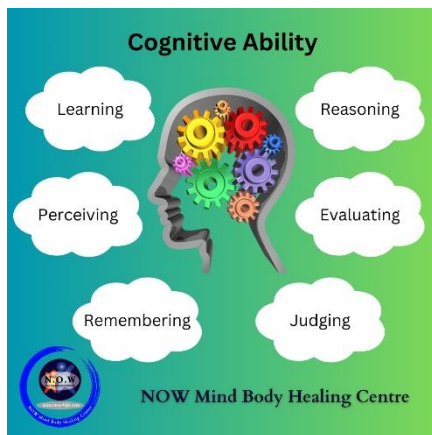


What's the Difference: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – Cognitive Remediation Therapy



Because I often say, “a rose by any other name smells just as sweet” when I talk about the many labels (sometimes with regards to treatment approaches, methods, or processes) I was asked during a recent supervision session if Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT) are the same? Is CRT just a newer name for CBT? Well, the answer is: No, they are not the same. The short write-up below provides a brief explanation for both these terms.

Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) are both therapeutic approaches that involve working with thought processes but have different goals, techniques, and applications.

Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT)

Focus

CRT is specifically aimed at improving cognitive functions, such as memory, attention, problem-solving, and executive functioning. It's often used for individuals with cognitive impairments stemming from conditions like schizophrenia, ADHD, brain injury, dementia, or depression.

Goal

The primary goal is to enhance cognitive skills that might be impaired, enabling individuals to improve functioning in daily life.

Techniques

CRT uses structured exercises, tasks, and computerized programs to train and strengthen cognitive abilities. These tasks often become progressively more challenging to support cognitive improvement over time.

Approach

CRT is more about cognitive training and rehabilitation rather than exploring or changing thoughts and behaviors related to emotional well-being.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Focus

CBT is primarily focused on identifying and modifying negative or unhelpful thoughts and behaviors to improve emotional well-being and manage symptoms of conditions like anxiety, depression, PTSD, and OCD.

Goal

The main objective is to help individuals change patterns of thinking and behavior that contribute to emotional distress, thereby promoting healthier responses and reducing symptoms.

Techniques

CBT uses cognitive restructuring, thought challenging, and behavioral experiments to help clients recognize distorted thinking patterns and replace them with healthier thoughts and behaviors.

Approach

CBT is more centered on mental health and emotional regulation. It addresses thoughts and behaviors that affect one's mood, beliefs, and actions rather than directly focusing on cognitive functioning or skills.

Key Differences:

1. Purpose:

CRT targets cognitive skills and functioning, while CBT aims to alter maladaptive thought patterns to improve emotional well-being.

2. Application:

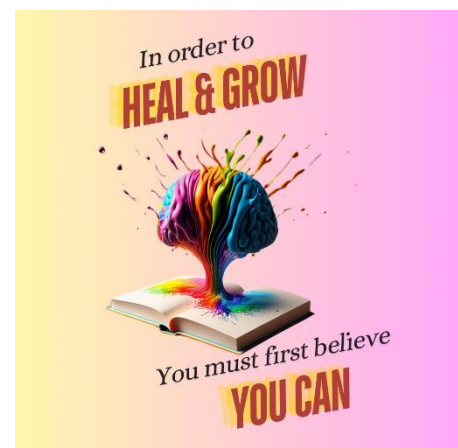
CRT is more common in rehabilitative or neuropsychological settings, whereas CBT is widely used in mental health treatment for emotional and behavioral issues.

3. Techniques:

CRT employs exercises and tasks to improve cognitive processes; CBT involves therapeutic techniques to reshape thoughts and beliefs affecting emotions and behaviors.

In short, CRT is about cognitive training and rehabilitation, while CBT is about changing thought patterns to manage emotions and behaviors effectively.

So, this is also a good show that while I am apt to use the metaphor "a rose by any other name ...", like everything else in life, metaphors, analogies, and even platitudes (especially platitudes) cannot and should not be applied to everything and every situation.



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