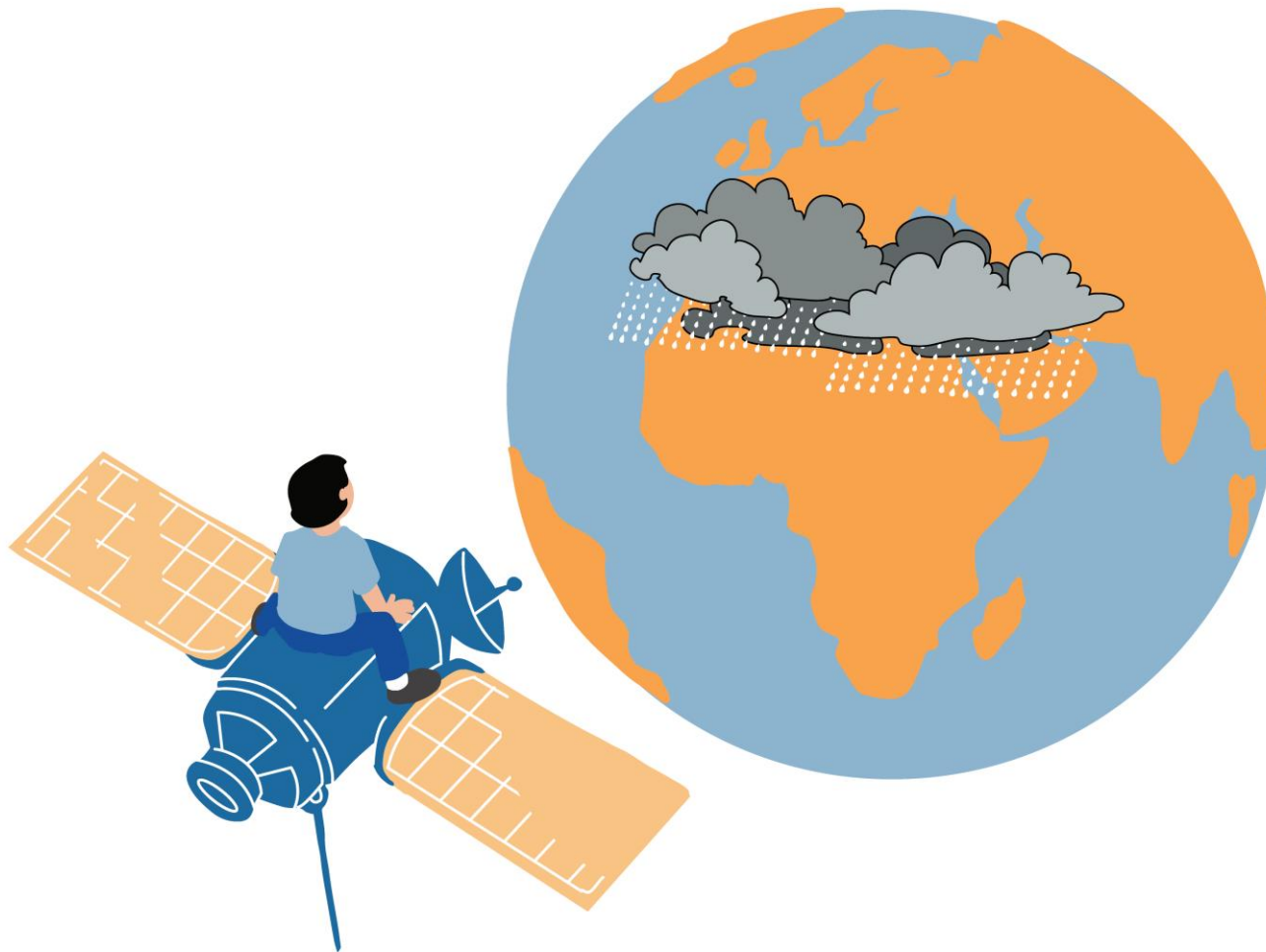




# Metacognitive Training for Depression

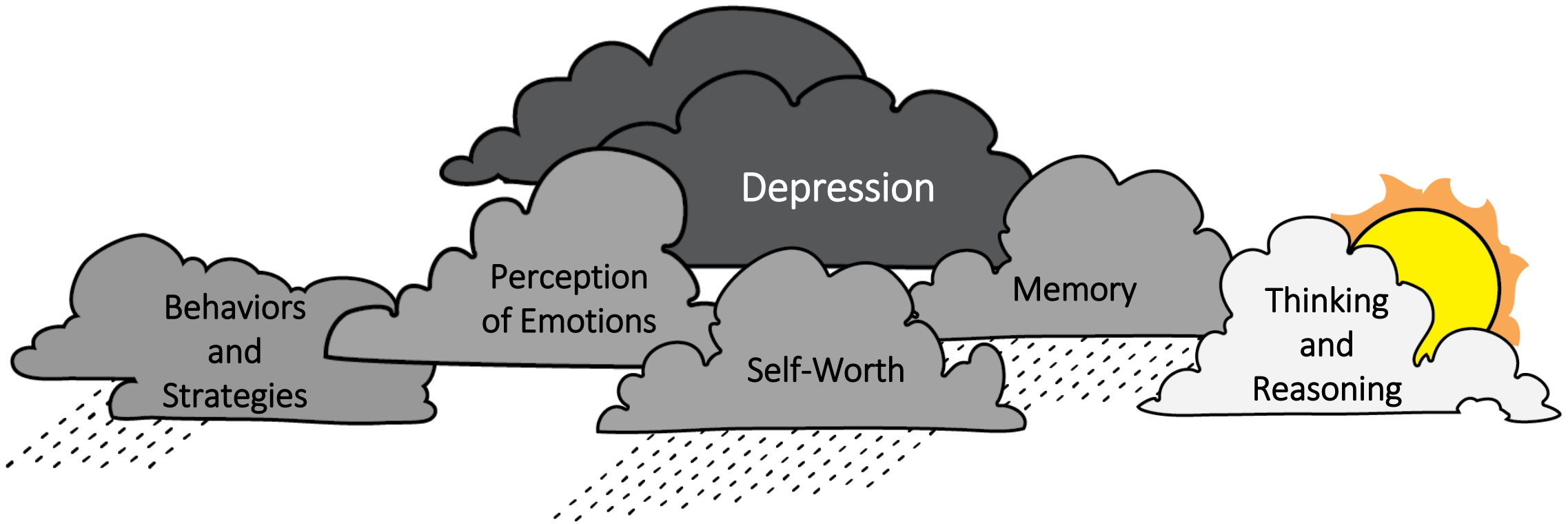


# D-MCT: Satellite Position





# Today's Topic





## Previous session

- What did you do for follow-up?
- Do you have any questions or success stories?



Training session

# D-MCT 3 – Thinking and Reasoning 2



# How is “thinking and reasoning” related to depression?

- In the USA and Germany, one in five people suffers from depression at least once in their lifetime.



# How is “thinking and reasoning” related to depression?

- In the USA and Germany, one in five people suffers from depression at least once in their lifetime.
- Many of them process information differently from people without depression.



## How is “thinking and reasoning” related to depression?

- In the USA and Germany, one in five people suffers from depression at least once in their lifetime.
- Many of them process information differently from people without depression.
- These depressive thinking patterns are often very one-sided and are called “thought distortions.” They 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?

“Should” Statement	Flexible Thought
I should always be on time for appointments.	???



# “Should” Statements

What would a more flexible thought be?

“Should” Statement	Flexible Thought
<p>I should always be on time for appointments.</p>	<p>“It's not equally important to be on time to everything. For example, it would be more important to be on time to a job interview versus a private barbecue. 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 can apologize once I get there.”</p>



## More examples of “Should” Statements

- “You should always look well-groomed”



## More examples of “Should” Statements

- “You should always look well-groomed”
- “You should always seem smart”



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“Should” statements are excessively high standards that we place on ourselves!



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- “You should always look well-groomed”
- “You should always seem smart”
- “You should only offer guests homemade cake”
- “You should do your job perfectly”

“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”?

