



Effective Ways to Fight Depression

with Dr. Lisa Firestone

Lisa Firestone, Ph.D.

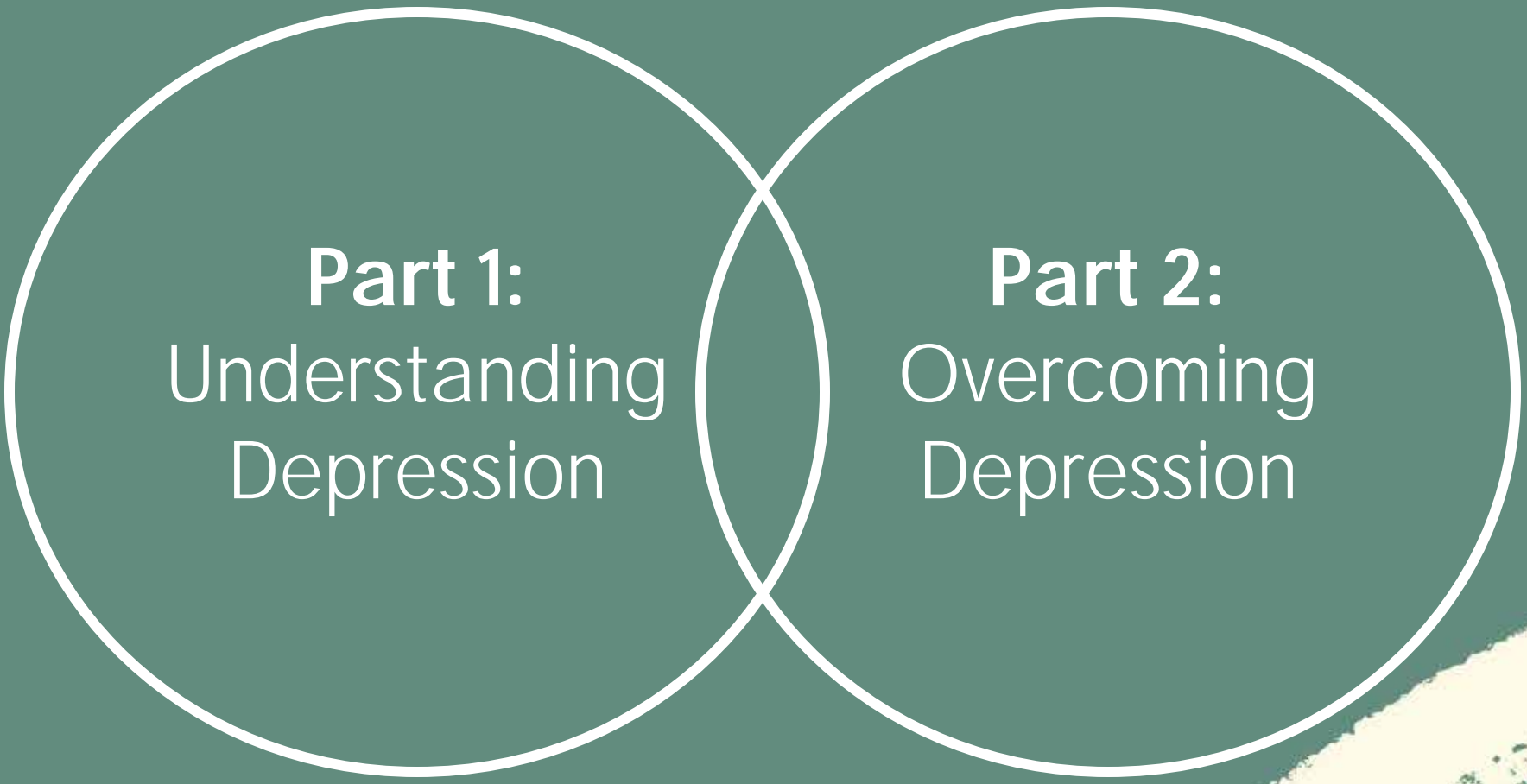
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In this Webinar:



Part 1:
Understanding
Depression

Part 2:
Overcoming
Depression

POLL

Have you:

- ü Struggled with depression?
- ü Had a friend or family member who has depression?
- ü Worked with people who suffer from depression?





