

The Struggle Is Real

Week 5: **Externalizing Your Depression**

Presented by CSUEB Counseling Services



Credit: Cosmao from Pexels

Introductions:

Share your name, pronouns, year @ CSUEB, major &
Name 1 thing you do to uplift yourself



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



- Externalizing Depression
- Lightstream Technique
- Using Humor to Cope

Externalizing Depression

Often when we have felt depressed for a long time, it starts to feel like depression is a critical part of our identity. This is one of the tricks that depression plays on us - making us think that we *are* our depression, and that there is no hope for ever feeling differently.

Instead of letting us become one with our depression, it can be helpful to remember that depression is just a visitor - we don't have to let it stay forever. It can be separate from who we are.

Eg. I am *NAME* and I struggle with depression vs. I am depressed.



What are some ways you can separate your depression from your identity?

The “Black Dog”



Your Depression

If you imagine your depression as something outside of yourself, what would it look like?

- Think about your depression's size, color, texture.
- Is it an object, or a creature?
- What name would you give it?

Share your image.

You could also take a piece of paper and draw and write out what it would look like. What is the first thing that comes to mind?

*What are some ways you could talk/ interact with this image that could help you manage it in a **healthy way**?*



Use Humor in Coping

Use Humor as a Coping Technique

Imagine your inner critic as a cartoon or fictional character from a movie or TV show (eg. Mickey Mouse, Kermit the Frog, Scooby Doo, etc). Choose a character whose voice you think is silly, or ridiculous, and who acts incompetently.

Imagine and visualize who you choose as the source of your inner critic voice. It is much easier to dismiss an inner critic with these characteristics.

Let's try it together. Imagine a critical or negative voice about yourself you have often. Now imagine the voice having the cartoon voice you chose.

How do you feel? How could respond to that image/ voice?

Lightstream Technique



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**



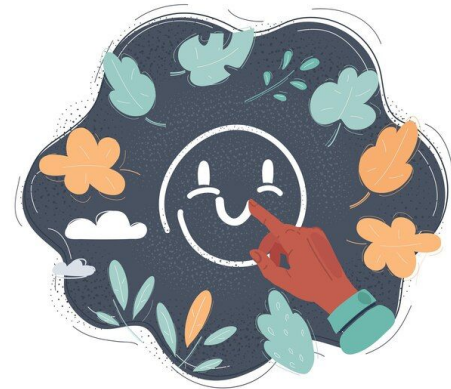
Check Out

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

- **Externalizing depression** as something outside of yourself
- Using **humorous voice** to quiet your inner critic
- Try the **Lightstream Technique**

See you next week!

YOU
Got this



Thank you



for your time!