

The B.E.T.R. Method of Therapy: Theoretical Background and Application

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The B.E.T.R. Method is founded upon contemporary and traditional psychotherapy methods in order to create a new, revolutionary technique that will help you find lasting relief from depression. B.E.T.R. stands for:

**Behavioral
Emotional
Therapeutic Relationship**

These form the three pillars of the therapy provided at Therapy Summit.

The foundation of the B.E.T.R. Method is the **Therapeutic Relationship**. Depression can be a soul-crushing thing for you to experience. We believe that the only way for you to get relief from depression is through a therapeutic relationship with a therapist that is built on compassion, non-judgment, and support. Additionally, depression can make you feel like you are somehow “wrong” for feeling the way you do. The therapeutic relationship we create with you is built on the firm belief that you should never be ashamed for how you feel. In fact, it is strength and courage that allows you to say how you feel.

Research has been clear that the relationship you build with your therapist is the single most important factor in ensuring that you have a successful therapy experience (Ardito & Rabellino, 2011). We believe that a good therapeutic relationship is transparent and flexible. And we regularly welcome feedback from our patients about what is going well, and what can be improved, in therapy.

Additionally, modern psychoanalytic theory has focused on how the therapeutic relationship acts as the vehicle for uncovering and understanding your unconscious mind (Barsness, 2017). On a daily basis, we have thousands of unconscious thoughts going through our heads that we are never aware of. For example, have you ever driven home from the store, only to find that you were clenching your teeth the whole time? Or have you found that certain days

of the week, or certain people in your life, make you feel especially bad about yourself, but you don't know why. What were you thinking about during these times? Usually, you don't have conscious thoughts that you can remember.

Unconscious thoughts play a huge role in how you are feeling and thinking about yourself – but because they are unconscious, they are hard to be aware of them. Through the therapeutic relationship, we will uncover the unconscious thoughts that are causing you to feel depressed. By gaining insight into these thoughts, you will experience freedom from patterns that have been keeping you stuck in the same place in your feelings, your relationships, your school or work, and your sense of yourself (Marmor, 2018).

The next pillar of B.E.T.R. is **Behavioral** changes. Long have psychologists known that the quickest way for people to find relief from depression is by making simple, easy changes in their daily lives (Cuijpers, Straten, Warmerdam, 2007). For example, many people have felt their mood lift by simply walking outside a few times a week, or by simply setting an alarm to get out of bed at a certain time in the morning. In addition to the simple changes, we will work with you on making the lasting changes to your behavior that will keep you free from depression. We will come up with a treatment plan that describes the behaviors that are contributing to you feeling depression. We will then outline the changes you can make to help you feel better immediate, and in the long-term.

The final pillar of the B.E.T.R. Method is **Emotional** acceptance. When you are feeling depressed, there is often a multitude of emotions going on for you – many of which you can't always describe or articulate. These emotions are usually painful. But despite their intensity, these emotions are still a part of who you are. No matter how hard you might try, you cannot get rid of your emotions. Instead, you can learn to recognize, feel, and accept them. This process is

aided through the use of mindfulness techniques (Baer, 2006). And wonderfully, when you do this, you will notice that the intensity and pain of these emotions begins to diminish (Hayes, et al., 2006). Emotions become more tolerable when you are able to feel and accept them. In talking about mindfulness, Jon Kabat-Zinn said, “You cannot stop the waves, but you can learn to surf” (1994, p.32). We will work with you on accepting the emotions you carry, which will give you some relief from them.

One of the revolutionary aspects of the B.E.T.R. Method is that all of these pillars are interconnected. Once we gain insight into your unconscious thoughts through the therapeutic relationship, you will notice a direct, positive impact on your behaviors and your emotions. Similarly, changing your behaviors or accepting your emotions will impact the unconscious thoughts you have about yourself.

As you have seen, the B.E.T.R. Method is designed to provide relief from depression immediately (by changing behaviors) and in the long-term (by accepting your emotions and understanding your unconscious mind). By seamlessly integrating these three pillars, the BETR method is able to do what other therapies can't: it helps you understand your past, while also changing your future.

References

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