

The Struggle Is Real

Week 1: **Understanding Depression**
Presented by CSUEB Counseling Services



Credit: Cosmao from Freepik

Introductions:

Share your name, pronouns, year @ CSUEB, major &
Please share a high and low from your break



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

Agenda for today's group



- What is depression?
- Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Butterfly Hug exercise

Causes of Depression

Depression does not have a single cause. It can be triggered by a life crisis, physical illness, or other life experience—or it can occur spontaneously.

Various factors can contribute to depression including trauma, genetics, life circumstances (including structural oppressions), other medical conditions, and drug and alcohol misuse.

The good news: **Depression is treatable**, and the skills that we will practice in these workshops have been shown to reduce the intensity of depressive symptoms when used consistently.

Question: How do you define depression?



How Do You Tell The **Difference**?

Sadness:

- A normal, painful, response to challenging life events.
- Usually passes when the event passes.
- Something we all experience at some point

Depression:

- May or may not include feelings of sadness
- Persists most of the time
- Includes a cluster of symptoms
- May or may not be triggered by a painful experience, so a person might not identify a reason for symptoms.

Question: Do you have different needs when you are sad vs depressed? What emotions do you have when you are depressed if not sadness?

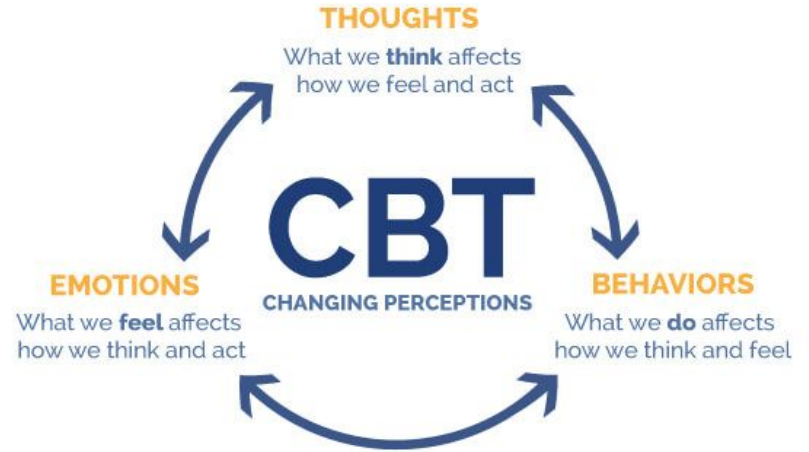
Common Symptoms of Depression

- Self-criticism
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Low mood or persistent sadness
- Fatigue or low energy
- Withdrawing from friends, family, or pets
- Suicidal thoughts or preoccupation with death
- Crying spells
- Suicide attempts
- Changes to sex drive
- Poor hygiene
- Anger or irritability
- “Self medicating” with alcohol or drugs
- Changes to eating or weight
- Worry about something awful happening
- Guilt
- Changes in appetite
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Numbness or feelings of emptiness
- Changes in sleep
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Physical restlessness or lethargy
- Heaviness in the body
- Hopelessness
- Fear of rejection
- Loss of pleasure for the things you used to enjoy
- Inability to make decisions

***Which symptoms stand out that you may have experienced?
Are there any on the list that are surprising to you?***

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Research shows that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is one of the most effective ways to address symptoms of depression. CBT focuses on changing our thoughts and behaviors. If we change how we are acting or thinking about our situation, that will often shift how we feel.



Depression can cause us to get stuck in a specific, negative perspective of the world. We can think of this as **lies that depression tells us**. Just by slowing down our thoughts, identifying these lies and noticing our feelings can be helpful to reduce symptoms and interrupt the negative cycle. The CBT model also helps us learn to challenge the unhelpful schema and see reality from a more balanced perspective.

Butterfly Hug for Self-Soothing



Additional Resources

- **CBT apps:** Wysa, CBT Thought Diary, MindDoc: Your Companion, What's Up, MoodTools, Calm, Shine, Happify
- **Counseling groups** throughout every week
- **Pioneers for HOPE** - support with food and housing
@pioneersforhope
- Follow us on **Instagram** - @eastbayshcs
- **Downloadable slides and group handouts**



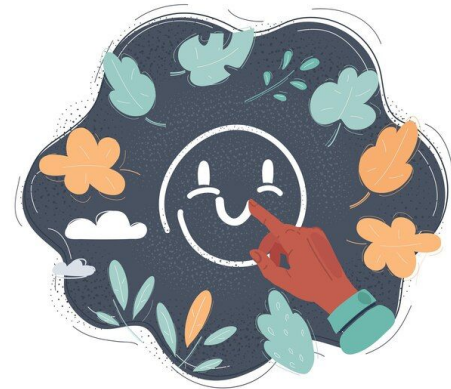
Check Out

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

- **Noticing your symptoms** as related to depression
- Start to **identify the lies** that depression tells us
- **Practice Butterfly Hug** exercise

Next week we will practice interrupting this cycle. As a reminder, this is a 8 week group. Weekly attendance is expected as the skills will build on each other. See you next week!

YOU
Got this



Thank you



for your time!