Part 1

Understanding Depression




Facts About **DEPRESSION**

- Depression is the most common mental health disorder in America.
- An estimated 1 in 10 U.S. adults report depression.
- Depression rates are rising. By the year 2020, it will be the second most common health problem in the world.



Facts About **DEPRESSION**

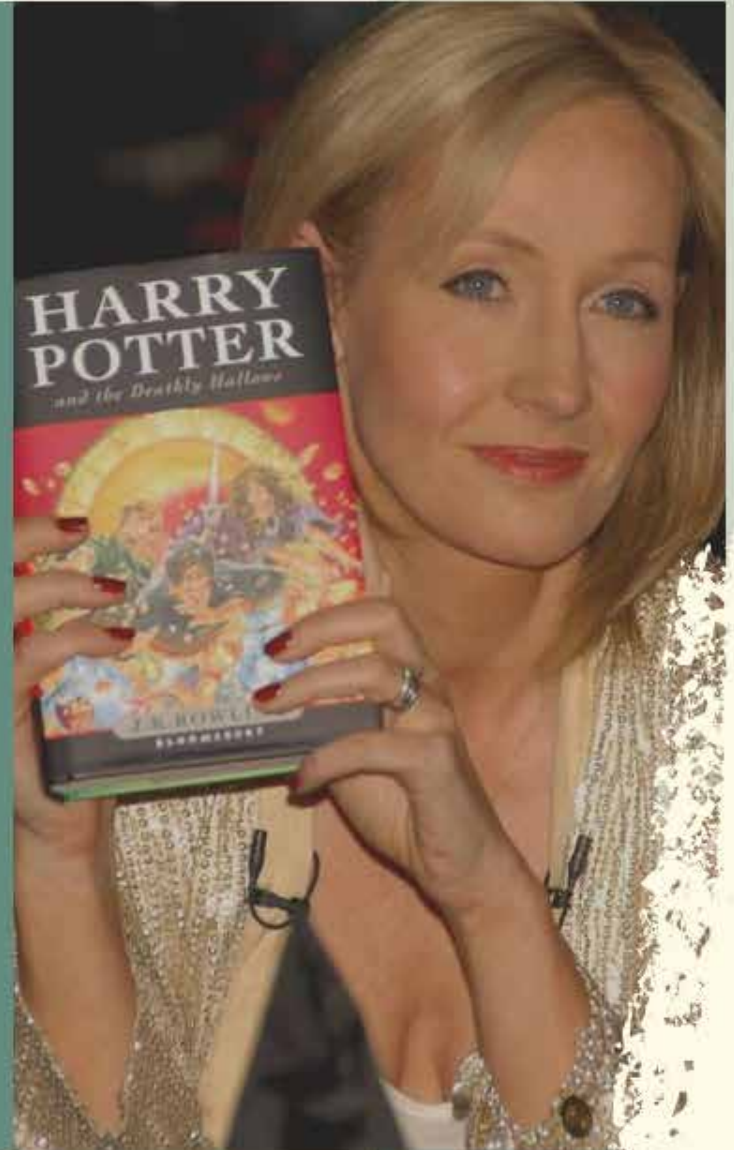
- Low self-esteem predicts depression, but depression does not predict low self-esteem.
- Negative self-concept has been found to be associated with depression in toddlers.

A person with long dark hair, wearing a striped shirt and teal pants, is sitting on a wooden floor against a grey wall. They have their head buried in their hands, suggesting a state of despair or depression. The background is a simple grey wall with a bright light source from the top left, creating a strong shadow.

Depression
is **not** "just a
bad mood."

“

Depression is the most unpleasant thing I have ever experienced. . . It is that absence of being able to envisage that you will ever be cheerful again. The absence of hope. That very deadened feeling, which is so very different from feeling sad. Sad hurts but it's a healthy feeling. It is a necessary thing to feel. Depression is very different... Depression isn't just being a bit sad. It's feeling nothing. It's not wanting to be alive anymore.



