



The Road to Tolerance: The Philosophy of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy

By Albert Ellis

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In this overview of one of the most successful forms of psychotherapy — Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) — its creator and chief advocate, Albert Ellis, explains at length the principles underlying this therapeutic approach and shows how beneficial it can be, not only for therapy but also as a basic philosophy of life. As the title indicates, REBT promotes an attitude of tolerance, an open-minded willingness to accept the frailties, less-than-ideal behaviors, and unique characteristics of both others and ourselves. Ellis persuasively demonstrates that lack of tolerance of our own imperfections can easily lead to emotional disturbances and unhappiness. And intolerance of others, which fails to account for the great diversity of human personalities and behaviors, can become a serious disruptive force in today's highly diverse, multicultural global society.

To counter such negative tendencies, Ellis advocates the adoption and practice of three basic attitudes of tolerance: (1) Unconditional Self-Acceptance (USA); (2) Unconditional Other-Acceptance (UOA); and (3) Unconditional Life-Acceptance (ULA). He discusses the philosophical foundations of these principles and then devotes a number of chapters to comparing REBT to spiritual and religious philosophies. He points out the dangers of fanatical tendencies in religion while also showing how the basic principles of REBT are similar to some ancient religious philosophies such as Zen Buddhism and the Judeo-Christian Golden Rule. In addition, he criticizes certain secular philosophies for their extremism, including Fascism and Ayn Rand's Objectivism, and he also discusses the ramifications of applying REBT in the social, political, and economic sphere. In emphasizing how easy it is for all of us to think, feel, and act intolerantly, Ellis brilliantly shows that tolerance is a deliberate, rational choice that we can all make, both for the good of ourselves and for the good of the world.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Now over 90 years old, the ebullient cognitive therapy pioneer Ellis has written more than 75 books, most of which advocate his brand of psychotherapy, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy. Writing in the no-nonsense style that characterizes his public speaking, Ellis opens his latest with an overview of how his therapeutic principles evolved. Dismissing Freudian therapy as ineffectual and opposing Jung's mysticism, Ellis believes in helping clients banish self-defeating thoughts, or "negative nonsense," in order to take control of their lives. Ellis, who claims to have discovered his main idea—that people largely upset themselves with these negative thoughts—in classical and Asian philosophy, recommends his teachings as a general guide to life. Assuming religious belief to be the most prevalent popular philosophy, he discusses—with the cautiousness of a self-declared atheist—some of the benefits of religious belief but warns against fundamentalism. He also pours doubt on religion's capacity for improving thought processes. And he takes on—not for the first time—Ayn Rand's Objectivism, using some entertainingly gossipy anecdotes culled from personal encounters with her. Throughout, Ellis demonstrates how it might be possible to salvage religion's humanistic and caring aspects for the purposes of therapy. Ellis's fans will enjoy his characteristically forthright engagement with definitions of spirituality and his honest, lively reappraisal of his own thought.

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About the Author

Albert Ellis, PhD (1913-2007) practiced psychotherapy, marriage and family counseling, and sex therapy for over sixty years. He was the author of more than eighty books, including many popular best sellers. Other books by Albert Ellis available from Prometheus Books are: *The Myth of Self-Esteem*; *The Road to Tolerance*; *Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy: It Works for Me—It Can Work for You*; *Overcoming Destructive Beliefs, Feelings, and Behaviors: New Directions for Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy*; and (with Raymond J. Yeager) *Why Some Therapies Don't Work: The Dangers of Transpersonal Psychology*.

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