

IRRATIONAL BELIEFS AND UNCONDITIONAL SELF-ACCEPTANCE. III. THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF IRRATIONAL BELIEF

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ABSTRACT: In two studies, one correlational ($N = 158$) and one experimental ($N = 128$), using college students, it was found that Need for Achievement, Need for Approval and Self-Downing were the most important irrational beliefs of the General Attitude and Belief Scale predicting unconditional self-acceptance. The Need for Comfort, Demand for Fairness and Other-Downing subscales were found to be less influential. The findings were discussed in terms of Ellis' theoretical formulation of four higher-order types of irrational belief processes (demandingness, awfulizing, low-frustration tolerance and self-downing), empirical research on different irrational belief themes, the distinction between ego disturbance and discomfort disturbance in REBT and the distinction between sociotropy and autonomy in different forms of depression.

KEY WORDS: irrational beliefs; REBT; unconditional self-acceptance; self-esteem.

INTRODUCTION

Two important elements of REBT are irrational beliefs and unconditional self-acceptance. As a result of holding irrational beliefs, people acquire unhealthy emotions, dysfunctional behaviors and a lack of self-acceptance. More rational and realistic ways of thinking produce healthier emotions, more functional behaviors and greater acceptance of the self and others (for reviews, see Dryden & Neenan, 2004; Ellis,

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1994). In REBT, self-acceptance means accepting oneself unconditionally regardless of whether one behaves competently or correctly and whether others are likely to express approval or respect. Although a good deal of research has been carried out on irrational beliefs, very little work has been done on unconditional self-acceptance, even though unconditional self-acceptance is a key feature of REBT. One reason for this may simply be the absence of a measure of unconditional self-acceptance (in contrast to self-esteem, for which many measures are available; see, for example, Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991).

Recently, however, Chamberlain and Haaga (2001a) devised a measure consisting of 20 statements reflecting the various philosophical and practical aspects of unconditional self-acceptance distilled from the REBT literature. Chamberlain and Haaga (2001a, b) found that this measure of unconditional self-acceptance was positively associated with life satisfaction and happiness, and negatively associated with anxiety, depression and depression-proneness. Unfortunately, their measure of unconditional self-acceptance was also found to be correlated with self-esteem. To overcome this problem, they partialled out self-esteem from the other correlations. When this was done, the correlations with anxiety and depression-proneness remained significant, but the correlations with depression and life satisfaction/happiness became non-significant.

Davies (2006) investigated relationships between irrational beliefs and unconditional self-acceptance and found highly significant negative correlations even after self-esteem had been partialled out. Thus, irrational thinking was associated with low unconditional self-acceptance, whereas rational thinking was associated with high unconditional self-acceptance. This provided the first empirical evidence of a link between these two key aspects of REBT. However, the findings were only correlational and therefore it could not be concluded that rational/irrational thinking is a *cause* of unconditional/conditional self-acceptance. In a follow-up study, Davies (in press) used an experimental priming technique and found that priming irrational beliefs had a direct effect on unconditional self-acceptance. Priming rational beliefs resulted in greater unconditional self-acceptance, whereas priming irrational beliefs resulted in greater conditional self-acceptance.

The present study set out to investigate the relative importance of different types of irrational belief affecting unconditional self-acceptance. Although Ellis (1962) originally identified 11 specific types of irrational belief, more recent research in REBT has concen-

trated on just four higher-order types reflecting different irrational belief processes. The *primary* type of irrational belief process is concerned with *demandingness*. *Secondary* types of irrational belief process are concerned with *awfulizing*, *low-frustration tolerance*, and *self-downing*. Although this four-factor scheme has been at the heart of REBT for many years, empirical research on different types of irrational belief has yielded somewhat different schemes. For example, Bessai and Lane (1976) devised the Common Beliefs Survey III, which has been shown to have good reliability and convergent/discriminant validity (e.g. Thorpe, Parker, & Barnes, 1992). Through factor analysis (e.g., Tosi, Forman, Rudy, & Murphy, 1986), six different types of irrational belief were identified: Blame Proneness, Self-Downing, Perfectionism, Importance of the Past, Importance of Approval and Control of Emotions.