- J.K. Rowling, Author



Two Kinds of Depression

Major Depressive Disorder

- Can be a single episode recurrent
- More severe symptoms

Dysthymia

- Less severe but persistent and pervasive
- Symptoms are similar but less intense

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness
- Irritability, restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping
- Overeating or appetite loss
- Thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps or digestive problems that do not ease even with treatment



Depression in Children

Recent research demonstrated that **lack of parental nurturing** is a risk factor for depression recurrence in young children. Fifty-one percent of the 74 children diagnosed with depression in preschool (ages 3-5) were later depressed in school (ages 9-12). Later depression symptoms were associated with **non-supportive parental behavior**. (Report from APA Monitor)





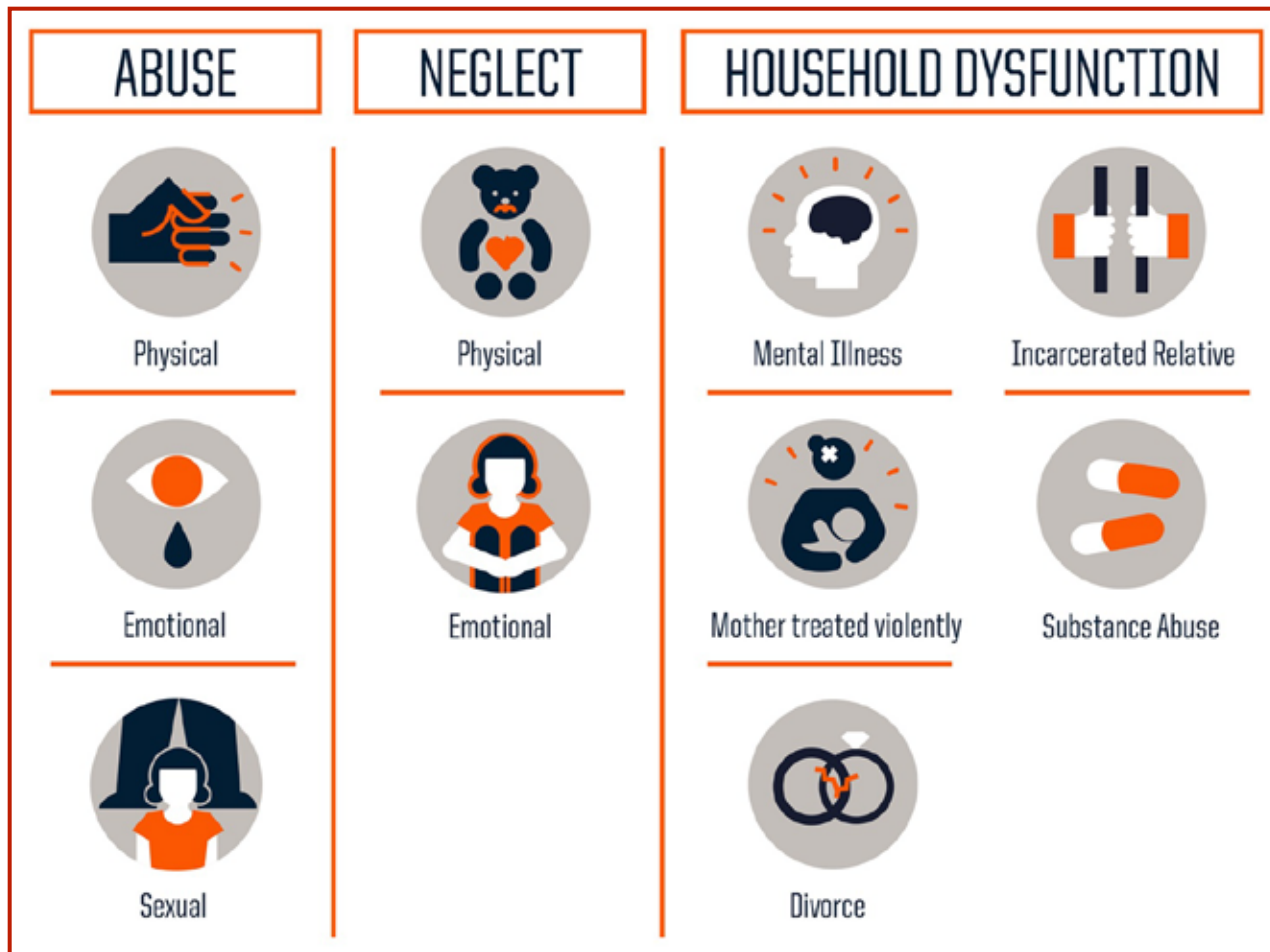
Parental Rejection

Recollections of **parental rejections** are significantly associated with depression, self-criticism and suicidality.



