A Cross-Cultural Redefinition of RE & CBT

From the West to the Middle East

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PART 1

Western Theory

Chapter 1: What is this book for?
This section explains the aim and objectives of the book. It also specifies how to use the book and identifies who the audience is.

Chapter 2: REBT & CBT Theoretical Essentials
This section is designed to prepare the reader for the cultural differences and practices as the main theme of this book. The topics on subsequent pages will be linked to this section. Essential information about RE & CBT psychotherapy is covered in this section.

Chapter 3: Bs of the ABC Model
This section looks closely at beliefs and thoughts (cognitions in general) and the ABC model of Rational Emotive & Cognitive Behavior Therapy. It provides RE&CBT’s essential concepts.

Chapter 4: The Goals of REBT & CBT
This section sets out the purpose of REB and CB therapies and focuses on ‘C’ (emotions) of the ABC Model. The goal of the therapy is discussed from the perspective and expectations of Middle Eastern people.

Chapter 5: What the Theory Says, What the Culture Understands
REBT and CBT theories will be discussed qualitatively from a Middle Eastern client’s point of view, including some questions as to what clients in the Middle East understand about cognitive distortions, irrational beliefs and emotions. It includes a discourse about their expectations from therapy and subsequently how their environment reacts after they have begun psychological treatment.

PART 2

Eastern Sources

Chapter 6: A history of psychology in the Middle East
A brief history of psychology in Middle Eastern countries is provided. Some of the topics related to psychotherapy and psychology from the wide cultural pattern of the Middle East is introduced.

Chapter 7: Unconditional Self - Acceptance and Sufism
The use of Sufism in psychotherapy is presented to readers. There is an attempt to summarize more than a passing understanding of Sufism, though it bows to the wisdom of the truly great masters. An explanation of its relevance to RE&CBT’s concepts of unconditional self-acceptance (USA), others acceptance (UOA) and life acceptance (ULA), self-worth and self-love is also considered.

Chapter 8: Middle Eastern Metaphors
This section provides some Middle Eastern metaphors to be used in psychotherapy. The examples bestow information to therapists and clients to create an alternative cultural flavor and atmosphere.

**Chapter 9: Middle Eastern Idioms, Proverbs & Folk Sayings**

This section includes examples of Turkish folk sayings, idioms and proverbs for rational beliefs. Explanations of how to use them to support clients is also discussed.

**Chapter 10: Session Structures and Examples**

This section provides some examples of culturally adaptable semi-structured session protocols and an actual session.
About the Author

Dr. Murat K. Artiran was born in Kartal-Istanbul in 1975. After moving to the USA in 2001, he studied psychology at Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond. After graduating in General Psychology on the Master of Arts Program in West Virginia, he completed his doctoral program in clinical psychology. He became a supervisor of RE & CB therapies following training in psychotherapy at the Albert Ellis Institute - New York. After returning to Turkey in 2013, he opened a private practice and is now the director of the Affiliated Center of the Albert Ellis Institute. He generally works with children, adolescents and young adults, providing supervision to clinical psychology students and teaching RE & CBT techniques at both his center and also at a private university in Istanbul.

About the Language Editor

Steve Leyland prefers to remain a mystery but can be found in Istanbul where he has one son.

Thanks … (Teşekkür…)

SWT. I would like to express my thanks to my family – especially my wife, my mother, sister and brother: they motivated me.

Many thanks should be extended to my clients and assistants who supported me at the Affiliated Centre of the Albert Ellis Institute - Turkey. In fact, I would like to thank everyone who helped me write this book. I particularly thank Steve Leyland, not only as an English language editor, but as a friend, coach and frequent inspiration. He coaxed and guided me in all sections of the book, notably the Sufism section.
Introduction

Many schools of therapy and psychotherapy have been introduced by Western culture to the world and offer a plethora of basic, similar methodologies. Others offer specific, relatable hypotheses and particular, precise methods. The good news is that all are useful to a variety of differing cultures. In the wake of Western psychotherapies, if the cultural aspects are not ignored, we may obtain optimal benefits for non-Western cultures (e.g. Middle Eastern) in therapeutic treatments. Each psychotherapeutic approach has its own structure, hypotheses and assumptions about human psychological well-being. Some of them are scientifically proven and applied all over the world, providing benefit to those in need. Although theoretical assumptions are applicable to clinical and non-clinical populations, each approach may not be culturally adaptable, nor is it necessarily capable of being adaptable to a different culture, due to its complex nature. In Western societies, diverse schools of psychotherapy have been condemned for their inability to welcome an ethnodiversity to their methodologies [1].

Since psychotherapy sessions are individually beneficial, therapy necessarily has to be tailored to the needs of each client. Western philosophy and embedded cultural factors offer their own approach and perspectives to clients. Psychotherapists from non-Western cultures may have difficulty in applying such knowledge to sessions without modifying applicable methodologies to their own culture. Language differences and cultural semantics are another huge obstacle in this process. Other aspects like life circumstances, socio-economic levels, religions, race, family structure, educational systems, political dissimilarities, understanding of psychological illnesses and attitudes towards an “understanding” of psychotherapy vary from culture to culture and so cultural pluralism needs to be addressed in a unique cultural formulation of a variety of therapeutic processes [2]. Therapists need to adjust their interventions using their own fundamental roots in terms of both academic theory, language, beliefs and superstitions.
The objective of this book is to convey an alternative point of view to Rational Emotive & Cognitive Behavior applications considered the ‘norm’, when pertaining to Turkish culture. Science is not only a body of established and unquestionable facts. It is also a method of asking questions which - at their best - moves us closer to an understanding of what is really going on. Many up-to-date pieces of information have been included and it is hoped that more research-based references will latch onto this trend effectively.

Throughout the book, theoretical information is given as simply as possible. Applications that can be used by clients and therapists are presented in boxes. This book intends to show unique examples of cultural differences in psychotherapy. It is not only Middle Eastern people that are interested in cognitive behavior therapy (chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5), a history of the psychology of the Middle East (chapter 6), Sufism (chapter 7) and metaphors (chapter 8). It is hoped that the general public from all walks of life, all over the world - not least academics, practitioners, clients and students - will gain something from this work. Successful psychology counselors are able to utilize and adjust their own psychotherapeutic models to give structure whilst intervening in a patient's personal issues, characteristic features and culture/cultural expectations, identity, nervosa and adaptation skills.

This book can be considered a qualitative approach to all the issues and it is hoped to be used as guidance for

- clients & practitioners
- academics & researchers

The first four chapters of the book provide information about the central concepts of REBT and CBT. The fourth, fifth and sixth chapters start to reveal cultural factors and differences. In the second part of the book, some cultural elements are provided that will help as a reference for clients, therapists and academicians in the application of REBT and CBT (chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10).
References
