

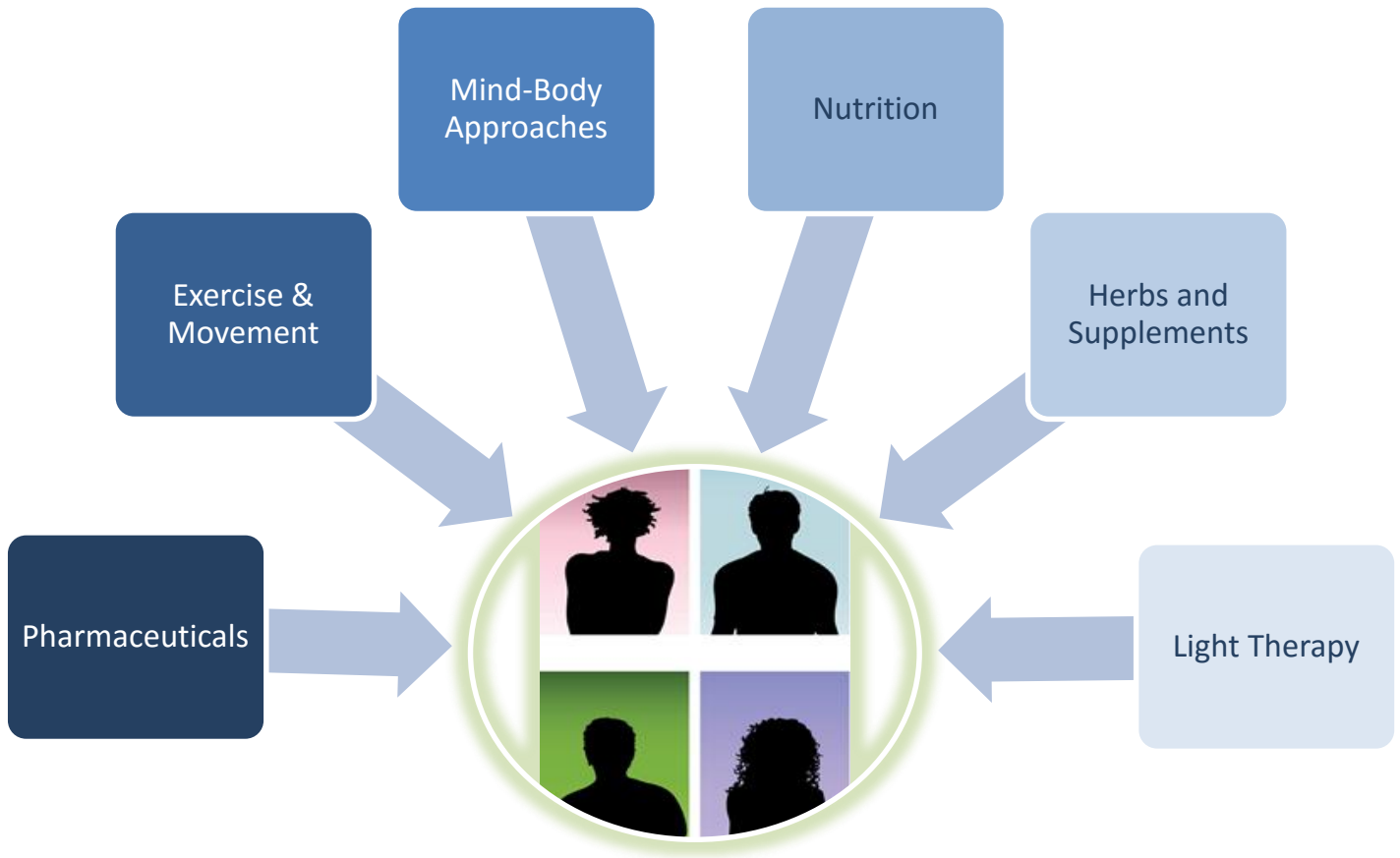
Session 7: Approaches to Depression and Challenging Communications



- Check your vitals
- Centering meditation
- Go around
- Home practice review: Challenging Communications Chart
- Health topics:
 - Approaches to Depression
 - Nutrition Spotlight: Vitamin D
- Mind-body:
 - Loving Kindness Meditation
- Review home practice assignments for coming week
- Recipe
- Healthy meal

Approaches to Depression

There are many ways to cope with depression



Any of these approaches can help improve well-being in those with depression

Adapted from: University of Wisconsin, Integrative Medicine Department

What is depression?

Depression is an illness that can interfere with a person's thoughts, feelings, behavior, and physical health. Everyone feels sad, "blue", or "down-in-the-dumps" at times. Depression is different. It can last for weeks, months, or years and greatly interfere with a person's life.

The good news is that for some people, depression can be successfully treated.

How is depression treated?

