

cognitive processes. Although cognitive therapy interventions focus on cognitive processes, it is important for us to assess and attend to emotions as well. Emotions and cognitions have reciprocal relationships in that one tends to impact and influence the other (Dobson & Dozois, 2001). Emotions are a critical part of the mediational model because cognitions activate and heighten relevant emotions, which in turn impact and shape corresponding behaviors. Moreover, strong emotions can intensify thoughts or thought processes and make thoughts seem all the more pressing (Cormier & Nurius, 2003). Think about working with the client who is seeking the life partner one more time. The cognitions that the client holds that he is unattractive and unlovable, are likely to be associated with and help to activate emotions like sadness, hopelessness, and despair. These cognitions and strong emotions will likely reduce behaviors that may help the client reach the goal of finding a life partner. (The client may say, "Why should I go to the party? No one will talk to me even if I am there." Or "Why ask anyone out on a date? No one would go out with me anyway.") Ultimately, there is an interdependent relationship among cognitions, emotions, and behaviors to the extent that a problem in one indicates a problem in the other two (Organista, 1995). As a result of the relationship of cognitions to emotions and behaviors, there is a therapeutic value in modifying cognitions because changes in cognitions will lead to the desired changes in emotions and behavior. Additionally, a change in behavior indicates a change in the corresponding cognition. Thus, as cognitive therapists, we will focus on identifying and altering problematic or unhelpful cognitions and cognitive processes in our clients that impact and shape feelings and behaviors in problematic or unhelpful ways.

4. **Core beliefs.** Cognitive therapy theory maintains that there are two primary types of cognitions: (1) automatic, surface thoughts and (2) core beliefs or schemas. It is possible to have unhelpful or problematic cognitions at both levels. In addition to working with the client's surface thoughts, which are associated with and in some cases inextricably tied to the client's presenting problem, we will also work with the client to identify the underlying, fundamental cognitive structures, the core beliefs that may be the foundation of the client's difficulties (Beck, 1995). Up to this point, I generally described automatic or surface thoughts. Unlike surface thoughts, which may be fleeting and transitory, core beliefs tend to be foundational, stable beliefs about the self, relationships, the world, and the future. For example, one person may tend to have a fairly optimistic view of life, relationships, the future, and the world, and may tend to endorse beliefs such as: the world is a beautiful place, things tend to work out for the best, and most people are good-hearted. Another person