

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy:ABC model

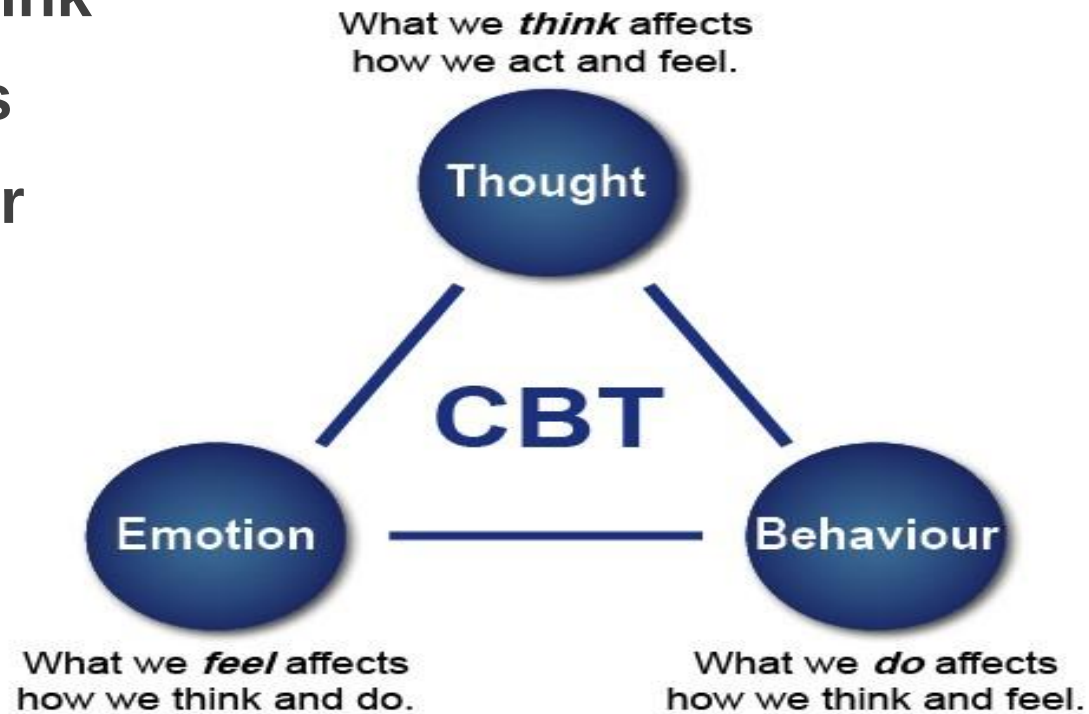
Cognitive psychology

- ▶ Study of the mental states and processes such as problem solving, memory and language
- ▶ Cognitive psychologist focus on the mental states as being important in predicting and determining behaviour
- ▶ The brain is likened to a computer.



Cognitive approach

- Cognition - how we think
- Feel - emotions
- Act - behaviour



Schemas

- ▶ Schemas are structures that consists of people's fundamental beliefs and assumptions.
- ▶ Schemas are **meaning making** cognitive structures
- ▶ Schemata's are the mental structures used to organise knowledge with long term memory
- ▶ A Schema is a mental script, which guides individuals and influences how they perceive and interpret events around them based on previous experiences.

- ▶ The degree of distress you feel depends partly on the severity of a bad event, often the **meanings you attach to an event** which can take a bad situation and make it worse.