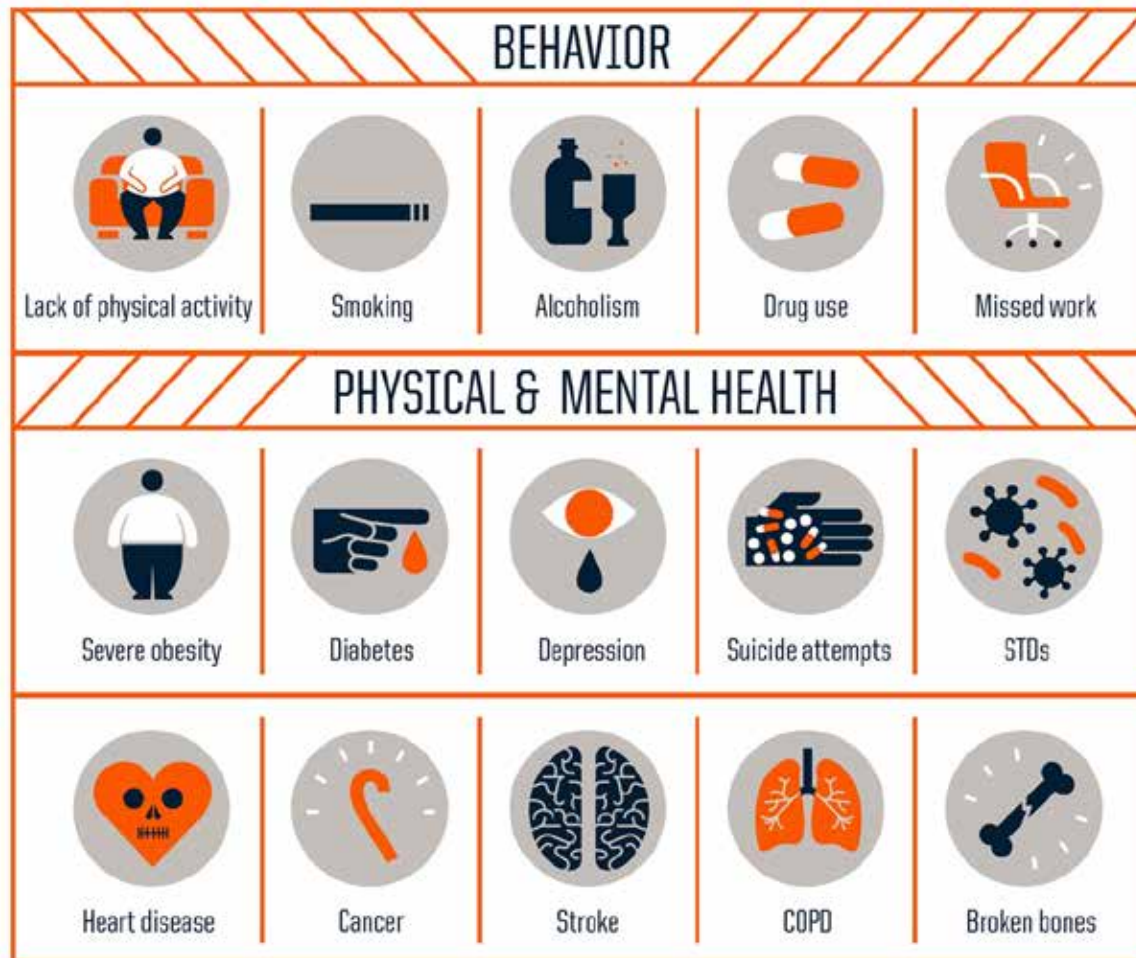
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Three Types of ACEs



Adverse Childhood Experiences

Results of ACEs





Even when there are biological
or hereditary factors,
depression can be treated.



Depression TREATMENT



Only about two-thirds of those suffering with depression seek help.



However...

Depression is one of the most treatable illnesses:



80-90 percent of people find relief.

Depression TREATMENT



Psychotherapy: It's critical for people suffering from depression to seek care from a licensed mental health professional who has training and experience in helping people recover from depression.



