

Getting Unstuck



**Presented by CSUEB Counseling Services
Week 3 - Shifting Depressed Thinking Patterns**

Gratitude Meditation



Introductions:

Share your name, pronouns, year @ CSUEB, major & Identify 1 positive thought or belief you have had this week



A Few Zoom Guidelines

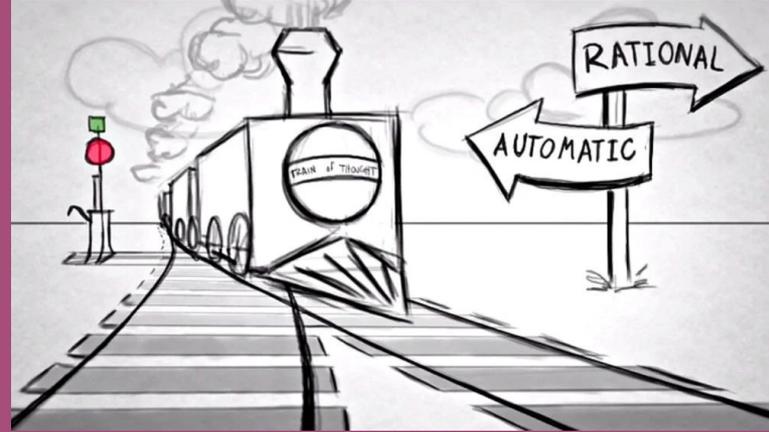
- Please mute your audio while others are talking and type any questions into the chat box
- Your video can be off or on, whatever makes you most comfortable
- Confidentiality, and Zoom limitations

Community Agreements

- Push yourself to participate
- Focus on your own experience
- Share headlines, not details
- Step forward, step back
- Ask others before giving them feedback
- Assume positive intent from others
- Take responsibility for your needs

Automatic Thoughts

Automatic thoughts are the thoughts and images that pop into our heads, as if they were a reflex. We don't choose for them to happen, they just do.



These automatic thoughts can impact the way we feel or think about things. With depression, this pattern of unhelpful automatic thoughts can occur repeatedly, as if you're live-streaming your perceived flaws and mistakes. This can be very hard to turn off. It can lead to low mood, behavioral changes, and physical sensations, all perpetuating the experience of depression.

Unhelpful Thinking Styles



- o All or Nothing Thinking
- o Mental Filter
- o Jumping to Conclusions
- o Emotional Reasoning
- o Labeling
- o Overgeneralizing
- o Disqualifying the Positive
- o Magnification (Catastrophizing) or Minimization
- o “Shoulds” and “Musts”
- o Personalization

Question: Which thinking style do you experience the most?

Alternative Thought Patterns

One way to shift our patterns of unhelpful thinking is to begin creating what we call, “alternative thought patterns.”

We are not saying to “just think positively,” because we know it's not that simple. Instead, what we are practicing is taking a step back and looking at the situation from a broader perspective, in order to begin developing new patterns of thoughts.

Make sure that your alternative thought is realistic and believable. Don't try to jump to the positive extreme, as this would be an example of “black and white thinking.”



Alternative Thoughts and Images

Situation: I asked a classmate to be my partner for a group assignment. She said no.

Automatic Thoughts and Images: “I knew I shouldn’t have asked her, she’s way smarter than me. If we had worked together, I only would have brought down her grade. I’m so stupid. She must hate me.”

To create alternatives, ask yourself:

- Are these thoughts helpful?
- Are they 100% true and accurate, 100% of the time?
- What are other ways of looking at this?
- What is the bigger picture?
- What evidence do I have for and against this thought?

Examples of alternative thoughts:

- She might already have a partner.
- I’ve done well in this class so far, so I might not be stupid.
- Not everyone is going to like me and that is okay.

Other examples of alternative thoughts to counter these negative ones?



Alternative Behaviors

Situation: I asked a classmate to be my partner for a group assignment. She said no.

Instinctive behaviors: Left class early to avoid anyone else rejecting me. Consider dropping this class - I'll never find a partner and will probably fail this group assignment.

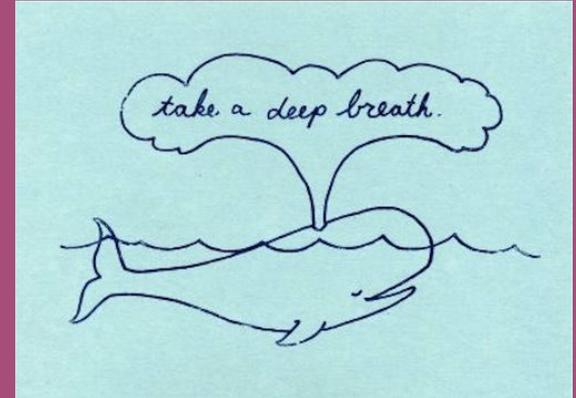
To create alternatives, ask yourself:

- What could you do that would be more helpful for you, others, and/or the situation?
- What are coping strategies that might help you?

Examples of coping strategies:

- Deep breathing
- Distract myself until the intensity of this feeling fades
- Seek support from a friend/ family member
- Do something that makes me feel happy or relaxed

Other examples of alternative behaviors you might consider?



Alternative Feelings

Situation: I asked a classmate to be my partner for a group assignment. She said no.

Automatic Feelings: Sad, ashamed, embarrassed, rejected, lonely, irritable

To create alternatives, ask yourself:

- What feelings would be more helpful in managing this situation?
- What if you acted and thought differently about the situation? How might these changes help you feel differently?

Examples of alternative feelings:

- Optimistic
- Confident
- Relaxed
- Neutral

How does it impact your mood to consider these alternative feelings?

Additional Resources

- CBT apps: CBT Thought Diary, MindDoc: Your Companion, What's Up, MoodTools
- Counseling Groups throughout every week
- Virtual RAW events, especially Mindful Minutes
- Pioneers for HOPE - support with food and housing
- Follow us on Instagram - @eastbayshcs

Check out

Think about what skills you might want to practice from home this week:

- Creating alternative thoughts
- Practicing coping strategies
- Considering alternative feelings
- Gratitude Meditation

We hope to see you again next week!