Attaching meaning to events

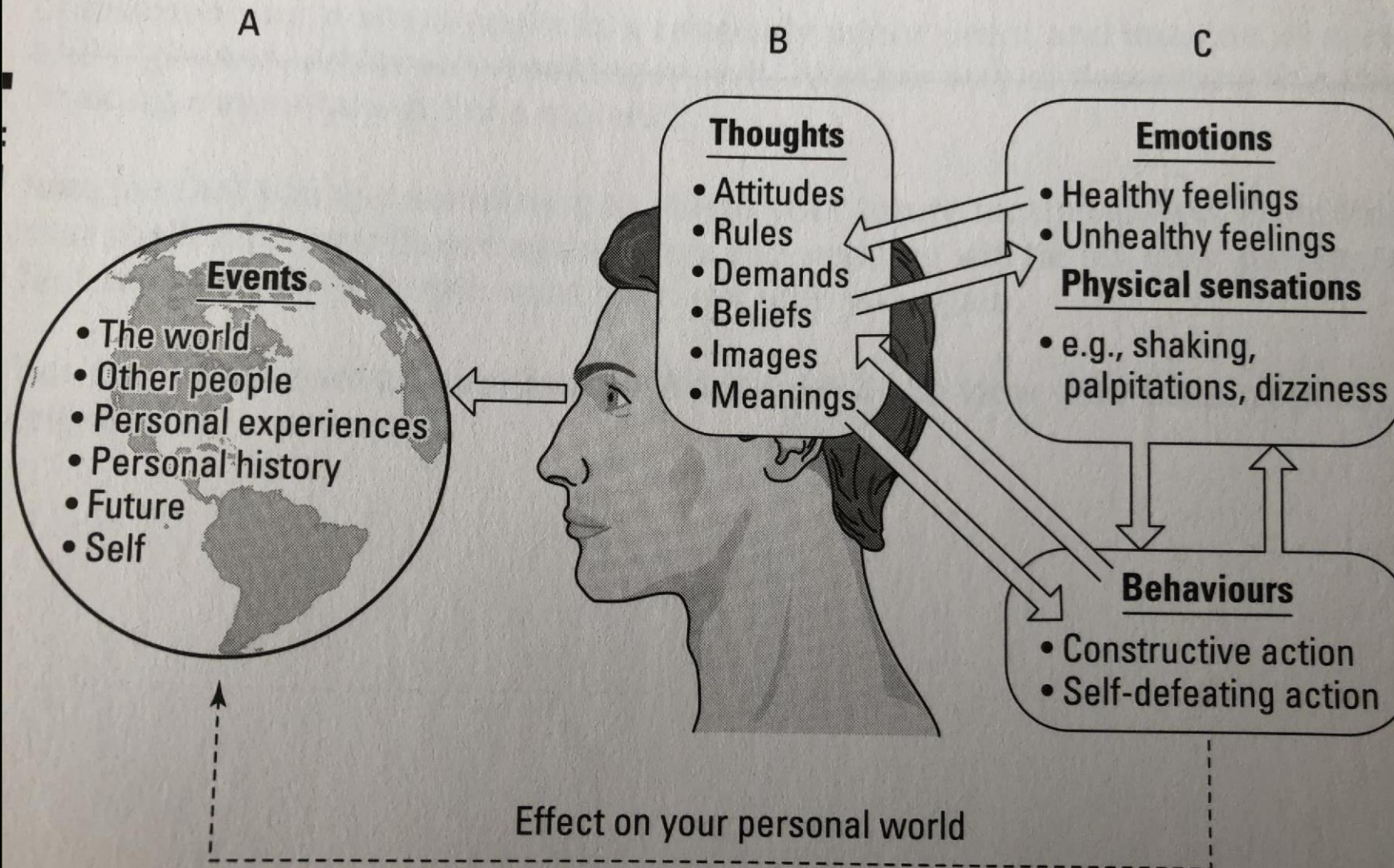
- ▶ Positive events normally lead to positive emotions and negative events to negative emotions (obviously) but it is the **personal meaning** that you assign to events in your life that can cause problematic thinking

- ▶ Links thinking to feelings and then leads to behaviour.
- ▶ **Disturbed** - inaccurate or rigid way of thinking about events that lead to you to experience extreme **unhealthy** negative emotions
- ▶ **Distressed** - accurate and balance way of thinking about events that lead you to experience the **appropriate** healthy negative emotion.

Cognitive approach

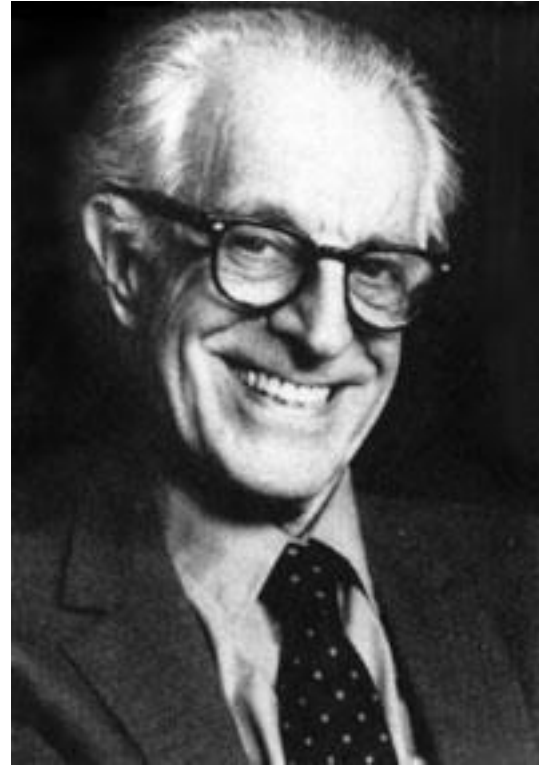
- ▶ “Believe that abnormality stems from faulty conditions about others, our world and ourselves.”

