**T4.B3 Time Management II – Personal Effectivity through Self-understanding**

**Preparation Part Two**

1. Read the theory about Beliefs & Emotions (pg. 2-3).
2. Answer these questions:
3. What irrational thoughts and beliefs do you recognize for yourself? Note some specific examples.
4. Which of the five types - described on page 3 - do you recognize most?
5. Which of these thoughts have a negative effect on you, making you ineffective? Be specific.

**Beliefs & Emotions**

(Albert Ellis)

**Introduction**

* *Someone else cannot give you a feeling; a feeling is created by your own thoughts.*
* *You don’t get upset by an event, but by the way you look at things.*

At the core of emotional disturbance and dysfunctional behaviour lies a set of irrational beliefs that people hold about themselves, about other people and about the world.

Albert Ellis believed that through [rational analysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationality) and [cognitive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive) reconstruction, people could understand their self-defeatingness in light of their core irrational beliefs and then develop more rational constructs. Positive consequences of these rational beliefs become visible not only on an emotional level, but – in line with this – also on a behavioural level.

**How to recognize irrational beliefs**

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| --- | --- |
| **Rational beliefs** | **Irrational beliefs** |
| According to facts | Not according to facts |
| Logical, consistent | Illogical, inconsistent |
| Realistic | Exaggerating, over generalizing |
| Flexible, relative | Absolute |
| Productive in pursuing your goals and purposes | Unproductive in pursuing your goals and purposes |

Some examples:

* “If I don’t check my e-mail now, I’ll die.”
* “I have not made any progress at all.”
* “I am a complete failure for not sticking to my plan.”
* “She is always ahead of me. I will never finish my PhD.”
* …….

**Beliefs and emotions**

There is a relationship between beliefs and emotions as follows: Rational beliefs lead to healthy (negative) emotions, irrational beliefs lead to harmful (negative) emotions.

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| --- | --- |
| **Rational beliefs lead to**  **healthy emotions** | **Irrational beliefs lead to**  **harmful emotions** |
| Concern | Fear |
| Sadness | Depression |
| Remorse | Guilt |
| Sorrow | Hurt |
| Disappointment | Shame |
| Annoyance | Anger |
| Desire | Envy |

**Types of irrational beliefs**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Beliefs** |
| 1. Fanatic perfectionism   Exaggerating personal consequences | “I may not make any mistake,  because they will find out I am worthless,  and I will prove to be a total failure.” |
| 1. Disaster thinkers   Giving a negative interpretation of all facts  Making an elephant out of a mosquito | “I will never be able to do this.  Everything will go wrong.  It will all fall apart. We will fail inevitably.” |
| 1. Low frustration tolerance   Exaggerating difficulties | “I can’t take criticism.  This is too difficult for me.  Life is too difficult, things should be more easy.” |
| 1. Love junk   Exaggerating that all people should like  them and approve their behaviour | “Everybody needs to like me.  I can’t be rejected. If I say no, he’ll hate me.  Suppose they won’t like my idea.” |
| 1. Demanding (on others/the world)   Exaggerating on justice, standards, values  Not accepting reality, demanding it to  change to their beliefs | “They should behave different.  I worked so hard, he should see that.  They shouldn’t allow that.  He should work as hard as I do.” |

And the consequences for emotions and behaviour are

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Emotions and behaviour** |
| Fanatic perfectionism  *“I may not make any mistake”* | Leads to fear and paralysis |
| Disaster thinkers  *“Everything will fall apart”* | Leads to indecisiveness and avoiding all risks |
| Low frustration tolerance  *“Life is too difficult for me”* | Leads to tension and frustration and lack of perseverance |
| Love junk  *“All people should like me”* | Leads to avoiding conflicts and never expressing one’s opinion |
| Demanding  *“They should be different”* | Leads to anger, envy and frustration |

**How to dispute irrational beliefs**

How do you know a belief is irrational?

An irrational belief has a ‘no’ on at least one of the following questions:

1. ***Is it realistic?***

Empirical: is the belief consistent with reality?

1. ***Is it logical?***

Logical: do the belief components follow logically from the partial components?

1. ***Does it help?***

Pragmatic: constructive both in terms of functional emotional and behavioural consequences as of enhancing basic goals and purposes?