



Metacognitive Training (MCT)

# MCT 8 B – Mood

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# 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:

For example, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) targets problems and underlying dysfunctional schemas (e.g. “I am worthless”), which in turn provoke other negative thoughts (“Nobody likes me”). Re-structuring these ideas has a **long-term impact**.





# Treatment options for depression?

- **Psychotherapy/self:**

For example, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) targets problems and underlying dysfunctional schemas (e.g. “I am worthless”), which in turn provoke other negative thoughts (“Nobody likes me”). Re-structuring these ideas has a **long-term impact**.

- **Medication:**

For example, antidepressants are important for severe depression and may 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 have 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

## Effects of psychosis on self-esteem



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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

## Effects of psychosis on self-esteem

 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 washed out by the *long-term negative consequences* of psychosis.

Examples:

- debts: when a person with psychosis falsely believed he/she is 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 in order 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 generalization

What would be a more realistic and helpful evaluation?

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



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A job interview did not go as expected.	<i>"I will never ever find work again"</i> "How can I improve for my next interview?"

- **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.





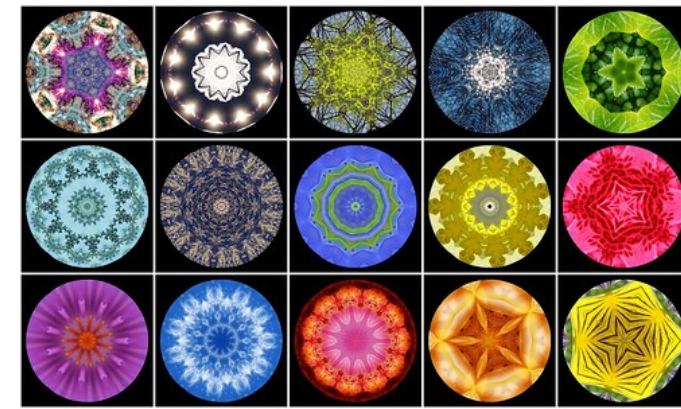
# Instead: Do not generalize from one imperfection to everything!

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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You stutter during a discussion	Angry at yourself	“This also happens to others and apart from the stuttering my contribution was appreciated.”
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’ behavior. There can be many possibilities to explain a situation!



### 3. Applying your own standards as the ultimate measurement


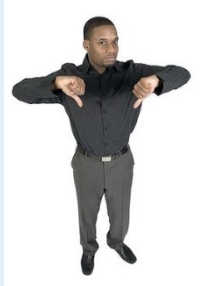
There is a difference between how I judge myself and how others judge me!

- 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!


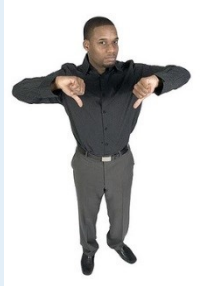
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Event	<i>Depressive evaluation</i> Positive/constructive evaluation
You receive compliments for your performance. 	<i>“That person only tries to flatter me ... he/she is dishonest.”; “Only he/she thinks that way ...”</i> ???
You are criticized! 	<i>“I’ve been exposed, I am worthless ...”</i> ???



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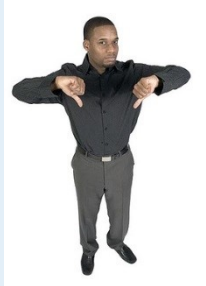
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You receive compliments for your performance. 	<p><i>“That person only tries to flatter me ... he/she is dishonest.”; “Only he/she thinks that way ...”</i></p> <p>“Great that someone acknowledges my achievement!”</p>
You are criticized! 	<p><i>“I’ve been exposed, I am worthless ...”</i></p> <p>???</p>



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

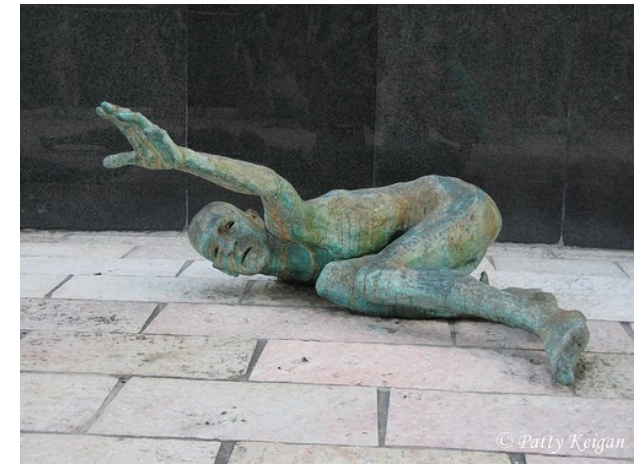




## 5. “All-or-Nothing-Thinking” / Catastrophic thinking

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Event	<i>Depressive appraisal</i> Positive/constructive evaluation
Your boss does not say hello to you.	<i>“I’m going to be fired”</i> ???