- Benefits?
- Costs?





# Benefits of high standards?





# Benefits of high standards?

- Positive feedback or recognition for special achievements can be good!





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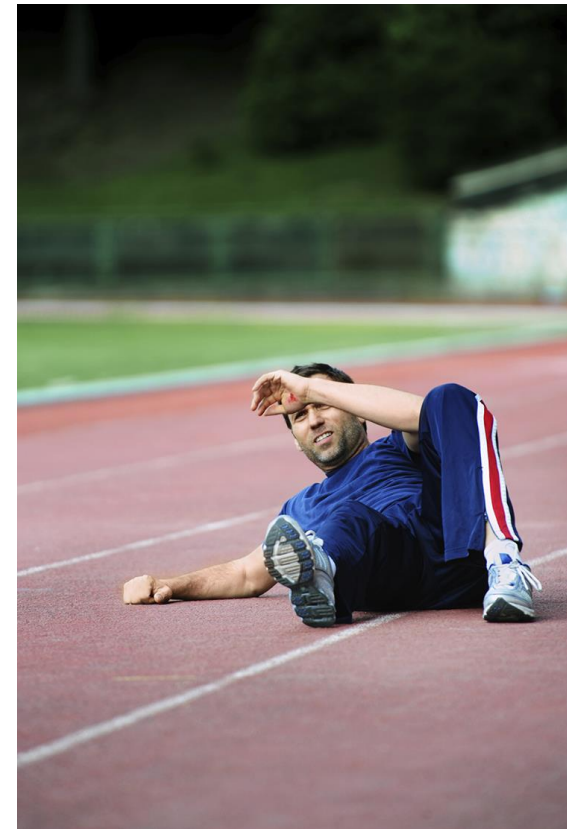
Warning: When you stop setting such high standards, you must also let go of the possible short-term benefits. This makes it more difficult to stop!

Therefore, you should consider the costs.