Medication: Medications can be very helpful for reducing the symptoms of depression in some people. Often, a combination of psychotherapy and medication is the best course of treatment.



Support System: The support and involvement of family and friends can play a crucial role in helping someone who is depressed.

How does psychotherapy help depression?

Pinpoint the life problems that contribute to their depression and help them understand which aspects of those problems they may be able to solve or improve.

Identify negative or distorted thinking patterns that contribute to feelings of hopelessness and helplessness that accompany depression.

Explore other learned thoughts and behaviors that create problems and contribute to depression.

Help people regain a sense of control and pleasure in life.

The Critical Inner Voice & Depression



“

When you're depressed, it's as though this committee has taken over your mind, leaving you one depressing thought after the other. Part of the depression is as though you're punishing yourself for something... Your sense of self, your appreciation for yourself, your respect for yourself, disappears completely. It certainly isn't that your mind goes blank. On the contrary, when you're depressed, your mind beats you to death with thoughts. It never stops.



- Rod Steiger, Actor

REAL SELF

VS

ANTI-SELF



Goal-directed,
life-affirming,
"on our side"



Self-critical,
self-destructive,
"turned on us"

What is the CRITICAL INNER VOICE?



The critical inner voice is a well-integrated pattern of destructive thoughts toward ourselves and others.

The nagging “voices” that make up this internalized dialogue are at the root of much of our self-destructive and maladaptive behavior.



The critical inner voice is not an auditory hallucination; it is experienced as thoughts within your head.

This stream of destructive thoughts forms an anti-self that discourages individuals from acting in their best interest.



Self-critical

No one will ever love you. He/She will never care about you. You'll just wind up alone."



Self-protective

You are just fine on your own. You can take care of yourself. You don't need anyone else. Don't trust them.

How does the critical inner voice affect us?



- The critical inner voice is an internal enemy that can affect every aspect of our lives, including our self-esteem and confidence, our personal and intimate relationships and our performance and accomplishments at school and work.
- These negative thoughts affect us by undermining our positive feelings about ourselves and others and fostering self-criticism, inwardness, distrust, self-denial, addictions and a retreat from goal-directed activities.

Common Voices in Depression



- You just don't belong anywhere.
- You're a horrible person!
- Your life is so boring and empty.
- Don't ever get too happy because the ax is bound to fall.
- Nobody really likes you. You're unlovable.
- You deserve all the bad things that are happening to you.
- Don't show anybody how bad you feel.
- Who do you think you are anyway? You're nothing!
- You don't deserve anything.

Where does the
critical inner voice
that causes
depression come
from?



Our critical inner voice is formed from our early life experiences. It stems from:

- **Internalized attitudes that were directed toward us by parents or influential caretakers throughout our development**
- **Internalized negative thoughts that our parents or early caretakers had toward themselves**



The background is a solid teal color. On the left side, there is a vertical strip showing a close-up of a plant with long, dark green, pointed leaves. Overlaid on the teal background are several thick, white, hand-painted brushstrokes. One large stroke is on the left, and another is in the top right corner.

Part 2

Overcoming Depression

Challenging the Critical Inner Voice



Identifying Your Critical Inner Voice



ü Recognize the events that trigger your critical inner voice.



ü Recognize the specific outside criticisms that support your critical inner voice.



ü Become aware of times you may be projecting your self attacks onto other people.



ü Notice changes in your mood.

Think of Your Inner Critic as an External Enemy

All exercises from Conquer Your Critical Inner Voice

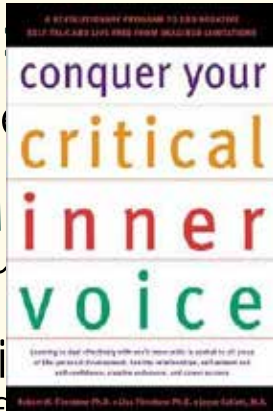
Change "I" statements to "you" statements

Example

I'm so useless. *He* likes *me*.

You're so useless. *He* likes *you*.

- This will help you to externalize your inner critic from your real point of view.
- Do your self-critical thoughts remind you of a point of view of someone in your past?



Respond Rationally to Your Inner Critic

Write down a more realistic and compassionate view of yourself. Use the first person to respond.