- ✓ There are many approaches and types of treatment for depression.
- ✓ The treatment prescribed will depend on the level of depression (mild, moderate, or severe)
- ✓ Lifestyle and behavior changes (examples include: exercise and movement, nutrition, mind-body approaches, supplements).
 - Prescription medication
 - Counseling/talk therapy
 - Combination of lifestyle changes and prescription medication

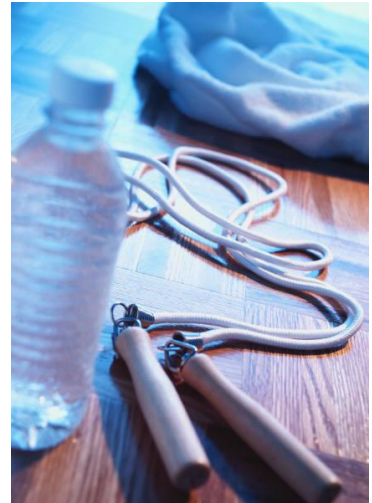
It is important to work with your health care practitioner to find the treatment that is right for you. We will focus on non-drug approaches to improving depression.



Mind-Body Approaches to Depression

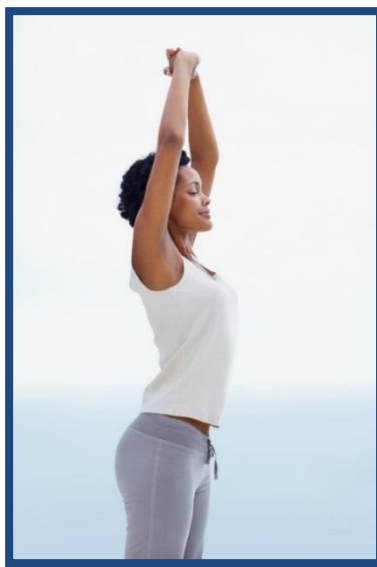
Mind-body approaches consider how the mind, spirit, body and behavior are connected to each other.

Bringing our awareness to the present moment and noticing our thoughts, feelings and sensations can have a very powerful effect on our overall well-being.



Yoga:

Yoga is a practice that unites the mind, body and spirit through a series of breathing exercises and holding various postures. There are many different styles of yoga and ways to adapt postures for everyone.



Reference:<http://www.americanयोगassociation.org/general.html>

Exercise and Movement:

Extensive research studies have shown that: “exercise enhances the action of endorphins, chemicals that circulate throughout the body.

Endorphins improve natural immunity and reduce the perception of pain. They may also serve to improve mood... How often or intensely you need to exercise to alleviate depression is not clear, but for general health, experts advise getting half an hour to an hour of moderate exercise, such as brisk walking, on all or most days of the week.” *(Special Health Report from Harvard Medical School "Understanding Depression").*



- ✓ In addition to lifting your mood, regular exercise offers many other health benefits, including;
 - Lowering blood pressure
 - Protecting against heart disease and cancer
 - Maintaining a healthy weight
 - Increasing strength and balance
 - Boosting self-esteem
- ✓ Before starting any new exercise routine it is important to consult with your health care practitioner.

Examples of helpful activities:

- **Stretching**



- **Walking** (being outside has many additional benefits)

- **Jogging**



- **Lifting weights**

- 20-30 minutes, 2-3 times a week for beginners



- **Swimming/water aerobics**



Tips:

- ✓ If you are new to exercising, begin slowly and over time increase your activity level.
- ✓ Trying different kinds of exercise can help you discover one that you will enjoy; therefore you will be more likely to continue with your practice over time.
- ✓ Group exercise can offer a fun and supportive environment for many.
- ✓ Try not to get easily discouraged: results will build slowly over time, as you develop your routine.

Other Approaches to Depression

Helping others and volunteering can build connections with others and make a difference in your community.

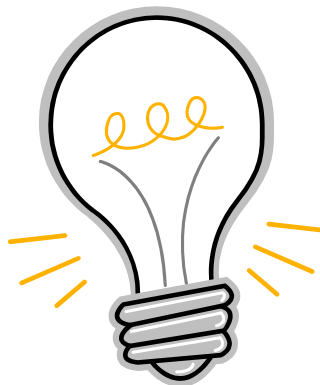
Art and Music therapy are ways of expressing thoughts through drawing, painting, clay, knitting and music, which is thought to improve moods and raise self-esteem.



Developing a **spiritual practice** can be helpful for many. This can take many different forms, uniting the individual with a sense of 'oneness' and connectedness.