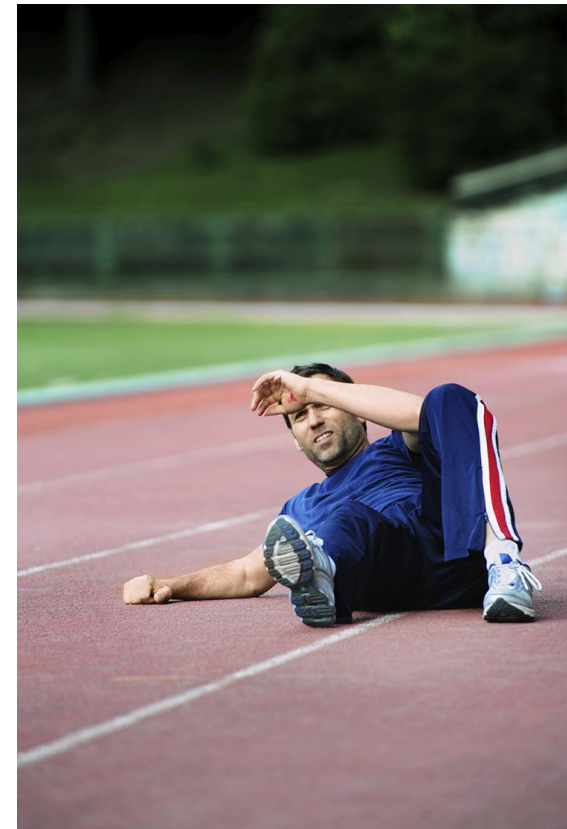
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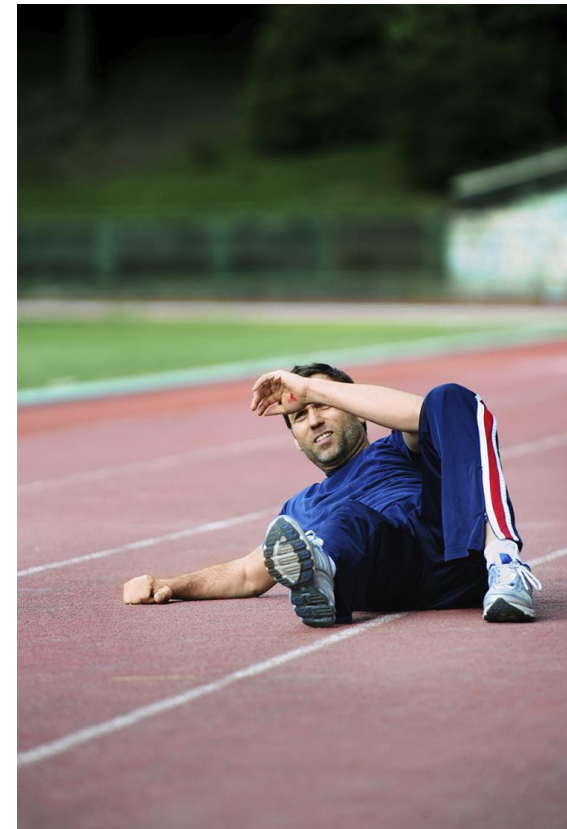
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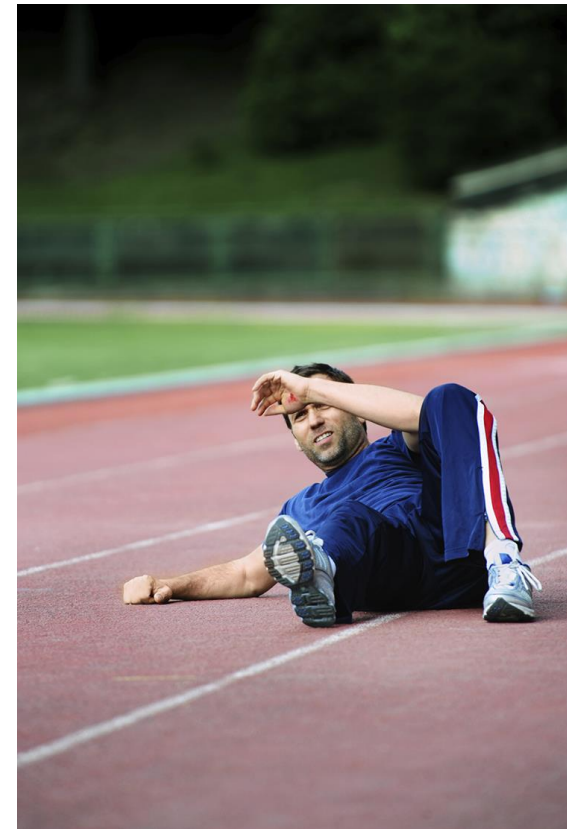
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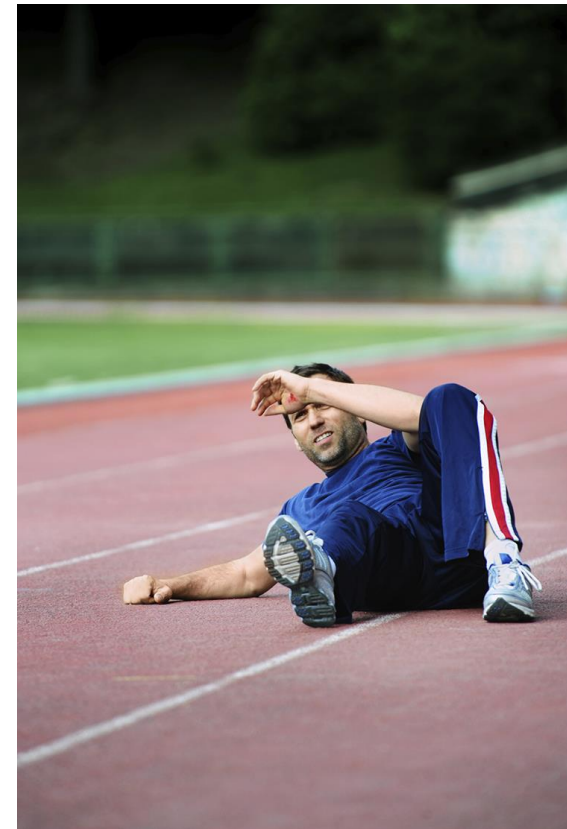
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## Costs of high standards?