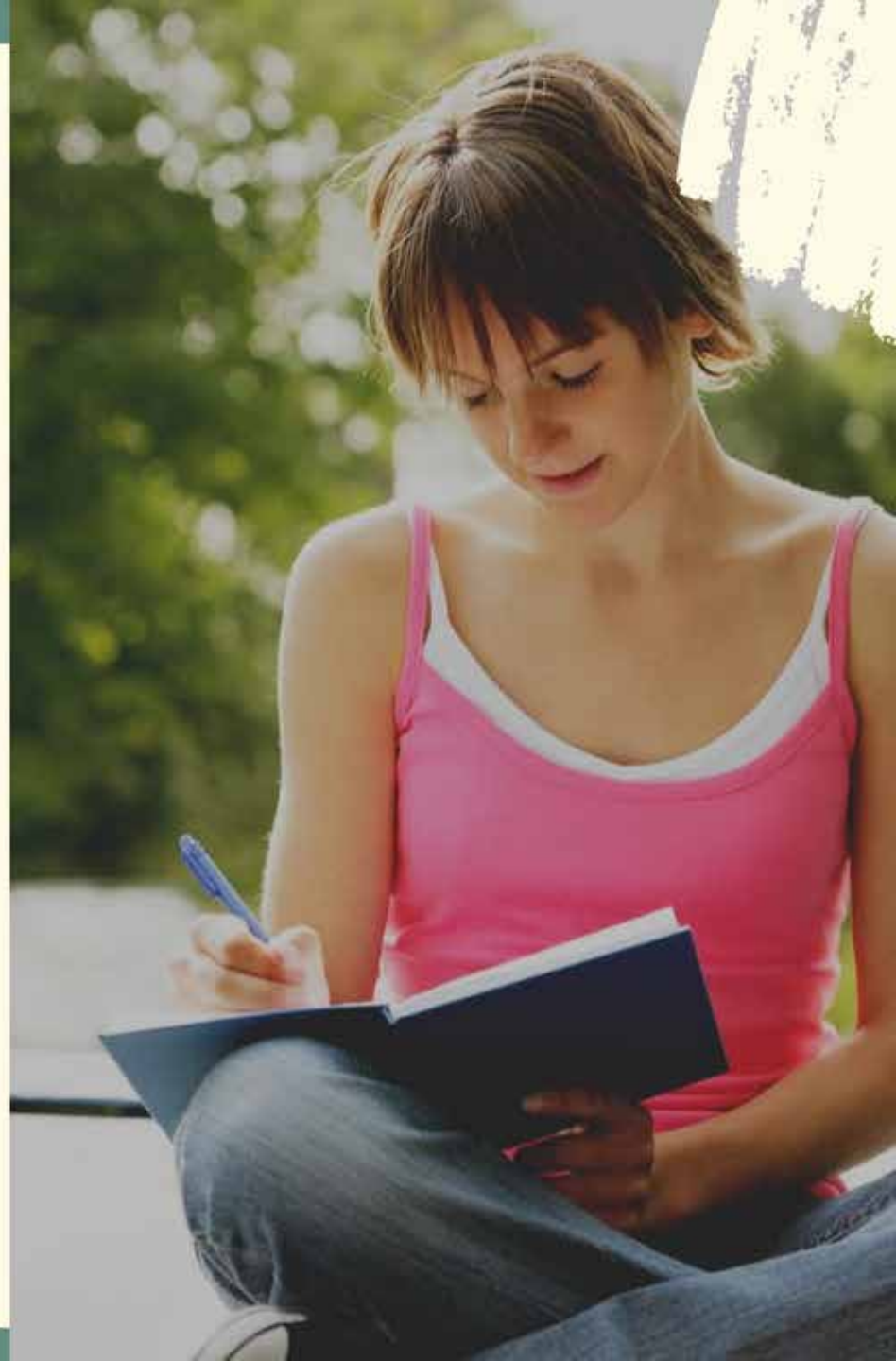
Example:

You're so stupid.



Sometimes I struggle like anyone else, but I catch on quickly and do a good job.

- This helps strengthen your real self.



Plan of Pleasurable Activities

Describe the activities
I plan to engage in

A weekly report of my critical
inner voices about my plan



Self

Anti-Self






Voice Therapy

Cognitive/ Affective/
Behavioral Approach

**Voice
Therapy**
A Psychotherapeutic
Approach to Self-Destructive Behavior

Robert W. Firestone Ph.D.

