

Three Minute REBT Do You Need What You Want?

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People sometimes believe they *must* have what they want. When you do, you create a disturbance that hinders you. You may get anxious in anticipation of failure. Or you may get depressed at losing something you value. When you are working in a group with others, you may believe the group should go in your direction when that isn't the stated purpose of the group. Your behavior may disrupt the functioning of the group, and create conflict between you and them.

Individually, you may believe you need what you want, such as a drink, a particular item you see in a store, or someone else's property. When you don't have it, you get upset.

Buddhists teach us to eschew all wants so that we don't have the suffering of disappointment and deprivation. To achieve that, some monks teach that when you are walking in public, do not look very far beyond your feet so you do not see something you may want. That way, you want less and, therefore, you suffer less. A goal they teach is to live with out suffering.

REBT teaches that a different goal is more desirable, and that is happiness. Happiness is when you're enjoying yourself, and that often means getting what you want. When you think helpfully, you want what you want, but you do not believe you must have it. When you don't get it, you feel disappointed, but not miserable, and you keep on truckin'.

How can you eliminate your demands that you have what you want and your whining if you don't get it?

Start with disputing the belief that you must have what you want. Here's an example:

Belief: I *must* have what I want.

Dispute: Is there any evidence that my belief is true?

Rational response: I can't find any. I want what I want, but there is no evidence that I have to have it.

Dispute: What good can happen to me if I give up my belief?

Rational response: I can feel free to have desire without disturbance. I am more likely get what I want because I am not desperate, anxious, and depressed. I am less likely to demand that other give me what I want, thereby being less

troublesome and dependent. I can be happier.

More than disputing your irrational beliefs, look for your demanding that you have what you want. Look for whining when you do not get it. Work at changing yourself at that time.

Also, imagine what it would be like to not have what you want. In some cases, you can ask yourself what could be like without it. In some cases out of sight is out of mind. This can be more difficult for some things, such as having just one drink. If you've been a heavy drinker for many years, you may ask members of your group what life is like for them without it.

Finally, for things you want that will serve you well for a long time, work at getting them.