

CENTER FOR REALITY THERAPY

ROBERT E. WUBBOLDING, EdD, DIRECTOR

7777 Montgomery Road

Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

(513) 561-1911

LEVELS OF WANTS

It is useful to help clients determine the degree of intensity of their want, i.e., how much is the want desired or how "serious" are the clients about the specific want. The list below is a complete list. Still, it is not necessary to categorize the wants precisely in every counseling session. It is often useful, for instance, to merely ask, "How badly do you want it?" "Is your want a non-negotiable desire or a weak whim?" "Is it something you intend to pursue relentlessly or is it something that 'would be nice to have?'"

1. Non-negotiable Demand - Desire for air, food, etc.
2. Pursued Goal - A want backed up by behavior. Going to school, developing a relationship, getting a job or a promotion are examples. A more desirable want could replace them.
- N.B. Levels of Commitment, #3, 4, 5 in Using Reality Therapy.
3. Wish - Some effort is made to achieve it, such as winning the lottery. Some behavior (not much energy) is exerted on it.
4. Weak Whim - Fulfilling the want is of little importance, e.g., wanting to wear one or an other piece of clothing.
5. Double Bind - A want accompanied by sabotaging or ineffective behaviors, e.g., wanting to lose weight while overeating.
6. Reluctant Passive Acceptance - Learning to accept what is inevitable, e.g., acceptance of a disease or handicap.
7. Non-desired Active Acceptance - Accepting a consequence as an unfortunate side-effect of a desired behavior, e.g., the battered woman who wants to visit her father, accepts the possibility that she will be abused. The result is tied to a clear want. She accepts the undesired outcome because it is tied to a desirable want.
8. Fantasy Dream - A want that is seen as unattainable. Wanting to have a family like the "Brady Bunch" when there is overwhelming evidence that this is out of the question.