

# Advances in REBT

Michael E. Bernard • Windy Dryden  
Editors

# Advances in REBT

Theory, Practice, Research, Measurement,  
Prevention and Promotion

 Springer

*Editors*

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# Preface

At the 2nd International Congress on Cognitive Behavioral Coaching held in Athens in June, 2016, Windy and I agreed that it was timely for current REBT theory, practice, research, measurement, and applications to be written about by leading REBT scholar-practitioners throughout the world. Sharon Panulla, Executive Editor at Springer whom we have worked with over two decades, agreed to support the project. In discussing the range of global REBT professional activity, we arrived at 36 topics for chapters, and the project with Sharon's support became two books.

Windy and I first met in 1980 while attending the REBT Supervisor's Practicum at the Institute for Rational Emotive Therapy in New York that was conducted by Richard Wessler. 1980 was an important year for REBT as four books were published on the theory and practice of REBT by authors other than Ellis (Wessler/Wessler, Bard/Fisher, Grieger/Boyd, Hauck). It was an exciting time for both of us as we had the opportunity to work directly with Albert Ellis, sat in on his group therapy sessions, and became close to an amazing array of REBTers including but not limited to Ray DiGiuseppe, Janet Wolfe, Dom Dimattia, and Ann Vernon. Subsequently, we became serial editors of the *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*.

Albert Ellis was a genius (we know he scored in the top 99% of the Army Alpha IQ test). As a result of his superior aptitude, his extensive reading of philosophy and psychology, and his 150,000+ hours of clinical practice, he discovered something about the human psyche that is quite unique. This discovery and its derivative clinical, counselling, educational, and coaching practices continue to stand the test of time and form a major part of his legacy. Ellis discovered *rationality* as a mental strength that helps people overcome adversity and self-manage negative emotions and self-defeating behaviors and as a self-actualizing force that assists people to live fulfilled, goal-achieving lives. Of course, Ellis also shed light on an oppositional force within the human psyche, *irrationality*, that, as he so eloquently discussed and wrote about, is more important as a contributor to people's mental health problems than their surrounding environment or their early childhood experiences.

Ellis expressed his view that the goal of REBT, when practiced in its most elegant and powerful form, is to educate people to become more rational in order to achieve their goals (and dreams) largely through changes in their philosophy of life. Ellis considered that all people construct personal beliefs that together form a *belief system* that ideally helps them to achieve their goals of living a long, self-actualized, and happy life and which leads to achievement, love, and an absence of stress. Unfortunately, because of people's largely biological propensity, rational beliefs ("I very much want to be successful, loved and stress free") are made into rigid, irrational shoulds, oughts, musts, and needs ("I need to be successful, loved and comfortable"). This is how people's belief system can prevent them from achieving their goals, leading to emotional misery. Much of REBT is devoted to helping strengthen people's rational beliefs. At the same time, and deriving from his self-confessed *gene for efficiency*, Ellis and REBT methods help people through the use of his renowned ABC model to become great problem-solvers in the emotional domain – further developing their mental faculty of rationality.

We think the chapters in this book on REBT measurement and REBT empirical status by Professor Daniel David, Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy/International Institute for Psychotherapy, "Babeş-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca, and his colleagues deserve special mention. In the early days, REBT was unfavorably compared with Beck's cognitive therapy because the scientific rigor and evaluation studies were not up to the best standards. Through Professor David's research, meta-analyses of REBT research, and thoughtful discussion of how current REBT assessment surveys exemplify best measurement practice, REBT can now be viewed better through the lens of science and research.

Thirty-eight years later, Windy and I are as excited about REBT's contribution to our own work and the mental health and well-being of everyone as we were in the 1980s. And this view is shared by the contributors to these two books and the many, many mental health practitioners using REBT today. The contributors know and practice REBT very well. They share Ellis' views on the empowering aspects of rationality and how REBT methods achieve this end. We have no doubt that you will share in the excitement we have about how REBT continues to make a difference to the lives of many.

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# Contents

<b>1 Early Theories and Practices of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy and How They Have Been Augmented and Revised During the Last Three Decades</b> .....	1
Albert Ellis	
<b>2 The Distinctive Features of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy</b> .....	23
Windy Dryden	
<b>3 A Comparison of REBT with Other Cognitive Behavior Therapies</b> .....	47
Walter Matweychuk, Raymond DiGiuseppe, and Olga Gulyayeva	
<b>4 The Measurement of Irrationality and Rationality</b> .....	79
Daniel O. David, Raymond DiGiuseppe, Anca Dobrean, Costina Ruxandra Păsărelu, and Robert Balazsi	
<b>5 Empirical Research in REBT Theory and Practice</b> .....	101
Daniel O. David, Mădălina Sucală, Carmen Coteș, Radu Șoflău, and Sergiu Vălenaș	
<b>6 Future Research Directions for REBT</b> .....	121
Daniel O. David, Silviu A. Matu, Ioana R. Podina, and Răzvan M. Predatu	
<b>7 Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy and the Working Alliance</b> .....	147
Windy Dryden	
<b>8 Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy: Assessment, Conceptualisation and Intervention</b> .....	165
Windy Dryden	

<b>9</b>	<b>Brief Interventions in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy</b> .....	211
	Windy Dryden	
<b>10</b>	<b>REBT in Group Therapy</b> .....	231
	Kimberly A. Alexander and Kristene A. Doyle	
<b>11</b>	<b>REBT and Positive Psychology</b> .....	247
	Aurora Szentagotai-Tătar, Diana-Mirela Căndea, and Daniel O. David	
<b>12</b>	<b>REBT in Coaching</b> .....	267
	Oana David	
<b>13</b>	<b>Rational Emotive Behavior Education in Schools</b> .....	289
	Ann Vernon and Michael E. Bernard	
<b>14</b>	<b>REBT in Sport</b> .....	307
	Martin J. Turner	
<b>15</b>	<b>REBT and Parenting Interventions</b> .....	337
	Oana Alexandra David, Horea-Radu Oltean, and Roxana Andreea-Ioana Cardoş	
<b>16</b>	<b>REBT in the Workplace</b> .....	353
	Michael E. Bernard	
	<b>Index</b> .....	381