

Three Minute REBT: Values in REBT

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Three-Minute REBT: Eliminating *I Can't*

By Philip Tate, Ph.D.

I can't may be the most debilitating belief you're likely to have. Not the *I can't* as in, *I can't jump to the moon*, but as in *I can't succeed at doing what I want to do*.

The first is true because of physical reality. The other, though, usually isn't.

What can lead you believe that you can't? Look for beliefs creating low self-esteem such as, *I'm no good*, or *Because I've failed, I'm a failure*. With these beliefs you can easily go on to think, *There is something especially wrong with me that makes it impossible for me to do what I want to do*. This goes beyond an accurate description of reality to an irrational belief.

Eliminating this belief is wise, for it clearly keeps you from achieving your goals and easily creates depression and contributes to your low self-esteem. In REBT, we teach you to challenge your irrational beliefs, so challenge the idea that you can't. It will help to recognize that this belief is absolutistic and unconditional. So, to state your belief clearly, it will be something like: There is no condition what so ever that will allow me to do this. I absolutely can't do it.

Challenge this belief by asking, *Is there any evidence my belief is true?*

The answer is **no!**

Challenge this belief repeatedly for awhile until it really sinks in that your belief is nonsense. You can begin to see that your failures are not created by some magically created entity of worthlessness in you but by natural events that you may be able to change through education and work and through other means that people use to

change themselves.

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