- ▶ (Ellis 1977)



Albert Ellis 1913-2007

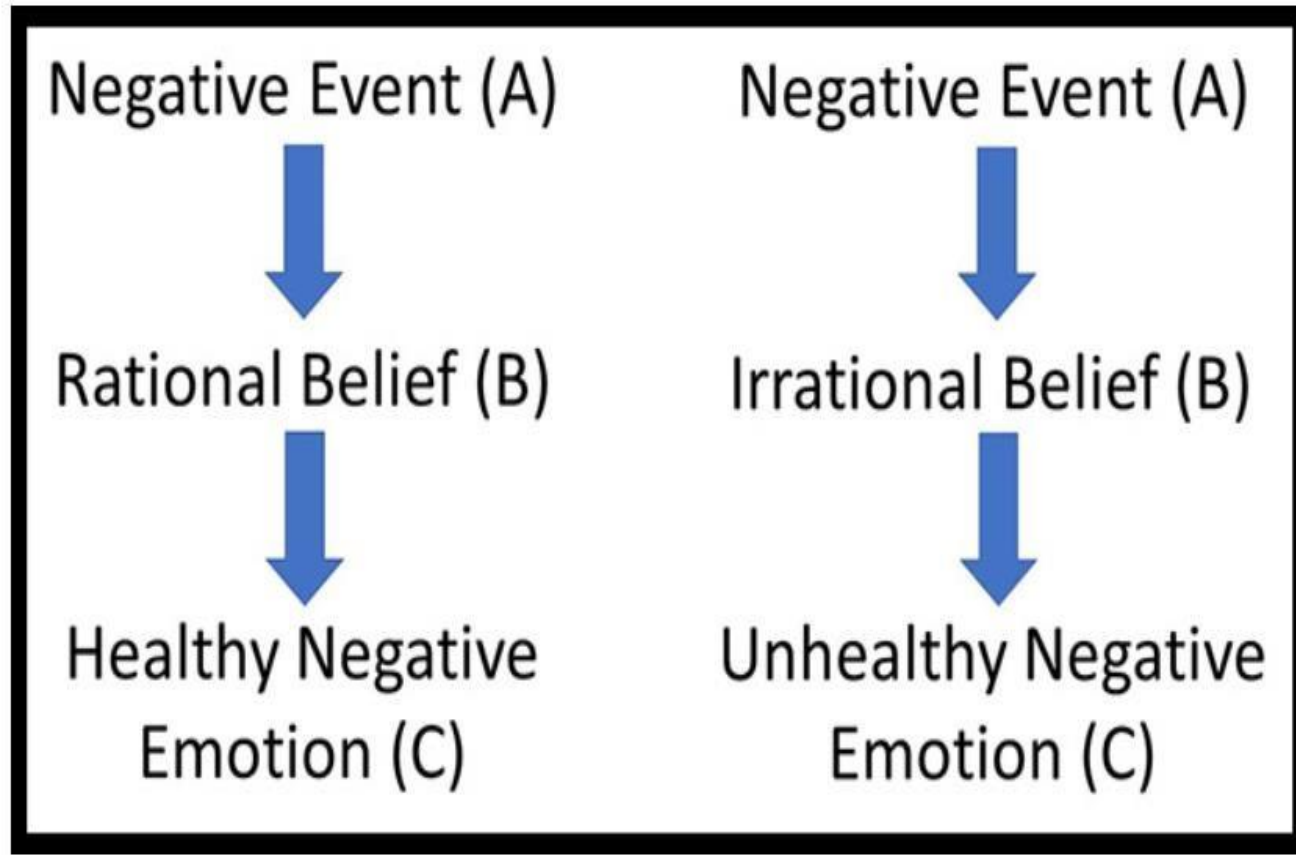
Developed REBT (Rational Emotive
Behaviour therapy 1955