- “Raising the bar” is often frustrating.
- “With luck and skill”, one can jump over extremely high hurdles, but it is difficult
- 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





# Black-and-White Thinking

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





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- High demands and “should” statements can encourage black-and-white thinking:







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# Black-and-White Thinking

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- High demands and “should” statements can encourage black-and-white thinking:  
When something is not perfect (demands are not 100% fulfilled), we are convinced we have totally failed!
- This is like an inner critic who wants you to believe that everything in life is only black or white.





# Black-and-White Thinking

What if an expectation cannot be met?

“Should” Statement	Black-and-White Thinking
I should always be on time for appointments.	“When I can't show up on time for an appointment, I ...”



# Black-and-White Thinking

What if an expectation cannot be met?

“Should” Statement	Black-and-White Thinking
I should always be on time for appointments.	“When I can't show up on time for an appointment, I shouldn't go at all.”



# Black-and-White Thinking

What would a more flexible thought be?

“Should” Statement	Black-and-White Thinking
I should always be on time for appointments.	“When I can't show up on time for an appointment, I shouldn't go at all.”



# Black-and-White Thinking

What would a more flexible thought be?

“Should” Statement	Black-and-White Thinking
I should always be on time for appointments.	“When I can't show up on time for an appointment, I shouldn't go at all.”



“Arriving late for an appointment happens. It's always better to go late than not go at all.”

“It's better to do something 70% rather than to 100% not do it!”



# Finding the right balance!





# Finding the right balance!

- Alternative: use a fair measure with realistic demands!







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- This does not mean that you should not set goals and try to avoid failing!





# Finding the right balance!

- Alternative: use a fair measure with realistic demands!
- This does not mean that you should not set goals and try to avoid failing!
- Rather, find your own **personal balance**; explore your capabilities while at the same time realizing your boundaries.





# Finding the right balance!





## Finding the right balance!

- In the middle of depression, it can be difficult to find a fair measure.





## Finding the right balance!

- In the middle of depression, it can be difficult to find a fair measure.
- For example, shopping or preparing a meal can be a huge achievement even though these activities were very easy during other periods of your life.





# Disqualifying the Positive

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





# Disqualifying the Positive

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





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Disqualifying the positive can be indicated by the following:

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Are you familiar with this?

Personal examples?







# Expecting Negative Feedback

## Example



Event	<i>Expecting negative feedback</i> Helpful thought
You are criticized!	??? ???



# Expecting Negative Feedback

## Example



Event	<i>Expecting negative feedback</i> Helpful thought
You are criticized!	<i>"They see through me. I am worthless."</i> ???



# Expecting Negative Feedback

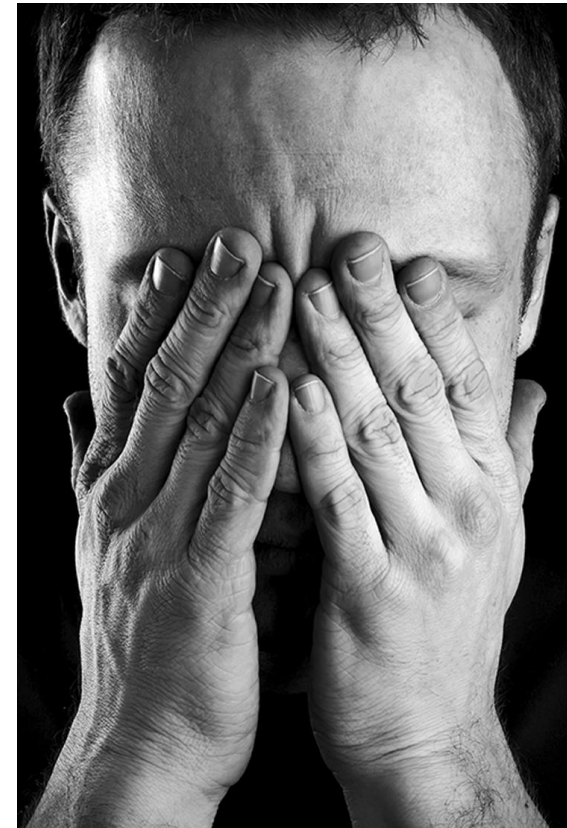
## Example



Event	<i>Expecting negative feedback</i> Helpful thought
You are criticized!	<p><i>“They see through me. I am worthless.”</i></p> <p>“Maybe they had a bad day.”</p> <p>“Can I learn something from their criticism?”</p>



