

Welcome to

Training Module 8: Self-Esteem & Mood

Symptoms of depression?

???



Symptoms of depression?

1. sadness, depressed mood
 2. poor drive and motivation
 3. low self-esteem, fear of being rejected
 4. fears (e.g. regarding future)
 5. sleep disturbances, pain
 6. cognitive problems (poor concentration and memory)
- ...

Treatment options for depression?

???

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- **Psychotherapy/self:** e.g. cognitive-behavioural intervention. Problems and underlying dysfunctional schemas (e.g. “I am worthless”) are targeted. These schemas in turn provoke other thoughts (“Nobody likes me”) leading to a cascade of negative thoughts. Re-structuring these ideas has a **long-term impact**.



Treatment options for depression?

- **Psychotherapy/self:** e.g. cognitive-behavioural intervention. Problems and underlying dysfunctional schemas (e.g. “I am worthless”) are targeted. These schemas in turn provoke other thoughts (“Nobody likes me”) leading to a cascade of negative thoughts. Re-structuring these ideas has a **long-term impact**.
- **Medication (antidepressant agents):** especially important for severe depression and to support psychotherapeutic intervention. However, medication only helps as long as it is taken regularly.



Why are we doing this?



Many people with mental health problems show thinking distortions that may **lead to depression**.

These thinking distortions can be changed through intensive and continuous training.

Psychosis & Depression

Effects of psychosis on self-esteem





 Negative effects of psychosis on mood	 <u>Short-term</u> positive effects of psychosis on mood
???	???
???	???
???	???

Psychosis & Depression

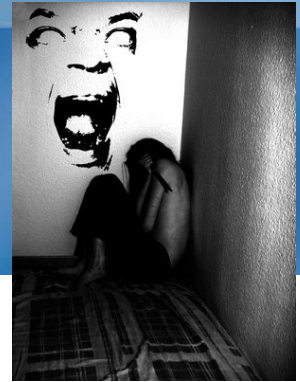
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During psychosis: experiencing constant threat	???
During psychosis: hearing harassing and insulting voices	???
After psychosis: feelings of shame , future seems shattered	???

Psychosis & Depression

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 Negative effects of psychosis on mood	 <u>Short-term</u> positive effects of psychosis on mood
During psychosis: experiencing constant threat	During psychosis: rush, excitement , "something happening at last"
During psychosis: hearing harassing and insulting voices	During psychosis: hearing voices that flatter you
After psychosis: feelings of shame , future seems shattered	During delusions (of grandeur): feeling of power, talent, importance (mighty enemies) and destiny

Psychosis & Depression

Effects of psychosis on self-esteem



The ***short-term positive effects*** of psychosis on self-esteem are generally cancelled out by the ***long-term negative consequences*** of psychosis; examples:

- debts: when person with psychosis falsely believed to be rich or famous
- loneliness: some friends may have turned their backs on the person
- work situation: loss of work because of inappropriate behavior at the office

It is very dangerous to stop taking medication without medical advice only to revisit the threatening yet exciting world of psychosis, particularly as fear is often predominant during psychosis!

What are characteristic thoughts and thinking styles of people with **depression** and **low self-esteem**?



1. Exaggerated Generalisation

What would be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

Event	False Generalisation Positive/constructive evaluation
"I weigh too much", "My nose is crooked"	"I am ugly" ???
A job interview did not go as expected.	"I will never ever find work again" ???

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What would be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

Event	False Generalisation Positive/constructive evaluation
"I weigh too much", "My nose is crooked"	"I am ugly" "I am not ugly just because of one single imperfection; there are some things I like a lot about myself, for example my eyes"
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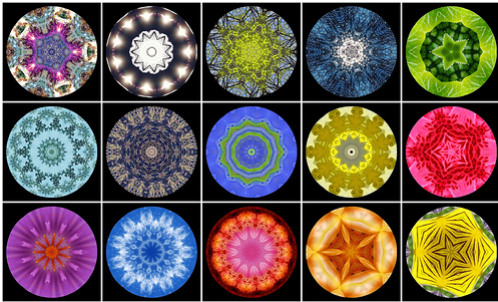
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➤ **Allow errors!:** Nobody's perfect! If you stutter from time to time, this does not mean that you cannot express yourself. If occasionally you make a mistake, this does not mean you are sloppy.

Instead: Do not generalise from one imperfection to everything!



Every human is complex – like a mosaic: we are made up of many small parts that are both good and bad.

Moreover, there are very different ways to define human characteristics:

What is happiness? Being rich, having many friends, good health, success, feeling content???

What is intelligence? Brilliant school performance, having a university degree, getting on well with others socially???

2. Selective perception

What would be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

Event	Selective appraisal	Holistic evaluation
You stutter during a discussion	Angry at yourself	???
You have prepared a dessert, which did not taste good	"This would have to happen to me!"	???



