Metacognitive Training for Depression (D-MCT)
D-MCT: Satellite Position
Today's Topic

- Behavior
- Memory
- Perception of Feelings
- Self-Worth
- Depression
- Thinking and Reasoning
D-MCT Topic:

Thinking and Reasoning 2
How is "thinking and reasoning" related to depression?

- Many individuals with depression process information differently.
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- Many individuals with depression process information differently.

- These depressive thought patterns are often not based on reality or tend to be very one-sided (i.e. to be convinced of total failure, when something is not perfect, etc.).
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These depressive thought patterns are often not based on reality or tend to be very one-sided (i.e. to be convinced of total failure, when something is not perfect, etc.).

We refer to this as "distorted thinking", which can contribute to the development or maintenance of depression.
Thought Distortions in Depression

adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989

1. "Should" Statements

2. Disqualifying the Positive
"Should" Statements
adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989

- Trying to push yourself by using "should," "must" or "have to" statements.
"Should" Statements
adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989

- Trying to push yourself by using "should," "must" or "have to" statements.

- Setting rigid rules and standards allows little room for deviation!
## "Should" Statements

What would a more flexible thought be?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Should&quot; Statement</th>
<th>Flexible Thought</th>
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"Should" Statements
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<td>&quot;It's not of equal importance to be on time to everything. For example, it would be more important to be on time to a job interview versus a casual get together. I try to be on time. If something comes up and I cannot do anything about it, then I can let the other person know that I will be late or I can apologize once I get there.&quot;</td>
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More examples of "Should" Statements

- "I should always look put together."
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- "I should always look put together."
- "I should always be witty."
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"Should" statements are excessively high standards that we place on ourselves!
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"Should" statements are excessively high standards that we place on ourselves!

Are you familiar with this? Which high standards do you hold yourself to?
Cost-benefit analysis of "setting the bar high"?

- Benefit?
- Cost?
Benefits of high standards?
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- Positive feedback or recognition for special achievements can be good!
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Warning: When you stop setting such high standards, you must also let go of the possible short-term benefits. This makes it more difficult to stop!
Benefits of high standards?

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- Possible short-term payoff (i.e. salary, promotion, improving in a sport).

Warning: When you stop setting such high standards, you must also let go of the possible short-term benefits. This makes it more difficult to stop! Therefore, you should consider the costs!
Costs of high standards?

e.g. Potreck-Rose, 2006
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- "Raising the bar" is often frustrating!

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Costs of high standards?

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- Expecting one's absolute best every day requires a lot of energy and is next to impossible!

- In the long term, under permanent overload, our ability to achieve is reduced.

e.g. Potreck-Rose, 2006
Black and White Thinking

adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989
High demands can encourage "Black and White" thinking:
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When something is not perfect (demands are not 100% fulfilled), we are convinced of total failure.

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Like an inner critic, that only sees black or white.
Black and White Thinking
What if the expectation cannot be met?

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"Coming to an appointment too late can happen. It's always better to go late than to not go at all. It's better to do something 70% rather than to 100% not do it!"
Finding the right balance!
Alternative: use a fair measure with realistic demands!
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That does not mean that you should not set goals in order to avoid imperfection!
Finding the right balance!

- Alternative: use a fair measure with realistic demands!

- That does not mean that you should not set goals in order to avoid imperfection!

- Rather, find your own personal balance: To explore your capabilities while at the same time realizing your boundaries.

E.g. Potreck-Rose, 2006
Finding the right balance!
In the middle of depression, it can be difficult to find a fair measure.
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For example, shopping or preparing a meal can be a huge achievement although these activities were very easy during other periods of life.
Disqualifying the Positive

adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989
Disqualifying the Positive

Disqualifying the positive can be indicated by the following:

1. Expecting negative feedback
2. Rejecting positive feedback

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Are you familiar with this? Personal examples?
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How can I better handle negative feedback?
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- Differentiate the criticism.
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- Avoid overgeneralizations ("It's not me – it's my behavior!").
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- Handle criticism positively by asking "What could I learn?".
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adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989
Disqualifying the positive can be indicated by the following:

1. Expecting negative feedback

2. Rejecting positive feedback
   - Denying positive experiences
   - Positive experiences are regarded as exceptions

adapted from Beck et al., 1979; Burns, 1989
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But: Accepting praise is often difficult!
### Rejection of Positive Feedback

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But: Accepting praise is often difficult! How well do you manage that?
When do you praise others?
When do you praise others?

- ... when someone has done something well.
- ... when someone tries especially hard.
- ... when you want to motivate someone.
- ... when you want to make someone happy.
- ...
Remember that usually when someone gives praise, it is meant as a gift and to make the other person happy!
How can I better accept praise?

- Remember that usually when someone gives praise, it is meant as a gift and to make the other person happy!

Strive to be happy and thankful!
How can I better accept praise?

- When you in turn devalue this praise ("That's not the case!"), it is as if you have said "I do not like your gift – I don't want it."
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- Do your words match your tones, mimics or gestures? Pay attention to how they match!
How can I better accept praise?

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  , it is as if you have said "I do not like your gift – I don't want it."

- Do your words match your tones, mimics or gestures?
  Pay attention to how they match!

- That goes also for the praise that you give to others!
Pay attention to "Should" Statements, Black and White Thinking and Disqualifying the Positive in everyday life!
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Find the right measure for your goals – be fair to yourself so that you have a chance to meet your own demands!
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Find the right measure for your goals – be fair to yourself so that you have a chance to meet your own demands!

This also means forgiving yourself when you find yourself falling into one of those cognitive traps.
Apply strategies to handle "Disqualifying the Positive" differently and practice them, for example:
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Thinking and Reasoning 2

Learning Points

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  - View praise as a gift.
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- Differentiate criticism (a specific behavior versus the entire person).
- Find the constructive parts of the criticism.
- View praise as a gift.
- Enjoy praise and do not devalue it.
Thank you!

Thinking and Reasoning