You take into account all relevant data when judging whether or not you have “sinned”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You try to make up for the mistake by taking a penalty</td>
<td>• You assume an appropriate level of personal responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You make appropriate amends</td>
<td>• You assign an appropriate level of responsibility to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have hurt someone’s feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You do not make excuses for your behavior or enact other defensive behavior</td>
<td>• You take into account mitigating factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You do accept offers of forgiveness</td>
<td>• You put your behavior into overall context</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You think you may be penalized rather than receive retribution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 3
# Shame vs. Disappointment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Irrational</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Shame</strong></td>
<td>• You remove yourself from the “gaze” of others</td>
<td>• You overestimate the negativity of the information revealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something highly negative has been revealed about you (or about a group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You isolate yourself from others</td>
<td>• You overestimate the likelihood that the judging group will notice or be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with whom you identify) by yourself or by others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You save face by attacking other(s) who have “shamed” you</td>
<td>interested in the information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have acted in a way that falls very short of your ideal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You defend your threatened self-esteem in self-defeating ways</td>
<td>• You overestimate the degree of disapproval you (or your reference group) will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others look down on or shun you (or a group with whom you identify) or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You ignore attempts by others to restore social equilibrium</td>
<td>receive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you think that they do.</td>
<td><strong>Rational</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disappointment</strong></td>
<td>• You continue to participate actively in social interaction</td>
<td>• You see the information revealed in a compassionate, self-accepting context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You respond positively to attempts of others to restore social</td>
<td>• You are realistic about the likelihood that the judging group will notice or be</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>equilibrium</td>
<td>interested in the information revealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You are realistic about the degree of disapproval self (or reference group) will</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>receive</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You are realistic about how long any disapproval will last</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Hurt vs. Sorrow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others treat you badly (and you think you do not deserve such treatment).</td>
<td>Irrational</td>
<td>Hurt</td>
<td>• You stop communicating with the other person</td>
<td>• You overestimate the unfairness of the other person’s behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You think that the other person has devalued your relationship (i.e., someone indicates that their relationship with you is less important to them than the relationship is to you).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You sulk and make obvious you feel hurt without disclosing details of the matter</td>
<td>• You think that the other person does not care for you or is indifferent to you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You indirectly criticize or punish the other person for their offence</td>
<td>• You see yourself as alone, uncared for, or misunderstood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You tend to think of past “hurts”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You expect the other person to make the first move toward repairing the relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You communicate your feelings to the other person directly</td>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Sorrow</td>
<td>• You request that the other person acts in a fairer manner towards you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>You are realistic about the degree of unfairness in the other person’s behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You think that the other person has simply acted badly, rather than as demonstrating lack of caring or indifference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You see yourself as being in a poor situation, but still connected to, cared for by, and understood by others not directly involved in the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• If you think of past hurts you do so with less frequency and less intensity than when you feel hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You are open to the idea of making the first move toward the other person for reconciliation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Unhealthy Anger vs. Healthy Anger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have been frustrated in some way.</td>
<td>Irrational</td>
<td>Unhealthy Anger</td>
<td>• You attack the other(s) physically</td>
<td>• You overestimate the extent to which the other(s) acted deliberately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have transgressed one of your personal rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You attack the other(s) verbally</td>
<td>• You see malicious intent in the motives of the other(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone or something has threatened your self-esteem.</td>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Healthy Anger</td>
<td>• You displace the attack on to another person, animal or object</td>
<td>• You see yourself as definitely right and the other(s) as definitely wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your movement towards an important goal has been obstructed in some way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You withdraw aggressively</td>
