

Welcome to

Metacognitive Training for Borderline Personality Disorder (B-MCT)

*If there is no new participant in the group, you
can skip slides 1-13 (start at slide 14)!*

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10/13

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Metacognitive Training (MCT)

???

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meta →

derived from Greek, means “about”

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metacognition →

“thinking about thinking”

B-MCT

Metacognitive training for BPD (B-MCT) is a therapeutic approach that deals with thoughts and thought processes.

The training is designed to ...

- impart knowledge about your own thought processes and
- make you aware of typical thought distortions and how to change these

Thought distortion: unfavorable way of taking in and processing information from the environment that can lead to developing or maintaining mental problems (e.g., only paying attention to the negative).

One event – many possible emotions... What leads to the different reactions?

Your bus pass expired, and the regular driver on that route made a fuss about it.

What are possible thoughts that can come up as a reaction?

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Possible thoughts

response /
thoughts?

response /
thoughts?

response /
thoughts?

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Your bus pass expired, and the regular driver on that route made a fuss about it.

Possible thoughts

“How dare this guy expose me in front of everyone?! I’m not going to put up with this!”

“Well, he probably has to do this 20 times a day. Let’s find a compromise. I did not do this on purpose.”

“How embarrassing! Now everyone will think that I don’t have any money and tried to dodge the fare.”

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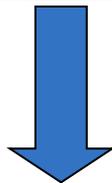
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sad

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sad

Possible emotions

What possible behavioral reactions could result from each case?

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Possible thoughts

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Possible emotions



angry

relaxed

sad

**argue, complain
and insult**

**stay calm, walk to
front**

ruminates

Welcome to

Training module: Mood

Symptoms of depression?

???



Symptoms of depression?

1. Sadness, melancholy
 2. Poor drive and motivation
 3. Low self-esteem, fear of being rejected
 4. Fears (e.g., regarding the future)
 5. Disrupted sleep, pain
 6. Cognitive impairments (poor concentration and memory)
- ...

Was I born like that... ... did I get like that?



Is whether I am a happy or a sad person predetermined?

???

Was I born like that... ... did I get like that?



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“Nature”: There is evidence for a partly genetic predisposition to depressive thoughts and low self-esteem.

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“Nature”: There is evidence for a partly genetic predisposition to depressive thoughts and low self-esteem.

“Nurture”: Strict/unloving parents and negative life events can promote a negative self-image.

Was I born like that... ... did I get like that?



Is whether I am a happy or a sad person predetermined?

“**Nature**”: There is evidence for a partly genetic predisposition to depressive thoughts and low self-esteem.

“**Nurture**”: Strict/unloving parents and negative life events can promote a negative self-image.

BUT: Depressive thinking structures can be changed.
Depression is not an irreversible fate!

What are treatment options for depression?

???

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- **Psychotherapy:** e.g., cognitive behavior therapy, has a **long-term** impact.



What are treatment options for depression?

- **Psychotherapy:** e.g., cognitive behavior therapy, has a **long-term** impact.
- **Medication (antidepressants):** especially useful for treating severe depression and to support psychotherapeutic intervention; however they only help as long as they are taken regularly.

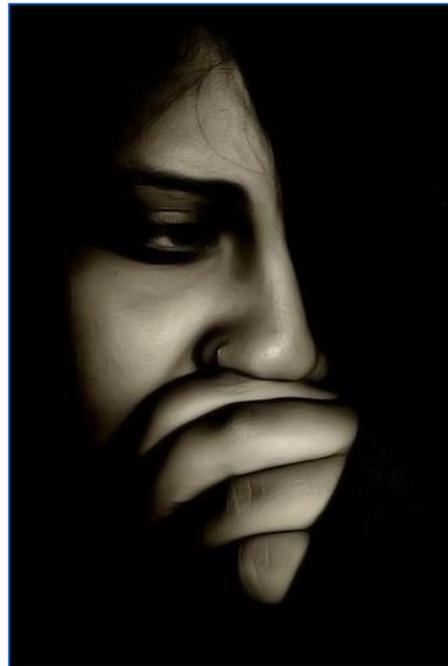


Why do we do this?