DiGiuseppe, Leaf, Exner and Robin (1988) developed a scale of irrationality—the General Attitude and Belief Scale (GABS)—to take account of the four *processes* of irrational thinking (demandingness, awfulizing, self-downing and low frustration tolerance) plus three *content* domains which had been found to be recurrent themes in irrational beliefs (achievement, approval and comfort). This measure of irrationality has been found to have good reliability and convergent/discriminant validity (Bernard, 1998). As well as irrationality subscales, the GABS also contains a rationality subscale. Factor analysis of the scale (e.g. Bernard, 1998) has shown that seven factors account for the observed correlations among scale items: *Rationality*, *Self-Downing*, *Need for Achievement*, *Need for Approval*, *Need for Comfort*, *Demand for Fairness* and *Other-Downing*. In the following study, correlations between the different subscales of the GABS and unconditional self-acceptance were examined. Self-esteem was also measured as a control variable.

STUDY 1: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF IRRATIONAL BELIEFS AND UNCONDITIONAL SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Method

Participants and Procedure. One hundred twenty-three female and 35 male undergraduate students aged 18–48 ($M = 22.15$) completed a number of questionnaires for course credit in mass-testing sessions.

Measures. The General Attitude and Belief Scale (GABS; Bernard, 1998) consists of 55 statements comprising seven subscales. The *Rationality* subscale consists of 9 statements (e.g. “It is frustrating being hassled, but I can stand the frustration of being hassled”). The *Self-Downing* subscale consists of 9 statements (e.g., “If important people dislike me, it goes to show what a worthless person I am”). The *Need for Achievement* subscale consists of 9 statements (e.g. “It’s awful to do poorly at some important things, and I think it is a catastrophe if I do poorly”). The *Need for Approval* subscale consists of 7 statements (e.g. “It’s essential to be liked by important people, and I will not accept their not liking me”). The *Need for Comfort* subscale consists of 9 statements (e.g. “I can’t stand being tense or nervous, and I think tension is unbearable”). The *Demand for Fairness* subscale consists of 9 statements (e.g. “I must be treated fairly by people, and I will not accept unfairness”). Finally, the *Other-Downing* subscale consists of only three statements (e.g. “I believe that if a person treats me unfairly, they are bad and worthless”). Participants respond to the statements on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

Unconditional self-acceptance was measured with the USAQ (Chamberlain & Haaga, 2001a), a questionnaire consisting of 20 statements to which participants respond on a scale from 1 (“almost always untrue”) to 7 (“almost always true”). In this questionnaire, nine items are worded such that higher scores represent greater unconditional self-acceptance (e.g., “I avoid comparing myself to others to decide if I am a worthwhile person”), while 11 items are reverse-scored since higher scores represent greater conditional self-acceptance (e.g., “I set goals for myself that I hope will prove my worth”).

Self-esteem was measured with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), a questionnaire consisting of 10 statements to which participants respond on a scale from 1 (“strongly agree”) to 4 (“strongly disagree”). To avoid confusion in the interpretation of results, items were scored so that high scores represented high self-esteem.

Results and Discussion

Summary descriptive statistics for the variables are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Study 1

| | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Unconditional self-acceptance | 89.08 | 14.73 |
| Self-esteem | 31.26 | 5.38 |
| Total irrationality | 125.35 | 24.95 |
| Rationality | 34.75 | 5.24 |
| Self-downing | 14.92 | 6.37 |
| Need for achievement | 25.63 | 7.83 |
| Need for approval | 13.62 | 3.69 |
| Need for comfort | 27.88 | 6.74 |
| Demand for fairness | 30.89 | 7.14 |
| Other-downing | 8.02 | 2.45 |

These statistics are similar to those published in the literature (USAQ and RSE—Chamberlain & Haaga, 2001a, b; GABS—Bernard, 1998)

Zero-order and partial correlations between Unconditional Self-Acceptance, Self-Esteem and GABS scales are shown in Table 2

