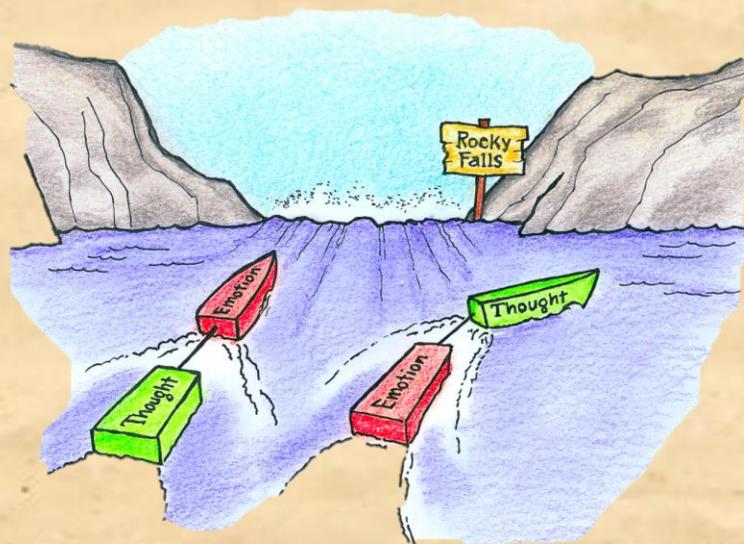


DYSFUNCTIONAL EMOTIONS: THE BANE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Human emotion is a powerful force – one closely associated with both the best and worst aspects of life. Emotions provide the spice for our existence, and without them life would be reduced to a series of tedious tasks and meaningless events. Yet emotions can also be the source of distress and damage. **The issue boils down to whether we allow emotions to control our thinking or whether we take steps to see that our thinking controls our emotions.**

One of psychology's most effective clinical tools is based on this insight, i.e., that many commonplace mental health problems can be successfully addressed if clients are taught how to manage their thoughts so as to better gain emotional control. This is the premise for a variety of counseling techniques all classified under the heading of **cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)**. One of the earliest proponents of CBT was Dr. Albert Ellis, creator and proponent of **Rational Emotive Therapy**. Dr. Ellis maintained that most emotional problems we face are a result of what he termed irrational belief systems – often long-held beliefs that Dr. Ellis would help the client change via an aggressive therapeutic intervention process.

MindSet terms these irrational belief systems **Cognitive Blunders**. Good leaders have an awareness of the most common cognitive blunders. They work diligently to avoid those to which they are most susceptible, thus enabling them to better manage their own emotions and maintain rational



thought. An understanding of CBT has another significant benefit for a leader: they can use the insights provided by CBT to help them to better understand and lead the staff members they supervise by identifying some of the cognitive blunders that are inhibiting their success in the workplace.

The next MindSet reviews some of the more commonly observed cognitive blunders that contribute to significant problems in the workplace and beyond. An exceptional leader with an awareness of these common blunders will have the ability to help their staff members to more consistently conduct rational analysis and to react with less emotional upset – two critically important skill sets for those who hope to excel in a business environment.

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