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

Today's goal is to become aware of depressive thinking traps, and to learn (or recall) some tips to counter depressive moods!

What are characteristic thoughts and thinking styles of people with depression?



I. Exaggerated generalization

What would be a more appropriate evaluation? (*not just talking things up*)

Event/perception	Exaggerated generalization Positive/constructive evaluation
You used a foreign word improperly, you don't understand a book.	"I'm dumb!" ???
Failed exam.	
You were criticized during a discussion.	

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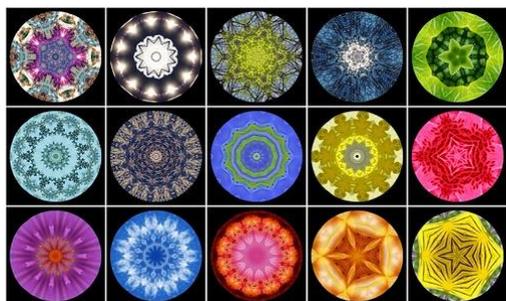
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You were criticized during a discussion.	"I'm worthless!" "Maybe the other person is right, perhaps I could even learn something?"

Allow some room for errors! Nobody's perfect. If you commit slips of the tongue from time to time, it doesn't mean you can't express yourself at all.

Instead: Do not generalize from one imperfection to everything!



Every human being is complex and – like a mosaic – is made up of many small parts.
We all have our bright and our dark parts!

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

What is attractiveness?

What is success?

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Every human being is complex and – like a mosaic – is made up of many small parts.
We all have our bright and our dark parts!

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

What is attractiveness? Inner or outer beauty, a perfect body?

What is success? Career, many friends, being content with oneself and one's life?

2. Selective perception

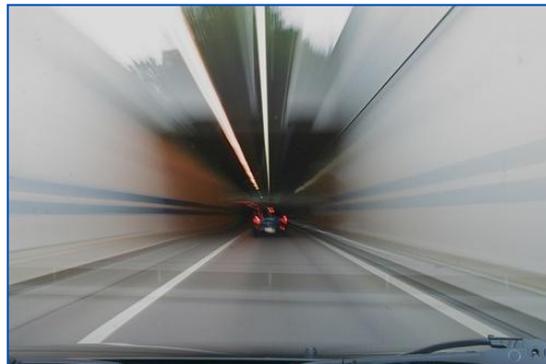
(searching for a fly in the ointment)



2. Selective perception

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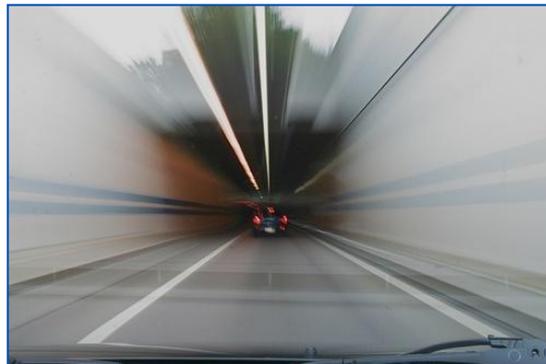
Event	Selective appraisal	Alternative evaluation
A good friend does not come to your birthday party.	“I’m unpopular”	???
People are standing together laughing. One of them looks your way.	“They’re laughing at me!”	???



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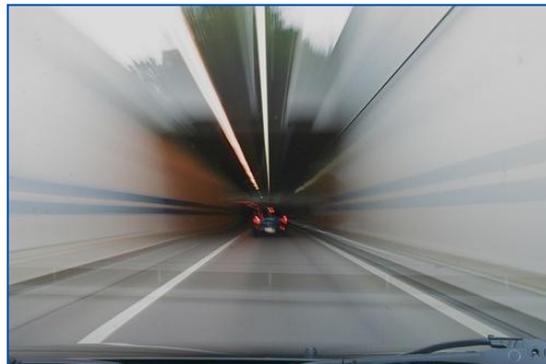
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People are standing together laughing. One of them looks your way.	“They’re laughing at me!”	People are only looking at me by chance or are mistaking me for someone else.