As expected, the Total Irrationality score correlated significantly negatively with Unconditional Self-Acceptance ($r = -.61$) and also with Self-Esteem ($r = -.46$). The correlation between Total Irrationality and Unconditional Self-Acceptance remained highly significant when Self-Esteem was partialled out ($r = -.48$), but the correlation between Total Irrationality and Self-Esteem became almost non-significant when Unconditional Self-Acceptance was partialled out ($r = -.16$, $p = .05$). The correlation of the Rationality subscale with Unconditional Self-acceptance was significantly positive (partial $r = .44$). Both zero-order and partial correlations of all the Irrationality subscales with Unconditional Self-Acceptance were significantly negative. However, the correlations were higher for Self-Downing (partial $r = -.32$), Need for Achievement (partial $r = -.48$), and Need for Approval (partial $r = -.53$), than for Need for Comfort (partial $r = -.22$), Demand for Fairness (partial $r = -.19$), and Other-Downing (partial $r = -.19$). These differences in the size of the correlations cannot be accounted for by differences in restriction of range. For example, Need for Approval showed the highest correlation yet had

Table 2
Zero-Order and Partial Pearson Correlations among Variables in Study 1

| | | <i>General Attitude and Belief Scales (GABS)</i> | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | | <i>Total</i> | <i>Need for</i> | <i>Need for</i> | <i>Need for</i> | <i>Demand for</i> | |
| | | <i>Rationality</i> | <i>Self-Downing</i> | <i>Achievement</i> | <i>Approval</i> | <i>Comfort</i> | <i>Fairness</i> |
| | | <i>Irrationality</i> | | | | | <i>Other-Downing</i> |
| Unconditional | .46 ^{***} | -.61 ^{***} | -.52 ^{***} | -.61 ^{***} | -.52 ^{***} | -.35 ^{***} | -.25 ^{***} |
| self-acceptance | .44 ^{***} | -.48 ^{***} | -.32 ^{***} | -.48 ^{***} | -.53 ^{***} | -.22 [*] | -.19 [*] |
| Self-esteem (RSE) | -.20 [*] | -.46 ^{***} | -.50 ^{***} | -.45 ^{***} | -.20 [*] | -.30 ^{***} | -.17 ^{**} |
| | (-.10) | (-.16) | (-.29 ^{***}) | (-.15) | (-.17 [*]) | (-.13) | (-.03) |

Note. Numbers in italics are partial correlations controlling for Self-Esteem. Numbers in parentheses are partial correlations controlling for Unconditional Self-Acceptance. ^{***} $p < .001$; ^{*} $p < .05$ 2-tailed tests.

one of the smallest *SDs*; conversely, Demand for Fairness showed the lowest correlation yet had one of the highest *SDs* (see Table 1).

As can be seen from Table 2, the zero-order correlations of irrational beliefs with self-esteem were all significant but, when unconditional self-acceptance was partialled out, only two remained significant, Self-Downing ($r = -.29, p < .001$) and Need for Approval ($r = -.17, p < .05$).

To summarize these findings, a regression analysis was carried out with unconditional self-acceptance as the dependent variable. The contribution of self-esteem as a predictor was removed by entering it first on step 1 and then entering the irrational beliefs on Step 2. Self-esteem was found to be a significant predictor, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.34$, $F(1,156) = 82.24, p < .001$. Irrational beliefs were also found to be significant predictors, Adjusted R^2 change = 0.27, $F(6,150) = 17.94, p < .001$. Table 3 shows the table of regression coefficients for the irrational beliefs.

As can be seen, Need for Approval, Need for Achievement and Self-Downing were significant predictors, whereas Need for Comfort, Demand for Fairness and Other-Downing were not.

These results confirm previous findings (Davies, 2006) that irrational beliefs are negatively related to unconditional self-acceptance, but, in addition, they show that different types of irrational belief differ in their strength of relationship with unconditional self-acceptance.

