Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – A Review for Registered Dietitians

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Credits to:

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Objectives

• Describe the origin of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
• Describe the basic principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
• Describe the tools used in CBT
• Explore situations when CBT would be useful to Registered Dietitians
What is CBT?

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oViaCsok2jM
CBT Changes Perspective

“People are not disturbed by things that happen but by the view they take of things that happen.”

Epictetus, Greek philosopher.
The Creators of CBT

• Albert Ellis, Ph.D. “grandfather of cognitive behavioral therapy.”

• Aaron Beck, MD, a psychiatrist (University of Pennsylvania)
The Origin Of CBT

• “Talk” psychotherapies for psychiatric conditions.
• Short-term focused treatment
• Well researched
• Recommended in the psychology community as a critical component of treatment
• As effective as psychiatric medications
Why is CBT so widely used?

• CBT makes sense to clients and patients
• CBT honors the patient or clients unique experience and situation
• CBT empowers patients/clients and gives them a sense of control
• CBT is successful at achieving behavior change.
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Concepts

- Thoughts cause Feelings and Behaviors.
- Thoughts can be Changed
- Modifying Thoughts (Cognition) Effects Behavior Change
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Concepts

• Brief and Time-Limited: 16 encounters average
• Emphasis on current behavior
• “Client-Centered”
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Concepts

- CBT is a collaborative effort between the therapist/coach and the client.
  - Client Role: define goals, express concerns, learn & implement learning
  - Therapist/Coach Role: Help client define goals, listen, teach, encourage
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Concepts

• Teaches the benefit of **remaining calm or at least neutral** when faced with difficult situations.

“If you are upset by your problems, you now have 2 problems: 1) the problem, and 2) your upsetness.”
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Concepts

• Based on “rational thought” – Fact, not assumptions

• Maladaptive behaviors are the result of skill deficit. Structured skill building.
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Concepts

• Most **emotional and behavioral reactions are learned**. Goal is to help client learn a new way of reacting.
  
  “What else could you do in that situation?”

• **HOMEWORK** is a central feature of CBT.
What is Dysfunctional Thinking and Irrational Beliefs?

Ellis suggested that a small number of core beliefs underlie most unhelpful emotions and behaviours. Core beliefs are underlying rules that guide how people react to the events and circumstances in their lives.

1. I need love and approval from those around to me.
2. I must avoid disapproval from any source.
3. To be worthwhile as a person I must achieve success at whatever I do.
4. I can not allow myself to make mistakes.
What is Dysfunctional Thinking and Irrational Beliefs?

5. People should always do the right thing. When they behave obnoxiously, unfairly or selfishly, they must be blamed and punished.

6. Things must be the way I want them to be.

7. My unhappiness is caused by things that are outside my control – so there is nothing I can do to feel any better.

8. I must worry about things that could be dangerous, unpleasant or frightening – otherwise they might happen.
What is Dysfunctional Thinking and Irrational Beliefs?

9. I must avoid life’s difficulties, unpleasantness, and responsibilities.

10. Everyone needs to depend on someone stronger than themselves.

11. Events in my past are the cause of my problems – and they continue to influence my feelings and behaviours now.
What is Dysfunctional Thinking and Irrational Beliefs?

12. I should become upset when other people have problems, and feel unhappy when they’re sad.
13. I shouldn’t have to feel discomfort and pain.
14. Every problem should have an ideal solution.
Dysfunctional Thinking – Disturbance

• Ego Disturbance:
  • emotional tension resulting from the *perception that one’s ‘self’ or personal worth is threatened* – and lead to other problems such as avoidance of situations where failure, disapproval, etc. might occur.
  • looking to other people for acceptance; and unassertive behavior through *fear of what others may think*. 
Dysfunctional Thinking – Disturbance

• Discomfort disturbance:
  • Results from *what we expect/demand from others or the world*

  “The circumstances under which I live must be the way I want”
Dysfunctional Thinking – Disturbance

- **Low frustration-tolerance (LFT)** results from demands that frustration not happen, followed by catastrophizing when it does.

  “The world owes me contentment and happiness.”

- **Low discomfort-tolerance (LDT)** -demands that one not experience emotional or physical discomfort, with catastrophizing when discomfort does occur.

  “I must be able to feel comfortable all of the time.”
Breaking the Vicious Cycle

A ➔ B ➔ C

• A = Activating Event
• B = Beliefs, Thoughts, Attitudes, Assumptions
• C = Feelings, Behaviors, Actions
Breaking the Vicious Cycle
Time to Practice

Which one of these Dysfunctional ideas do you think drives poor food choices for your clients?

• I must avoid life’s difficulties, unpleasantness, and responsibilities.
• I shouldn’t have to feel discomfort and pain.
• I must avoid disapproval from any source.
• My unhappiness is caused by things that are outside my control – so there is nothing I can do to feel any better.
Evidence-Based Applications of CBT

- Depression and Anxiety
- Eating Disorders
- Addictions
- Anger and Antisocial Behavior
- Personal Growth
- Sexual Abuse Recovery
- Adjusting to chronic health problems
- Pain Management
- Stress Management
- Workplace Effectiveness
- Child and Adolescent Behavior
CBT is Effective in a variety of Settings

• Self or Personal Growth
• Individual Clients – Health Behavior
• Groups
• Marriage and Relationships
• Family
• Workplace
Learning to use CBT

• To Practice CBT it is important to have a good understanding of irrational thinking.

• The most effective way to learn how to help clients uncover and dispute irrational beliefs is to practice on oneself.
Thank you!

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