Caution!: Avoid over-interpreting other people’s behavior. There can be many explanations for a situation.

3. Reading negative thoughts

???

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Situation: While you present your ideas at a team conference, two colleagues keep whispering to each other.

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You feel very uncomfortable and allow the colleagues to make you feel insecure; your confidence fades. You probably don’t want to present ideas at the next conference.

3. Reading negative thoughts

Situation: While you present your ideas at a team conference, two colleagues keep whispering to each other.

Reading negative thoughts:

“They’re talking about me – my ideas are bad!”



Justified? NO!

Therefore: What can I think instead?

3. Reading negative thoughts

What can I think instead?

???

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What can I think instead?

“Everyone else listened, some even looked at me in a friendly way and nodded in agreement. These two colleagues talk to each other all the time. Besides, I can’t know what they were actually talking about. Maybe they were just happy that they weren’t presenting.”

3. Reading negative thoughts

What can I think instead?

“Everyone else listened, some even looked at me in a friendly way and nodded in agreement. These two colleagues talk to each other all the time. Besides, I can’t know what they were actually talking about. Maybe they were just happy that they weren’t presenting.”

What effects does this thought have?

3. Reading negative thoughts

What can I think instead?

“Everyone else listened, some even looked at me in a friendly way and nodded in agreement. These two colleagues talk to each other all the time. Besides, I can’t know what they were actually talking about. Maybe they were just happy that they weren’t presenting.”

What effects does this thought have?

My capabilities are not dependant on other people’s behavior. I am satisfied with my contribution and will again present something in the future.

3. Reading negative thoughts

Were there situations in which you read negative thoughts into others?

What are alternative ways of looking at it?

3. Reading negative thoughts

“Reading negative thoughts”: Don’t let yourself believe that your own negative self-image is automatically shared by others!

Although I consider myself worthless, ugly, etc., others do not necessarily think that as well.



Does trying to read other people’s thoughts help you in any way?

Gain? Danger?

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- If we were right we could adjust our behavior (e.g., stay away from “enemies”)...
- If we were wrong we would just unnecessarily distress ourselves...

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Unlikely!

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4. Comparison with other people

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We continually compare ourselves to others. However, *the terms in which* we compare ourselves and *with whom* we compare ourselves make all the difference!

If you always come-out badly in comparisons because the ideal is so out of reach or the comparison is so unfair, your self-esteem will suffer.



Examples of unfair comparisons?

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Video clip: „unfair comparison“



<http://www.youtube.com/user/AGNeuropsychologie>

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Also!: For an evaluation of seemingly “perfect biographies”, include **all** areas of life!

“Perfect life” ...?

Do you know these 5 people?

What do they have in common?



“Perfect life”...?

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What do they have in common?



Robbie
Williams

Catherine
Zeta-Jones

Jim
Carrey

Robert de
Niro

David
Beckham

... famous, rich, good-looking, successful???

“Perfect life”...?

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What do they have in common?



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Catherine
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... famous, rich, good-looking, successful???

Correct, but: All of them had/have psychiatric problems.

“Perfect life” ...?



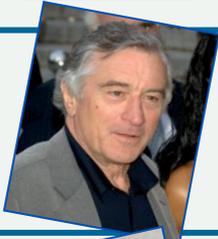
Robbie Williams became famous as a member of the band “Take That,” which he had to leave due to drug abuse. He then successfully started a career as a singer. In February 2007, he was admitted to a clinic because of depression and his addiction to pills.



Catherine Zeta-Jones, the Oscar-winning actress, sought treatment for bipolar disorder at a psychiatric clinic in 2011 after enduring several severe losses, both professional and personal.



The comedian and actor Jim Carrey suffered from severe depression for a long time. At first, antidepressants helped him overcome his personal low points. He has now discontinued them and successfully works with other strategies (e.g., balanced diet, psychotherapy) to counter depression.



Early in life, the US-American actor and Oscar-winner Robert de Niro was so shy that he could hardly be around people without having palpitations and clammy hands. Today he is considered one of the best actors of his time.