<td>• You are unable to see the point of view of the other(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone has transgressed one of your personal rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You recruit allies against the other(s)</td>
<td>• You plot to exact revenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have transgressed one of your own personal rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You think that the other(s) may have acted deliberately, but you also recognize that this may not have been the case</td>
<td>• You ruminate about the other's behavior and imagine coming out on top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone or something has threatened your self-esteem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You assert yourself with the other(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have transgressed one of your own personal rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You request, but do not demand, behavioral change from the other(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone or something has threatened your self-esteem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• You leave an unsatisfactory situation non-aggressively after taking steps to deal with it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 6
### Unhealthy Jealousy vs. Healthy Jealousy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A threat is posed to your relationship with your partner from a third person. | Irrational | Unhealthy Jealousy | • You seek constant reassurance that you are loved  
• You monitor the actions and feelings of your partner  
• You search for evidence that your partner is involved with someone else  
• You attempt to restrict the movements or activities of your partner  
• You set tests which your partner has to pass  
• You retaliate for your partner’s presumed infidelity  
• You sulk | • You exaggerate any threat to your relationship that does exist  
• You think the loss of your relationship is imminent  
• You misconstrue your partner’s ordinary conversations with relevant others as having romantic or sexual connotations  
• You construct visual images of your partner’s infidelity  
• If your partner admits to finding another person attractive, you think that s/he finds that person more attractive than you and that s/he will leave you for this other person |
| A threat posed by the uncertainty you face concerning your partner’s whereabouts, behavior or thinking, in the context of the first threat. | Rational | Healthy Jealousy | • You allow your partner to initiate expressing love for you without prompting her or seeking reassurance once she has done so  
• You allow your partner freedom without monitoring his/her feelings, actions and whereabouts  
• You allow your partner to show natural interest in members of the opposite sex without setting tests | • You tend not to exaggerate any threat to your relationship that does exist  
• You do not misconstrue ordinary conversations between your partner and another man or woman  
• You do not construct visual images of your partner’s infidelity  
• You accept that your partner will find others attractive but you do not see this as a threat |
# Unhealthy Envy vs. Healthy Envy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSITY</th>
<th>BELIEF</th>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>SUBSEQUENT THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Another person</td>
<td>Irrational</td>
<td>Unhealthy Envy</td>
<td>• You verbally disparage the person who has the desired possession to others&lt;br&gt;• You verbally disparage the desired possession to others&lt;br&gt;• If you had the chance, you would take away the desired possession from the other (either so that you will have it or that the other is deprived of it)&lt;br&gt;• If you had the chance you would spoil or destroy the desired possession so that the other person does not have it</td>
<td>• You tend to denigrate in your mind the value of the desired possession and/or the person who possesses it&lt;br&gt;• You try to convince yourself that you are happy with your possessions (even though you are not)&lt;br&gt;• You think about how to acquire the desired possession regardless of its usefulness&lt;br&gt;• You think about how to deprive the other person of the desired possession&lt;br&gt;• You think about how to spoil or destroy the other’s desired possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possesses and</td>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Healthy Envy</td>
<td>• You strive to obtain the desired possession if it is truly what you want</td>
<td>• You honestly admit to yourself that you desire the desired possession&lt;br&gt;• You are honest with yourself if you are not happy with your possessions, rather than defensively trying to convince yourself that you are happy with them when you are not&lt;br&gt;• You think about how to obtain the desired possession because you desire it for healthy reasons&lt;br&gt;• You can allow the other person to have and enjoy the desired possession without denigrating that person or the possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjoys something desirable that you do not have.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES

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www.windydryden.com
and
www.albertellis.org

Other publications, CDs and DVDs for mental health professionals, plus self-help books and materials, can be found at the

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First Steps in Using REBT in Life Coaching

is a valuable guide for the Life Coach who wants to apply the effective techniques of REBT (Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy) to helping coachees deal with any emotional problems that might prevent them from achieving their life goals. This step-by-step approach to problem-solving can lead to a more successful outcome in the life coaching process.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Windy Dryden, Ph.D is Professor of Psychotherapeutic Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, where he directs a Masters course in Rational-Emotive and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. He is currently editor of The Journal of Rational-Emotive and Cognitive-Behavior Therapy, and has written or edited more than 180 books.