STUDY 2: EFFECTS OF PRIMING DIFFERENT TYPES OF IRRATIONAL BELIEFS ON UNCONDITIONAL SELF-ACCEPTANCE

To further explore differences between types of irrational belief and unconditional self-acceptance, an experimental design was used in this study. *Priming* is a commonly-used technique in social cognition to examine the effects of presenting different types of information on ostensibly unrelated subsequent judgments or behavior (for a review, see Higgins, 1996). In the present study, the effects of priming different types of irrational belief on unconditional self-acceptance and self-esteem were investigated.

Table 3**Regression Coefficients for Irrational Belief Predictors of Unconditional Self-Acceptance**

| | | <i>Coefficients^a</i> | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| | | <i>Unstandardized coefficients</i> | | <i>Standardized coefficients</i> | | |
| <i>Step</i> | | <i>B</i> | <i>Std. Error</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
| 2 | Self-Downing | -.351 | .142 | -.152 | -2.467 | .015 |
| | Need for Achievement | -.600 | .134 | -.319 | -4.487 | .000 |
| | Need for Approval | -1.367 | .254 | -.343 | -5.375 | .000 |
| | Need for Comfort | -.074 | .158 | -.034 | -.470 | .639 |
| | Demand for Fairness | -.195 | .167 | -.094 | -1.164 | .246 |
| | Other-Downing | -.544 | .375 | -.091 | -1.452 | .149 |

^a Dependent Variable: Unconditional Self-Acceptance.

Method

Participants. Ninety women and 38 men undergraduate students aged 18–41 ($M = 22.06$) completed a number of questionnaires for course credits in mass-testing sessions.

Measures. The measures used were the same as in Study 1—the GABS, USAQ and RSE.

Procedure. In initial mass-testing sessions, participants completed a number of questionnaires including the Unconditional Self-Acceptance Questionnaire (USAQ), the General Attitude and Belief Scale (GABS) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE). Within approximately one month, participants returned for a second testing session when they were randomly assigned to one of six priming conditions. These conditions corresponded to the subscales of the GABS with the exception of Other-Downing which was excluded because the number of items (three) was judged to be too small for adequate priming effects. In each priming condition, participants were presented with seven statements from the GABS subscales. (To equalize across conditions, the seven statements were chosen by omitting two statements at random across participants from the 9-item subscales with the exception of Need for Approval which only has seven statements.)

Participants were asked to study the statements for two minutes. In order to justify the task and to concentrate participants' attention on the statements, the experimenter told them that they would be asked questions about the statements later on as part of a memory test. This memory test also served as a check on the equivalence of the priming tasks across conditions. After two minutes, the list of statements was removed and participants were given the USAQ and RSE to complete. The participants were then presented with 15 statements, seven of which had been previously presented in the priming phase and eight from the other irrationality-priming conditions which had not been previously presented. (For the rationality priming condition, a set of eight rational statements was prepared by reversing the meaning of items from the other irrationality subscales to make them rational.) Participants were required to tick the seven statements they had been shown previously. After completion of the testing, participants were thoroughly debriefed.

Results and Discussion

The recognition-memory scores are shown in Table 4. There were no significant differences between the priming conditions, $F < 1$. This suggests that the statements were equally memorable across conditions and that the priming was therefore equivalent in magnitude.

Table 5 shows summary statistics for Unconditional Self-Acceptance (USAQ) scores as a function of Priming and Pretest/Posttest conditions. Scores on the USAQ were analyzed using a 6 (priming condition) \times 2 (Pretest/Posttest measurement) ANOVA.

Table 4

Number of statements correctly recognized in Study 2

| <i>Priming condition</i> | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | <i>Rationality</i> | <i>Self-downing</i> | <i>Need for achievement</i> | <i>Need for approval</i> | <i>Need for comfort</i> | <i>Demand for fairness</i> |
| Mean | 5.33 | 5.55 | 5.26 | 5.59 | 5.67 | 5.57 |
| SD | 1.27 | 1.32 | 1.16 | 1.21 | 1.32 | 1.10 |
| N | 21 | 20 | 23 | 22 | 21 | 21 |

There was a significant interaction of priming and pretest/posttest conditions, $F(5,122) = 3.73$, $p < .005$. As can be seen from Fig. 1, unconditional self-acceptance increased from pretest to posttest in the rationality priming condition but decreased in the irrationality priming conditions.