The British soccer star David Beckham suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder. He has great difficulties when objects in his environment are messy or not symmetrically ordered. In an interview he said that it seriously affects him as his condition is highly time-consuming and leads to interpersonal conflicts.

Questioning idols



Unfair comparisons with allegedly “perfect” people decreases your self-esteem.

Critically question “appearances”.

e.g., What does this person do for his/her looks? What are things that might make this person envious of you?

What does perfection even mean?



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What does perfection even mean?



- *Do you know a perfect person?*
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 - Every human being has rough edges and flaws.
 - People who look perfect or talk perfectly may seem boring or daunting – or even be hiding dark secrets.

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- *Do not place absolute demands on yourself such as:*
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- *Do not place absolute demands on yourself such as:*
 - “I must always look good!”
 - “I must always appear smart!”
 - “I must always get my work done perfectly!”

- *“I must not make mistakes!”*
 - An error rate of 5% is normal, even with monotonous tasks. To err is human!

What does perfection even mean?



- *No reliable scientific study claims 100% certainty.*
 - If a result is 95% certain, scientists say it has “significance” and, for the time being, it will be assumed to be correct – but in no case will it be considered a complete truth.

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- *No reliable scientific study claims 100% certainty.*
 - If a result is 95% certain, scientists say it has “significance” and, for the time being, it will be assumed to be correct – but in no case will it be considered a complete truth.
- *Striving for perfection can make one unhappy and fearful.*
 - As a result, many concert musicians, of whom perfection is expected, suffer from performance anxiety.

What to do?!

???

What to do? Change perspective!

- Try to reduce exaggerated demands on yourself and have fairer expectations.
- To do so, it can be helpful to observe yourself from someone else's point of view. It will make it easier to realistically evaluate your own behavior.

Would you be as hard on someone else as you are on yourself?

Own examples???

Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem I

???

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



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Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem I

- Every night, write down or think of a few positive things (up to 5) about your day. Then go through these things in your mind.
- Accept compliments and write them down so you can use them as resources when times are tough.
- Think of situations in which you felt really good and try to remember them with all your senses (seeing, feeling, smelling...), perhaps with the help of a photo album.



Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem II

- Do things you really enjoy – preferably together with others (e.g., going to the movies, going to a cafe).



Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem II

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- Work out (at least 20 minutes a day) – but don't push yourself too hard – e.g., go for a vigorous walk or go jogging.



Tips to improve depressed mood/low self-esteem II

- Do things you really enjoy – preferably together with others (e.g., going to the movies, going to a cafe).
- Work out (at least 20 minutes a day) – but don't push yourself too hard – e.g., go for a vigorous walk or go jogging.
- Listen to your favorite (happy) songs.
- ...



- Mood Module -

Transfer to everyday life

Learning objectives:

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- Be aware of the typical depressive distortions and try to modify them (see leaflet).

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- Be aware of the typical depressive distortions and try to modify them (see leaflet).
- Use at least some of the tips to improve and stabilize your mood. Give it a go, it won't hurt you!

Transfer to everyday life

Learning objectives:

- Be aware of the typical depressive distortions and try to modify them (see leaflet).
- Use at least some of the tips to improve and stabilize your mood. Give it a go, it won't hurt you!
- In case of severe depressive symptoms, contact your general practitioner, psychologist, or psychiatrist.

Further questions?

???



The story of a count...

... who got to be very, very old because he was an connoisseur of life. The count never left his house without first sticking a handful of beans into his pocket. He didn't do this because he wanted to chew them. No, he took them with him because he wanted to treasure and count the special moments of the day.

For each little positive thing he experienced during the course of the day – a chat with someone in the street, his wife's laugh, a delicious meal, a fine cigar, a shady tree in the afternoon sun, a glass of good wine – for everything that pleased his senses, he took one bean out of his right jacket pocket and put it into the left pocket. Sometimes there were two or three.

In the evening he sat at home and counted the beans that were in his left pocket. He relished these moments. They brought to mind the wonderful things he had experienced during the day and made him happy. Even on the evenings when he only counted one bean, for him the day was a success – it made life worth living

Thank you for your attention!

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