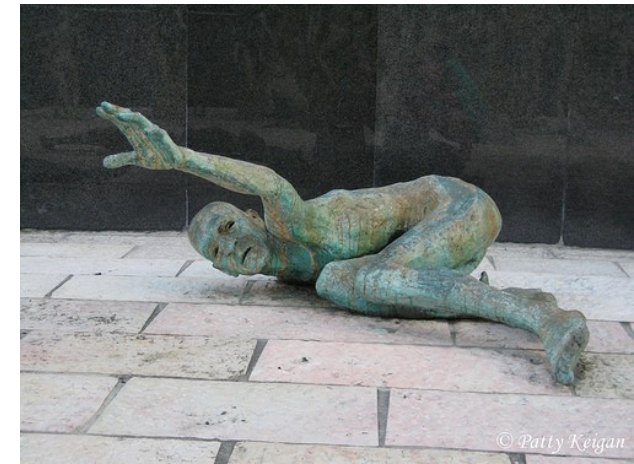




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Your boss does not say hello to you.	<p><i>“I’m going to be fired”</i></p> <p>“Did he see me at all; perhaps he has had a bad day?”</p>





## 6. Suppression of negative thoughts

What would be a more realistic evaluation?

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





## 6. Suppression of negative thoughts

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You have recurrent negative thoughts (e.g. “idiot”, “fool”, “You are so ugly”).	<p><i>“I mustn’t think those negative thoughts” ... but this does not work (→ see next exercise).</i></p> <p>Ask yourself whether the thoughts are justified. What contradicts these thoughts?</p> <p>Distract yourself by pursuing pleasant activities!</p>



## 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 which 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 recognize 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”





## Optional: Videoclip

Video clip presentations that address today's topic are available at the following web site:

[http://www.uke.de/mct\\_videos](http://www.uke.de/mct_videos)

After the video, you may discuss how it is related to today's topic.

*[for trainers:*

Some movie clips contain language that may not be appropriate for all audiences and across all cultures. Please carefully pre-screen videos before showing]





# Be aware of your strengths

- Instead of focusing on your weaknesses, emphasize 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*





# Be aware of your strengths

1. Think about your own strengths.

*What abilities do I have? What have I received compliments for in the past?*

*e.g. I am technically talented ...*





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2. Imagine specific situations.

*When and where? What have I done and who has provided feedback?*

*e.g. Last week, I helped a friend decorating her apartment. I was a great help to her ...*





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*When and where? What have I done and who has provided feedback?*

*e.g. Last week, I helped a friend decorating her apartment. I was a great help to her ...*

## 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 compliments you received ...*





# Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem



- Every evening, write down a few positive things (up to 5) of that day. Then, go through these things in your mind.



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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 ...).





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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.



# Transfer to every-day life

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- Depression is not an inevitable fate.



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# Transfer to every-day life

## Learning objectives:

- Depression is not an inevitable fate.
- Be aware of the typical depressive distortions just discussed and try to modify them (see handout).
- 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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- Excitement (“something is finally happening”)
- Sense of destiny (to fulfill a mission, to be important)



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**Example:** The computer hacker Karl Koch believed that the secret society of the illuminates was persecuting him. One of the “proofs”: he frequently comes across the number 23 – which to him is the number of the illuminates.

**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 realize that the number 23 does not occur anymore often than other numbers and is also of dubious significance.



# Thank you for your attention!

*for trainers:*

Please hand out worksheets. Introduce our app COGITO (download free of charge).



[www.uke.de/mct\\_app](http://www.uke.de/mct_app)





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Brenda Anderson	flickr	storm through a dirty window	CC	Window with thunderclouds/Fenster mit Gewitterwolken
*Saffy*	flickr	Goodbye Dandelion. Sorry for delays i'm a bit overwhelmed.	CC	Barbie doll/ Barbiepuppe
c.a.muller	flickr	JUMPING	CC	Jumping/Springen
GreyArea	flickr	Smiley Face	CC	Smiley