

Michael E. Bernard · Oana A. David
Editors

Coaching for Rational Living

Theory, Techniques and Applications

 Springer

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Foreword

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Oana A. David and Michael E. Bernard

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

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

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

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

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

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

Albert Ellis: A Pioneer Coach

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

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

What Is Rational Living?

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

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

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

Coaching Rationality

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

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

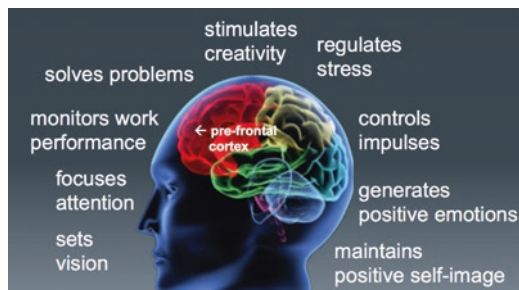


Fig. 1 The home of rationality: the pre-frontal cortex

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

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

Cognition

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

Semantics

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

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

Philosophy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rational Living in an Irrational World

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

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

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

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

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

Comprehensive RE-CBC: Processes and Techniques

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

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

The RE-CBC Coaching Relationship

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

Assessment and Conceptualization in RE-CBC

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

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

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

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

The Change Process in RE-CBC

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

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

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

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

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

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

Development Focused RE-CBC

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

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

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

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

Emotional Problem Focused RE-CBC

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

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

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

- (a) Demandingness (DEM), which is the primary absolutist, dogmatic and illogical belief (e.g., ‘I must have high achievements at work’); its RB alternative is Preferences (PREF) type of attitudes, as flexible, realistic and logic beliefs concerning own desires (e.g., “I prefer to have high achievements at work, but this does not mean that I must have”). There are three types of beliefs that are considered secondary to DEM (Montgomery et al., 2007).
- (b) Awfulising (AWF), which refers to a catastrophic evaluation of the adversities (e.g., ‘It is awful to not obtain high achievements at work.’); its RB alternative is badness (BAD) or non-awfulizing type of beliefs, involving a realistic evaluation of the adversities (e.g., “It is bad but not awful when I do not obtain high performance at work”);
- (c) Frustration intolerance (FI), which refers to person’s evaluation about the inability to tolerate the frustration steaming from the adversity (e.g., “I cannot stand not to have high achievements at work”); its alternative RB is frustration tolerance (FT) beliefs, when the person considers the negative situation/emotions tolerable (“I do not like this situation but I can tolerate it and move forward”).
- (d) Depreciation of self/others/life, which refers to making global negative evaluations (GE; e.g., “I am incompetent”); its alternative RB is unconditional acceptance (UA) beliefs, when the person considers herself/others/life acceptable without conditions, and commits towards changing specific aspects that could make them more successful/enjoyable (e.g., “I can accept my manager and try to check the reasons for his lack of appreciation regarding my efforts”).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Practical Problem Focused RE-CBC

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

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

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

RE-CBC: Personal and Organizational Applications

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

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

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

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

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

The Evidence-Base of RE-CBC

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix: References: REBC Literature Chronology

1960

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