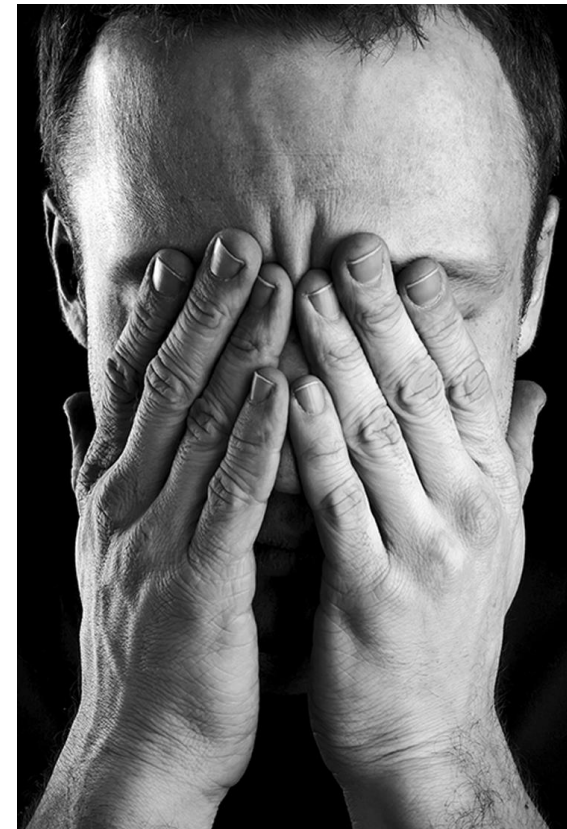
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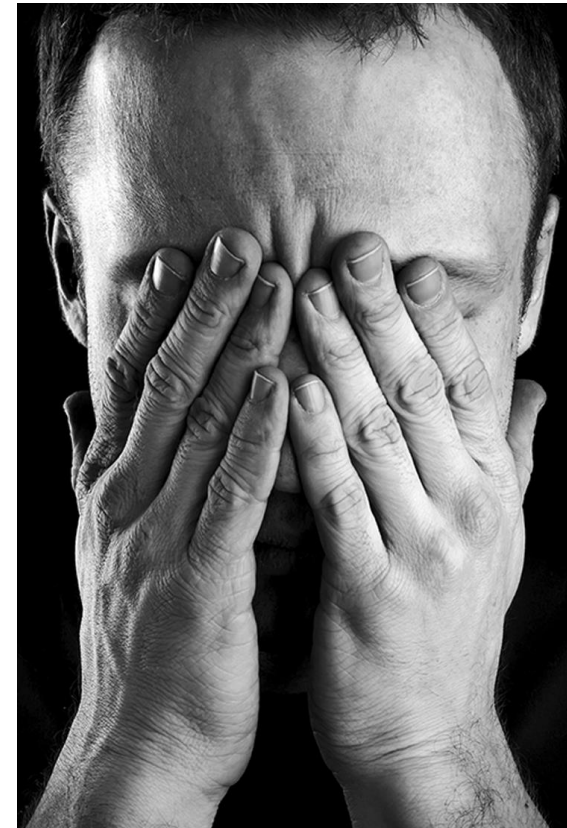
- Differentiate criticism of your behavior from criticism of you as a person.