A man with short brown hair and a beard is sleeping peacefully in a bed. He is covered up to his chest with a thick, dark blue blanket. His head is resting on a blue pillow. The background shows more of the bed with blue and grey pillows. The overall lighting is soft and warm, suggesting a comfortable sleep environment.

Address sleep problems

Increase quality of sleep.



Identify anger

Anger often underlies depression.



Anger and Depression

- Self-blame, rumination, catastrophizing and reduced positive reappraisal were among the most valuable predictors of negative emotions, including anger and depression.

- Studies suggest that anger suppression, but not anger expression, is associated with mood, i.e. depression and anxiety.

- You can recognize and accept your anger in a healthy way that releases the emotion without allowing it to fester or be turned into an attack on yourself.

A photograph of two women jogging outdoors in a park-like setting. The woman on the left is older, with short white hair, wearing a blue zip-up jacket and blue pants. The woman on the right is younger, with dark hair, wearing a bright pink zip-up hoodie and pink pants. They are both smiling and looking towards the right. The background shows green foliage and bamboo stalks. The image is partially obscured by a white brushstroke in the top left and a teal overlay on the right.


**Be
active**

Exercise and Depression

Penny McCullagh, Ph.D.

- Beneficial antidepressant both immediately and long term
- Although exercise significantly decreased depression across all ages, the older people were, the greater the decrease.
- Most powerful antidepressant effect occurred with the combination of exercise and psychotherapy.



A group of four friends (two women and two men) are sitting on a white blanket on a grassy lawn in a park, surrounded by trees. They are all smiling and holding red plastic cups. A small, fluffy white dog is sitting in front of them. The scene is bright and sunny, with a white brushstroke graphic in the top left corner.

Increase your
connectedness
to others

A hand is holding a smartphone, and several red notification icons with white symbols and numbers are floating above it. The icons include a star with '32', a speech bubble with '5', a person icon with '18', an envelope with '11', an '@' symbol with '9', and a heart with '25'.

Take a break from social media

Studies from 2018:

- Found social media use increases depression and loneliness.
- People who limited their social media use felt significantly better, reporting reduced depression and loneliness

A hiker is seen from the side, ascending a steep, rocky mountain trail. The hiker is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt, grey shorts, and brown hiking boots with dark socks. They have a large backpack and are using two trekking poles for stability. The trail is composed of loose rocks and patches of green grass. In the background, a jagged, rocky mountain peak rises against a clear blue sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of adventure and physical challenge.

**Do things
you once
enjoyed**

... even if you don't feel like it

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a grey sweater and blue jeans, is sitting on a light-colored sofa. She is holding a black remote control in her right hand and pointing it towards the camera. The background shows a kitchen with white cabinets and a sink. The image is decorated with abstract brushstroke-like shapes in white and yellow at the top left and bottom right. A large green rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

**Watch a
funny
show or
movie**

A man with a beard is shown in profile, looking upwards and to the right. He is standing in a field of tall, dry grass. The background is a soft, hazy sky with some bare tree branches visible. The lighting suggests it is either sunrise or sunset, with a warm, golden glow. The image is framed by a dark teal rectangle on the right side, which contains the text.

**Don't punish
yourself for
feeling bad**



**Avoid
rumination**

Rumination

- A 2013 study of more than 30,000 people showed that harping on negative life events (particularly through rumination and self-blame) can be the prime predictor of some of today's most common mental health problems like anxiety and depression.
- Limit the time you allow yourself to think about negative thoughts or worries.



A woman with short blonde hair is sitting cross-legged on a light-colored, textured couch. She is wearing a white knit sweater and blue jeans. Her hands are resting in her lap in a mudra position, and her eyes are closed. The background shows a bedroom with a white dresser and a bed with white linens. The image has a soft, warm lighting and a slightly grainy texture. There are decorative white brushstroke-like elements in the top left and bottom right corners. A teal-colored rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Practice mindfulness' in white.

Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness & Depression

- Mindfulness practices don't change our feelings or thoughts, but they do change our relationship to our feelings and thoughts.
- Mindfulness skills can benefit people struggling with depression by helping them to be better able to regulate and tolerate emotion.