The amount of reduction in unconditional self-acceptance differed across the irrationality priming conditions, $F(4,102) = 2.68$, $p < .05$. The reductions were significant for *Need for Achievement*, $F(1,22) = 15.60$, $p < .001$, *Need for Approval*, $F(1,21) = 6.86$, $p < .02$, and *Self-Downing*, $F(1,19) = 4.52$, $p < .05$, but not for *Need for Comfort*, $F(1,20) = 2.51$, ns, nor *Demand for Fairness*, $F < 1$.

Table 6 shows summary statistics for Self-Esteem (RSE) scores as a function of Priming and Pretest/Posttest conditions. Scores on the RSE were analysed using a 6 (priming condition) \times 2 (Pretest/Posttest measurement) ANOVA. There was no similar significant interaction between priming and pretest/posttest conditions for RSE scores, $F < 1$.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Unconditional Self-Acceptance scores in Study 2

| <i>Priming condition</i> | | <i>Pre</i> | <i>Post</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Rationality | Mean | 90.71 | 93.38 |
| | <i>N</i> | 21 | 21 |
| | <i>SD</i> | 14.47 | 15.61 |
| Self-downing | Mean | 88.90 | 84.30 |
| | <i>N</i> | 20 | 20 |
| | <i>SD</i> | 14.32 | 12.81 |
| Need for achievement | Mean | 91.13 | 83.30 |
| | <i>N</i> | 23 | 23 |
| | <i>SD</i> | 13.02 | 11.34 |
| Need for approval | Mean | 90.32 | 84.50 |
| | <i>N</i> | 22 | 22 |
| | <i>SD</i> | 13.40 | 12.37 |
| Need for comfort | Mean | 92.33 | 88.62 |
| | <i>N</i> | 21 | 21 |
| | <i>SD</i> | 17.38 | 14.09 |
| Demand for fairness | Mean | 91.67 | 90.90 |
| | <i>N</i> | 21 | 21 |
| | <i>SD</i> | 9.570 | 12.18 |

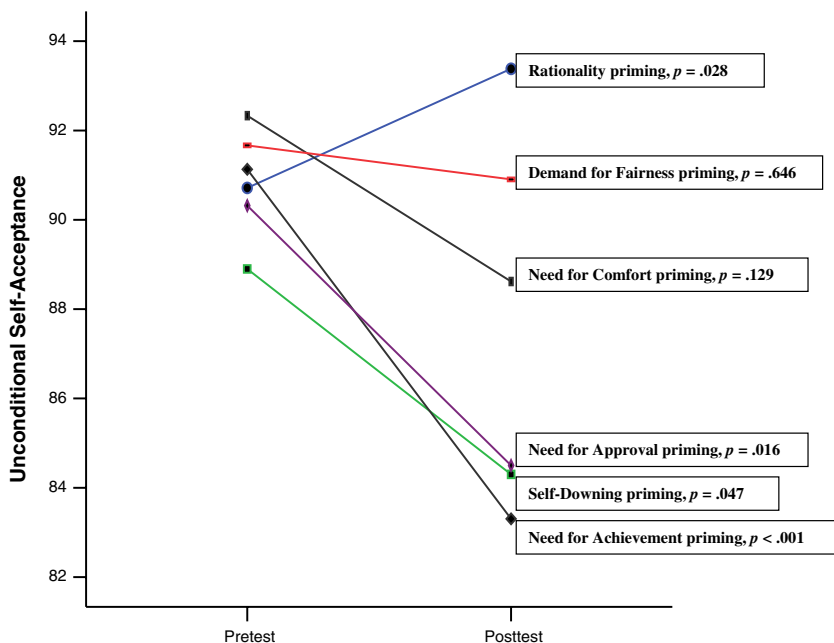


Figure 1. Unconditional Self-Acceptance as a function of Different Priming Conditions.