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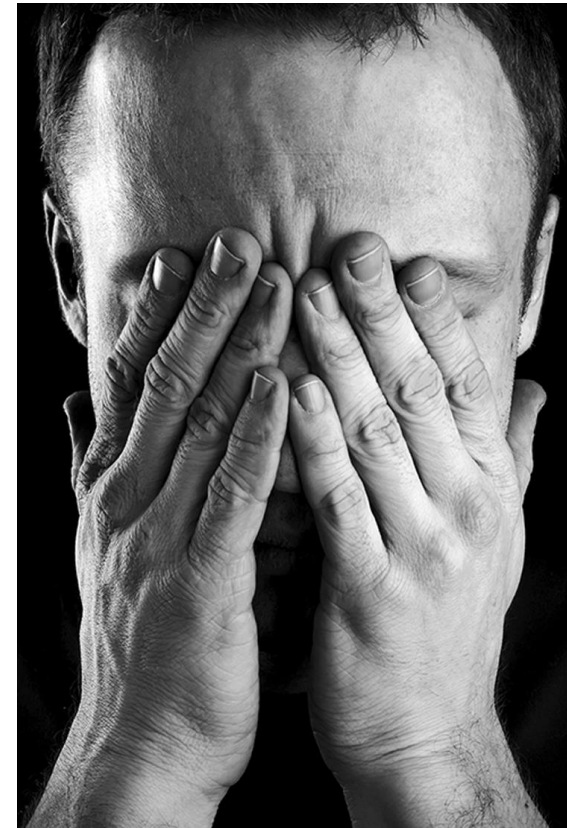
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- Avoid overgeneralizations (“Its not me—it’s my behavior!”).





# How can I better handle negative feedback?

- Differentiate criticism of your behavior from criticism of you as a person.
- Avoid overgeneralizations (“Its not me—it’s my behavior!”).
- Handle criticism positively by asking what you could learn (“learn from your mistakes”).





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# Disqualifying the Positive

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
  - Viewing positive experiences as exceptions





# Rejection of Positive Feedback

## Example



Event	<i>Disqualifying the Positive</i> Helpful Thought
You are praised!	<p>???</p> <p>???</p>



# Rejection of Positive Feedback

What would be a more helpful assessment?



Event	<i>Disqualifying the Positive</i> Helpful Thought
You are praised!	<p><i>“They were just trying to flatter me; they weren't being honest.”</i></p> <p><i>“They are the only ones who think that.”</i></p> <p>???</p>



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But: Accepting praise is often difficult!

How well do you accept praise?



# When do you praise others?

???



# When do you praise others?

- ... when someone has done something well
- ... when someone tries especially hard
- ... when you like someone
- ...





# When do you praise others?

- ... when someone has done something well
- ... when someone tries especially hard
- ... when you like someone
- ... when you want to make someone happy



## How can I better accept praise?

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





How do you react when you receive a gift?





# How do you react when you receive a gift?

- You are thankful!





# How do you react when you receive a gift?

- You are thankful!
- Why?





# How do you react when you receive a gift?

- You are thankful!
- Why?
- Most of the time, it's not about the gift itself but the gesture.





# How can I transfer the gift metaphor to praise?



- Do not devalue the person's praise (“That's not true!”), but instead see it as a gift.
- You might even be able to thank the person.
- Do your words **match** your tone and your gestures? Pay attention to this!
- This goes also for the praise that you give yourself!



# Learning Points





## Learning Points

- Pay attention to “should” statements, black-and-white thinking, and disqualifying the positive in your everyday life.



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- Pay attention to “should” statements, black-and-white thinking, and disqualifying the positive in your everyday life.
- 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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- Pay attention to “should” statements, black-and-white thinking, and disqualifying the positive in your everyday life.
- 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 these cognitive traps.



# Learning Points

- Apply strategies to avoid disqualifying the positive and practice them. For example:



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  - Differentiate criticism of a specific behavior from criticism of you as a person.



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# Learning Points

- Apply strategies to avoid disqualifying the positive and practice them. For example:
  - Differentiate criticism of a specific behavior from criticism of you as a person.
  - Find the constructive parts of the criticism.
  - View praise as a gift.
  - Enjoy praise and do not devalue it.





# Final round

- What was most important for you today?
- Which thought distortion would you like to do an exercise on as homework?



# For trainers

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



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





Thank you!