A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark blue sweater, is sitting in a chair with his hands clasped together, looking thoughtfully at a therapist. The therapist, whose back is to the camera, is wearing a grey blazer and holding a clipboard. The background shows a blurred office setting with bookshelves. The image is framed with a torn paper effect on the left and bottom edges, and a teal overlay on the right.

**See a
therapist**

Psychotherapy & Depression

- It's critical for people suffering from depression to seek care from a licensed mental health professional who has training and experience in helping people recover from depression.
- Asking for help is a brave act.
- Speaking to a therapist is a healthy, productive endeavor from which every individual would benefit.
- Learning about the source of your pain can alleviate its impact on your life.





**Take
medication,
if indicated**

Newer Medical Treatments

- Ketamine
 - May be helpful for patients that have exhausted other therapeutic options
- Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS)
- Psilocybin??



A person with dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved sweater, is shown from the chest up, hugging themselves with both hands. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene. A dark green rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Embrace self-compassion' in white. The overall design includes a light beige background with a dark green rectangular area on the right and a light green rectangular area at the bottom. There are also some white, torn-edge style graphic elements in the top left and bottom right corners.

**Embrace self-
compassion**



Self-Compassion

"Being touched by and not avoiding your suffering"

From Kristin Neff:

Self-compassion is not based on self-evaluation. It is not a way of judging ourselves positively; it is a way of relating to ourselves kindly.



Three Elements:

1. Self-kindness
vs. Self-judgment



2. Mindfulness
vs. Over-identification with thoughts



3. Common humanity
vs. Isolation

Source: <http://www.self-compassion.org>

A vertical image strip on the left side of the slide. It features a silhouette of a person sitting in a meditative lotus position on a sandy beach. The background is a warm, golden sunset or sunrise over the ocean, with the sun low on the horizon. The top left corner of the slide has a teal background with white, brush-stroke-like patterns.

Loving-Kindness Meditation

- Self-criticism predicted poor response to psychological and pharmacological treatments.
- Increased self-compassion reduced depressive symptoms and increased positive emotions.

Source: Ben Shahar, Ohad Szepeswol, Sigal Zilcha-Mano. (2014) A Wait-List Randomized Controlled Trial of Loving-Kindness Meditation Programme for Self-Criticism. Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy



Curious

Open

Accepting

Loving

COAL



Ways to **ACTIVELY** Fight Depression



- Challenge your inner critic.
- Address sleep problems.
- Identify anger.
- Be active.
- Increase connectedness.
- Take a social media break.
- Do things you've enjoyed.
- Watch a funny show/movie.
- Don't punish yourself.
- Avoid rumination.
- Practice mindfulness.
- See a therapist.
- Take medication, if indicated.
- Embrace self-compassion.

Online CE Workshop

Overcoming Depression:



Nov. 5 and 12 Workshop

Watch live or recorded

Sign up at PsychAlive.org under "Webinars"



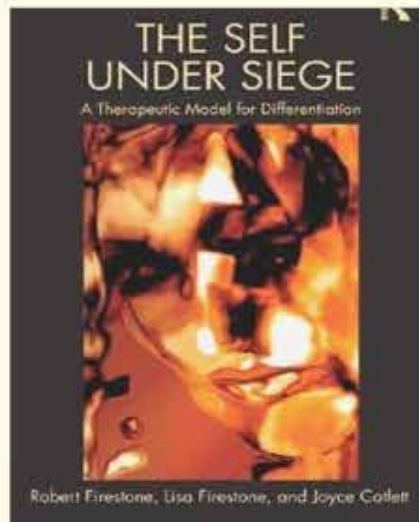
conquer your
critical
inner
voice

Learning to deal effectively with one's critical inner voice is central to all areas of life: personal development, healthy relationships, self-esteem and self-confidence, creative endeavors, and career success



**Voice
Therapy**
A Psychotherapeutic
Approach to Self-Destructive Behavior

Robert W. Firestone Ph.D.



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A top-down view of a wooden desk. In the upper left, a silver laptop is open. Below it, a white smartphone lies vertically. In the lower left, a hand holds a black pen over a white notepad. In the lower right, a white coffee cup sits on a matching saucer. A small green plant in a white pot is visible near the laptop. The background is a solid teal color with white brushstroke-like borders on the left and right sides.

Thank you!

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