Only the Self-Downing priming condition produced a significant reduction in self-esteem scores from pretest to posttest, $F(1,19) = 3.75$, $p = .07$.

These results mirror the correlational findings of Study 1 quite closely. Significant effects of irrational-belief priming on unconditional self-acceptance were found for Self-Downing, Need for Achievement and Need for Approval but not for Need for Comfort or Demand for Fairness.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The findings from both the correlational and the experimental studies are consistent in showing that Need for Achievement, Need for Approval and Self-Downing are the most important types of irrational beliefs contributing to low unconditional self-acceptance. It should be noted that Self-Downing is a *process* of irrational thinking, whereas Need for Achievement and Need for Approval are contents or *themes* of irrational thinking. Ellis's theoretical orientation toward

Table 6**Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem scores in Study 2**

| | | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>N</i> |
|----------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Rationality | Pretest | 31.24 | 5.74 | 21 |
| | Posttest | 32.10 | 4.52 | 21 |
| Self-downing | Pretest | 33.10 | 4.23 | 20 |
| | Posttest | 31.20 | 4.29 | 20 |
| Need for achievement | Pretest | 32.00 | 3.90 | 23 |
| | Posttest | 32.65 | 5.32 | 23 |
| Need for approval | Pretest | 31.82 | 3.95 | 22 |
| | Posttest | 31.32 | 3.08 | 22 |
| Need for comfort | Pretest | 31.48 | 6.95 | 21 |
| | Posttest | 31.10 | 5.48 | 21 |
| Other-downing | Pretest | 31.33 | 5.17 | 21 |
| | Posttest | 31.90 | 6.44 | 21 |

REBT emphasizes four types of irrational belief *processes*, a primary irrational belief (demandingness) and three secondary irrational beliefs (awfulizing, low frustration tolerance and self-downing). However, empirical research casts some doubt on this conceptualization. For example, Bessai and Lane's (1976) Common Beliefs Survey identified one irrational belief *process* (Self-Downing) and five different irrational belief *themes*—Blame Proneness, Perfectionism, Importance of the Past, Importance of Approval and Control of Emotions—which have been confirmed by factor analysis (e.g., Tosi et al. 1986; Thorpe et al. 1992). Similarly, the GABS subscales comprise two irrational belief *processes* (Self-Downing and Other-Downing) and four different irrationality *themes* (e.g. Bernard, 1998)—Need for Achievement, Need for Approval, Need for Comfort, and Demand for Fairness.

Of course, in practice, it is difficult if not impossible to separate *processes* and *themes*. Thus, an irrational belief must have both a process and a theme (or content) component. For example, "It's unbearable to fail at important tasks and I can't stand failing" and "It's awful failing at important tasks and it is a catastrophe if I do" refer to different *processes* (low frustration tolerance and awfulizing) but the same theme (Need for Achievement). On the other hand, "It's unbearable to fail at important tasks and I can't stand failing" and "It's unbearable not being loved by people important to me and I

can't stand not being loved" comprise the same irrational process (low frustration tolerance), but different themes or contents (Need for Achievement and Need for Approval). From a statistical/empirical point of view, it is possible, firstly, that Factor Analysis is more sensitive in identifying differences in item *content* rather than item *processes*. Secondly, it could be that irrational belief *processes* are higher-order factors than irrational belief *themes*. The author carried out second-order factor analyses but the results were unfortunately inconclusive and unreliable probably because of the relatively small sample size (<300).

Table 7 shows the distinction between process and theme by providing examples of the GABS items in a matrix of combinations of irrational processes and themes. (Note that the GABS Demand for Fairness subscale does not have items relating to self-downing.)

It is noteworthy that the well-known irrational-beliefs scales (e.g. CBS and GABS) consist of a mixture of processes and themes (mainly the latter). This suggests that empirical research has not yet produced a set of irrational beliefs that can be distinguished in terms of both processes and themes so that scores can be obtained for both of these components.