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What would be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

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You have prepared a dessert, which did not taste good	"This would have to happen to me!"	The main dish tasted very good, good conversation during meal



➤ **"Mind-reading"**: Avoid over-interpreting other peoples' behaviour. There can be many possibilities to explain a situation!



3. Applying your own standards as the ultimate measurement

There is a difference between how I judge myself and how others judge me!

- If I consider myself worthless, ugly etc., others do not necessarily share this view.
- There are often multiple opinions/judgments/preferences. Others may not agree with my understanding of intelligence or looks, etc.



4. Denial of positive feedback, but uncritical acceptance of negative feedback!

What would be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

Event	Depressive evaluation Positive/constructive evaluation
You receive compliments for your performance. 	"That person only tries to flatter me—he/she is dishonest, only he/she thinks that way..." ???
You are criticised! 	"I've been exposed, I am worthless..." ???



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<p>You are criticised!</p> 	<p>“I’ve been exposed, I am worthless...”</p> <p>“The other person might have had a bad day.”; “Can I benefit from the feedback?”</p>

5. "All-or-Nothing-Thinking" / Catastrophic thinking

What could be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

Event	Depressive appraisal Positive/constructive evaluation
Your boss does not say hello to you.	"I'm going to be fired" ???



5. "All-or-Nothing-Thinking" / Catastrophic thinking

What could be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

Event	Depressive appraisal Positive/constructive evaluation
Your boss does not say hello to you.	"I'm going to be fired" "Did he see me at all; perhaps he has had a bad day?"



6. Suppression of negative thoughts

What would be a more realistic evaluation?

Event	Problematic evaluation Positive/constructive evaluation
You have recurrent negative thoughts (e.g. "idiot", "fool", "You are so ugly").	"I mustn't think those negative thoughts" ...but this does not work (→ see next exercise). ???



6. Suppression of negative thoughts

What would be a more realistic evaluation?

Event	Problematic evaluation Positive/constructive evaluation
You have recurrent negative thoughts (e.g. "idiot", "fool", "You are so ugly").	"I mustn't think those negative thoughts" ...but this does not work (→ see next exercise). Question if the thoughts are justified. What contradicts those thoughts? Distract yourself by pursuing pleasant activities.

6. Suppression of negative thoughts

Exercise

It is not possible to deliberately suppress upsetting thoughts.

Trying not to think of something leads to an increase in those thoughts.

Have a go!

Do not think of a polar bear in the next minute!

6. Suppression of negative thoughts

Does it work? No!



Most of you had probably thought of a polar bear and/or of something that has to do with a polar bear (e.g. zoo, snow, Arctic etc.)

This effect grows even stronger if one tries to deliberately suppress upsetting thoughts ("I am a loser" etc.). Those thoughts can then become so strong that they seem strange or out of one's control!

Instead:

If you are bothered by strong negative thoughts, do not try to actively suppress them (this only increases them), but observe the inner events without intervening - just like a storm outside, that one can watch securely through the window.



The thoughts will pass by, just like heavy thunder clouds.

7. Further distortions of thinking

- **Comparison with other people:**
 - Do not compare yourself too much with others!
 - There will always be people who are more attractive, more successful, and more popular. However, if you look at these “lucky devils” closely, you will recognise that even these people have their weaknesses and problems.

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- **Absolute demands:**
 - **Do not** place too high demands on yourself such as:



- “I must always look good”
- “I must always appear smart”
- “I must always be most entertaining”

Be aware of your strengths



- Instead of focusing on your weaknesses, emphasise your strengths.
- Every human being has strengths that he or she can take pride in and are not shared by everyone
...these do not have to be world records or famous inventions

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1. Think about your own strengths.

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When and where? What have I done and who has provided feed-back? e.g. I recently helped my niece with maths, and now she has received a good mark...

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3. Write it down!

Read this regularly and expand. In case of a crisis, go back to these memories (e.g. when you think you are worthless). e.g. Write down things that went well, or things you received compliments for...

Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem

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- Tell yourself in front of the mirror: "I like myself" or "I like you"! [note: At first, you might feel a bit silly when doing this!]
- Accept compliments and write them down to use them as resources when times are tough.



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- Listen to your favourite music.



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- Be aware of the typical depressive distortions just discussed and try to modify them (see leaflet).
- Use at least some of the aforementioned tips continuously to decrease depressed mood/ low self-esteem.
- In case of severe depressive symptoms contact a general practitioner, psychologist or psychiatrist.

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Appraisal: Fear and threat. But also a feeling of importance and determination to fight the world conspiracy of the illuminates.

But!: Karl got increasingly wrapped up in his conspiracy theories. Due to his close-minded view on the world, he did not realise that the number 23 does not occur anymore often than other numbers and is also of dubious significance.

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Try to establish a healthy and durable self-esteem with the techniques discussed.

Thank you for
your attention!

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