Albert Ellis ABC

- ▶ A - Activating event or objective situation: the event that leads to highly emotional response or negative dysfunctional thinking
- ▶ B- Beliefs : negative thought
- ▶ C- consequences - dysfunctional behaviour through:
 - ▶ Anger
 - ▶ Sorrow
 - ▶ Anxiety

Albert Ellis (1977) and his ABC model



Ellis REBT

- ▶ Ellis believes that it is not the activating event (A) that causes the negative emotional and behavioural response (C)
- ▶ But rather that a person **interprets the event unrealistically** therefore has a irrational belief system (B) that helps cause the consequence of (C).
- ▶ Expectations

Faulty schema

- ▶ If we have interpreted information wrongly or assume due to stereotyping.
- ▶ Issues can occur with patients where they have preexisting ideas about their medication or illness and are given new information.
- ▶ Nurses should ensure that pre-conceived ideas and beliefs are fully explored before new information is given.

Faulty schema examples

Selective abstraction



Drawing conclusions on the basis of just one of many elements of a situation.

Minimisation



Downplaying the importance of a positive thought, emotion or event.

Personalisation

"this is my fault"

Attributing personal responsibility for events which aren't under a person's control.

Arbitrary inference



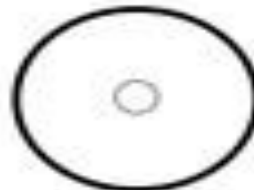
Drawing conclusions when there is little or no evidence

Magnification



"Making a mountain out of a molehill" - blowing things out of proportion.

Overgeneralisation



Making sweeping conclusions based on a single event.

Goal of therapy

- ▶ Change irrational beliefs to more rational ones.
- ▶ “I must be perfect, I must be competent at everything I do or I am a failure”
- ▶ This irrational belief links to a schema that they are worthless if they are not approved or loved by everyone they know. “Seek approval”

Example

- ▶ A nurse finds Gina in floods of tears as she is struggling to get out of bed after a big operation.
- ▶ The nurse engages with Gina in conversation to find out what has caused Gina to feel this distraught.
- ▶ Gina tells the nurse that she feels so useless, so worthless and that she is no good to anyone like this.
- ▶ The nurse uses her effective communication skills and Socratic questioning to help Gina reframe her thoughts

Reframing

This is done by;

1. Identifying negative thoughts,
2. Challenge the thought asking for evidence,
3. Reframing (re-interpret with a more realistic thought).

Reframing helps the patient to develop a more rational belief system and healthy coping strategies.

Reality testing

► Socratic questioning

1. “where is the evidence?”
2. “where is the logic?”
3. “Are there other ways of perceiving the situation?”
4. “What do you have to loose?”
5. “what do you have to gain?”
6. What would be the worst thing that could happen?”
7. “what can I learn from this experience?”

Get patients to start asking these questions themselves

1. “What evidence is in **favour** to my interpretation?”
2. “What evidence is **contrary** to my interpretation?”
3. “Is it logical?”
4. “Is there an alternative explanation for this?”

Benefit to patients using the ABC model

1. The patient will have their self-awareness raised or enhanced
2. The nurse can demonstrate to the patient how beliefs can be uncovered, which can be beneficial for patients to see the link between their current irrational thoughts and feelings and behaviour. (*reduce anxiety etc*)
3. Nurses can use this model to teach patients how to challenge their irrational beliefs about their illness recovery etc when they are not in the hospital setting/ health care setting which leads to **developing healthy coping** strategies.
4. Getting patients to identify their beliefs and act on them will have a change in their behaviour.

5. (Froggatt 2001)

TASK

- ▶ A patient named Stewart has got a belief system that he is never going to get better.
- ▶ Write down how you would help Stewart. Think about questions of exploring previous illnesses, family illnesses, depression, past experiences, identifying any thoughts linked to loss of control, low self esteem .
- ▶ How would you dispute his belief?

- ▶ Write down anything that could help Stewart reframe his thinking, self help, what small steps could he make. (bring in new evidence) reframe

References

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