

THE ABCDE OF REBT

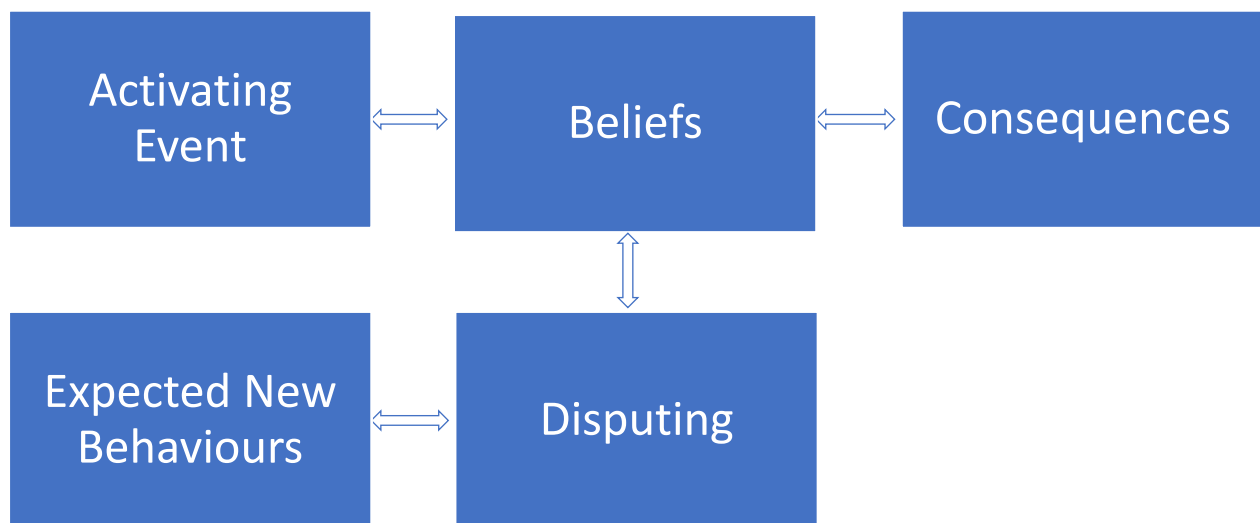
REBT or Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy was established by Albert Ellis in 1955, a New York clinical psychologist with a psychoanalytic background. Ellis theorised that our cognition, emotion, and behaviour are an interrelated psychological process. This means that the way you think will influence the way you act and the way you feel.

In working to improve your mental health, one of the most important things to identify is the difference between a healthy and unhealthy emotional response. This is important because you act very differently to situations depending on your healthy vs unhealthy emotions. If emotion is healthy, you have several good options:

- You can simply accept the feeling.
- You can express it respectfully.
- You can act on the feeling constructively.

If an emotional response is unhealthy, you can work to alter the emotion by re-examining thoughts and beliefs you have about yourself, others, a thing, a place or the situation. However, if you have difficulty expressing emotion, it is essential to be very careful about trying to suppress healthy feelings because they are uncomfortable or you feel that it is wrong to show them.

The models below represent the logical approach to Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy.

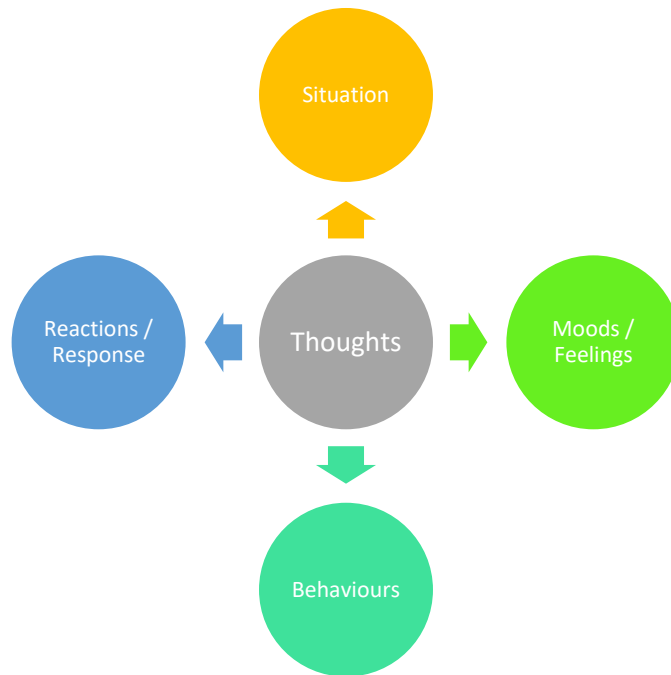


Below is a list of some familiar names and characteristics for healthy vs unhealthy emotions.

Positive Emotions		Negative Emotions	
Healthy	Unhealthy	Healthy	Unhealthy
Self-Esteem	Arrogance	Sadness	Depression
Love	Co-dependency	Concern	Anxiety
Happiness	Mania	Anger	Rage
Interest	Obsession	Remorse	Shame/Guilt
Desire	Addiction	Awareness	Paranoia
Serenity	Passivity	Irritation	Exasperation
Content	Too comfortable	Resent	Jealousy
Satisfied	Boastful	Yearning	Envy
Serene	Sour	Distaste	Disgusted
Hopeful	Apathy	Woeful	Grief-stricken
Significant	Idolise – put someone on a pedestal	Devalued	Worthless

You have an emotional response to a situation, a thing, a place, a person, and about yourself. At this stage, it is neutral. The way that it is processed in the psyche determines what happen next.

If you have a tendency to act impulsively, it is essential to be careful about acting out on unhealthy feelings.



Characteristics of Healthy Feelings	Characteristics of Unhealthy Feelings
The feelings go away after a short period.	The feeling may go on endlessly with no limits.
Your negative thoughts are realistic and not filled with distortions.	Your negative thoughts are exaggerated and distorted, even though emotionally, they feel authentic.
You continue to be productively involved with your life and solving problems.	You lose interest in essential areas of your life or stop trying to solve problems.
You do not incur a loss of worth or self-esteem.	You lose self-esteem or feel worthless.
Your feelings allow you to have a healthy enjoyment of your life.	Your feelings cause you to participate in behaviours that are self-destructive and harmful to you.
Your feelings are in reasonable proportion to the event that triggered them.	Your feelings are far out of proportion to the event that triggered them.
You do not feel discouraged about the future.	You feel demoralised and convinced that things will never get better.
You can respectfully express your feeling.	You cannot express your feeling in a way that is respectful of others.
You believe that both you and the other person have valid ideas and feelings that deserve to be understood.	You feel that your way of seeing things is the only right way.
Your emotions help you to learn from the situation so you can be wiser in the future.	Your emotions cause you to become overwhelmed and avoid all similar situations, even when the new position isn't actually dangerous.
Your emotions help you to build positive relationships with other people.	Your emotions make it difficult to have healthy relationships with other people
You look for a solution in which neither you nor anyone else has to lose.	You feel like you are in a battle or a competition where you or someone else has to lose.
There are no hidden motives that are driving the emotion, such as wanting to avoid a problem or procrastination.	Your emotion is serving to help you avoid feelings or problems that you do not want to confront through fears.