

## Toxic Behaviors in Therapy

Reality Therapy (and Choice Therapy upon which it is founded) aims to “replace ineffective external control ideas with more effective in-control self-talk leading to more satisfying action behavior, that is *choice*” (Wubbolding, 2017, p. 27).

However, a toxic atmosphere resulting from several different patterns of unhelpful behavior can damage the therapeutic alliance.

Use this worksheet as a helpful self-evaluation technique to identify and, where possible, stop damaging behaviors.

Consider the following toxic behaviors and their effect on the successful relationship between therapist and client, and their potential to damage the overall outcome of therapy.

At the end of (or even during) the session, consider whether the following behaviors have occurred and what was the effect (modified from Wubbolding, 2017):

Toxic behavior	Example(s) of behavior	Potential to impact therapy (relationship and outcome) Is this healing or helpful?
<p><b>Arguing</b></p> <p>Possibly in the form of accusations and attacks.</p>		
<p><b>Blaming</b></p> <p>Including finger-pointing, bossing, and belittling.</p>		
<p><b>Criticizing</b></p> <p>Directly or indirectly.</p>		

<p><b>DemEANing and demanding</b></p> <p>Intense criticism or belittling.</p>		
<p><b>Encouraging excuses</b></p> <p>Constant and ingrained use of excuses is unlikely to be beneficial.</p>		

Reflect on the toxic behaviors used and their ability to get in the way of successful therapy.

## References

- Wubbolding, R. E. (2017). *Reality therapy and Self-Evaluation – the key to client change*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

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