Ellis (1979a, b) suggested that two types of thematic content are important in REBT: Ego disturbance and discomfort disturbance. In terms of the GABS, ego disturbance is related to need for achievement and need for approval, whereas discomfort disturbance is related to need for comfort. From the present studies, it appears that ego disturbance is more important in determining unconditional self-acceptance than discomfort disturbance. This is in line with findings by DiGiuseppe and Leaf (1990) who found that a general clinical sample endorsed success beliefs more strongly than comfort beliefs, suggesting that ego disturbance was more strongly associated than discomfort disturbance with emotional problems. However, Bond and Dryden (1996, 1997) did not find evidence that ego disturbance and discomfort disturbance differentially affected the functionality of inferences.

Need for Achievement is similar in some ways to the idea of 'autonomy' whereas Need for Approval is similar to the idea of 'sociotropy' in different forms of clinical depression (e.g. Robins & Luten, 1991). When depressed, *sociotropic* individuals primarily feel *deprived* and this sense of deprivation is consistent with the concept of reactive depression. When *autonomous* individuals are depressed,

Table 7
Matrix of Irrational Processes and Themes

| <i>Irrational Processes</i> | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <i>Irrational themes</i> GABS subscales | <i>Demandingness</i> | <i>Self-downing</i> | <i>Frustration tolerance</i> |
| | | | <i>Awfulizing</i> |
| Need for achievement | I must do well at important things and I will not accept it if I do not do well | I believe that I would be a worthless person if I achieved poorly at tasks that are important to me | If I do not perform well at things that are important, it will be a catastrophe |
| Need for approval | I must be liked by important people and I will not accept not being like by them | If important people dislike me, it is because I am an unlikable bad person | It's awful to be disliked by people who are important to me and it is a catastrophe if they don't like me |
| Need for comfort | I must have a pleasant life and I will not accept hassles when I don't want them | When I feel tense, nervous or uncomfortable, I think it just goes to show what kind of bad worthless person I am | Sometimes I think the hassles and frustrations of everyday life are awful and the worst part of my life |
| Demand for fairness | I must be treated fairly by people and I will not accept unfairness | | It is awful and terrible to be treated unfairly by people in my life |

they primarily feel *defeated* which is consistent with endogenous depression. In Robins and Luten's conceptualisation, sociotropy consists of concern about what others think, dependency and pleasing other people, whereas autonomy consists of perfectionism, need for control and defensive separation. Somewhat different results were obtained by Fresco, Sampson, Craighead and Koons (2001) who found that sociotropy was more closely related to anxiety whereas autonomy was more closely related to depression.

The present findings are similar to those of a recent study by Ciarrochi (2004) who correlated the Common Beliefs Survey III measure of irrational beliefs with a number of measures of negative well-being (depression, anxiety, stress, guilt, hostility, hopelessness and suicidal thinking) and positive well-being (life satisfaction, joviality and state self-assurance) in student samples. He found that the Self-Downing, Need for Approval and Demanding Perfection subscales of the CBS III were significant predictors of well-being whereas the Blame Proneness, the Past is All Powerful and Emotions Are Caused Externally subscales were not. Self-Downing was the best predictor of depression but not anxiety, whereas Need for Approval was the best predictor of anxiety but not depression. Demanding Perfection (Need/Demand for Achievement) was the best predictor of hostility. From these findings, he suggested that REBT interventions should focus on particular types of irrational beliefs depending on the type of psychological disturbance involved: Self-Downing for depression; Need for Approval for anxiety; and Perfectionism for hostility.

It would be unwise to generalize from the present findings about the effectiveness of different types of irrational belief interventions in the treatment of different types of psychological disturbance since the data were obtained from non-clinical student samples. The finding that Need for Achievement was the most influential type of irrational belief in unconditional self-acceptance could well be due to the fact that the samples were students who, presumably, value achievement particularly highly. In addition, Bernard (1998), again using primarily student samples, did not find that the different GABS irrational beliefs were differentially associated with measures of depression, anxiety or anger. Clearly, it would be most valuable to test these findings in other samples, especially clinical or therapy samples.

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