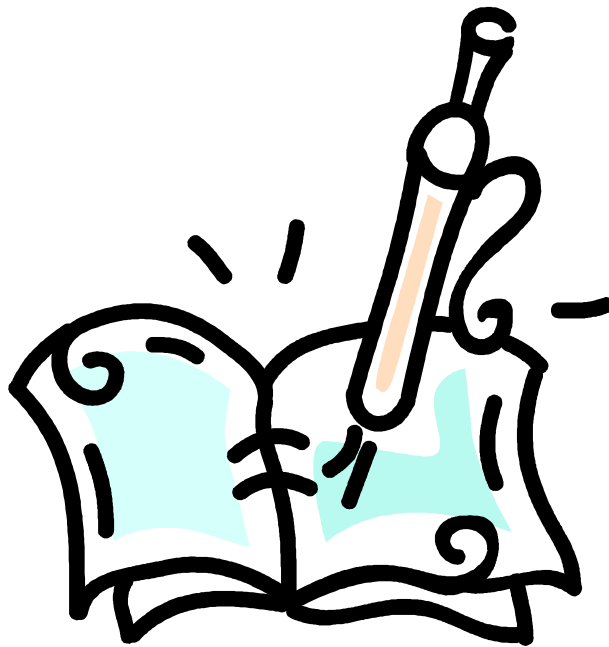
Light therapy, or phototherapy, consists of concentrated doses of light, at specific wavelengths and intensities. It is important to consult your health care provider before pursuing this therapy to see if it is the right fit for you.



Journaling:

Many individuals find that keeping a journal can be beneficial for depression. Some ways a journal may be positive:

- ✓ Can help to manage anxiety
- ✓ Can promote stress reduction
- ✓ Can help to prioritize problems, fears, and concerns
- ✓ Expressing gratitude for positive experiences throughout the day
- ✓ Can provide a space for positive self-talk
- ✓ Can be used to identify negative thoughts and behaviors



Adapted from: <http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?ContentTypeID=1&ContentID=4552p>

Food for a Happier Mind

- ✓ The food that we eat is directly related to our mood, behavior, and well-being.
- ✓ When we are stressed, we often crave foods that can make us feel worse over time.

Try to increase:

- ↑ Fruits and vegetables
- ↑ Whole grains, like brown rice, whole wheat cereals, oatmeal
- ↑ Omega 3 essential fatty acids, like fish and walnuts

Try to limit:

- ↓ Refined sugars, high fructose corn syrup, soda
 - Alternatives: honey, maple syrup, agave nectar, stevia, sparkling water with sliced fruit
- ↓ Refined carbohydrates (pastries, white bread, white rice)
 - Alternatives: whole grain bread, oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa
- ↓ Caffeine: having too much can make falling asleep harder and increase anxiety levels
 - Alternatives: herbal tea, sparkling water, fresh fruit

Nutritional supplements

The next page shows a few of the supplements which have been proven to help depression. It is recommended that we aim to get these nutrients from the food that we eat, versus in supplement form, because food offers additional minerals, vitamins, and essential nutrients that our body can absorb.



However, if we can't get these nutrients through eating diverse foods, supplements can be a good option for many. Be sure to consult your provider before taking any new supplements.

Omega-3 fatty acids

Research suggests that taking omega-3 fatty acid supplements in addition to prescribed medication may help ease the symptoms of mild depression. Strong sources include fatty fish, such as salmon; walnuts; greens; such as kale and spinach, and certain oils, like canola and soybean.

B vitamins

The body needs B vitamins, in part, to make “feel good” hormones for the body that help regulate mood. When a person does not have enough folic acid (a B vitamin), depressive symptoms are common.

B vitamins can be found in whole grains, like brown rice, greens, beans and legumes, fish, eggs, and dairy.



Image credit: Google images

Reference: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/omega-3/>

Nutrient Spotlight: Vitamin D

What is vitamin D?

- ✓ Vitamins are chemicals that your body needs for good health. They are vital for everyone to ensure that your body works well, is able to fight illness and heal well.
- ✓ Your body can make its own vitamin D from sunlight. You can also get vitamin D from supplements and a very small amount comes from a few foods you eat.



- ✓ The way that vitamins and minerals work in your body is interconnected. How well vitamin D works depends on the amount of other vitamins and minerals that are present in your body.

The other vitamins and minerals needed to help vitamin D work well are:

- *Magnesium*
- *Vitamin K*
- *Zinc*
- *Boron*
- *Vitamin A*

Why is vitamin D important?

- ✓ Vitamin D is important for good overall health and strong and healthy bones. It is also an important factor in supporting:
 - *Immune system, which helps you to fight infection*
 - *Muscle function*
 - *Cardiovascular function, for healthy heart and circulation*
 - *Anti-cancer effects*
 - *Respiratory system, for healthy lungs and airways*
 - *Brain development*



How do I get vitamin D?

- ✓ Exposure to sunlight for a short period of time
- ✓ Supplement form
- ✓ Small amounts from certain foods, including:
 - *Egg yolks*
 - *Tuna fish*
 - *Salmon*
 - *Fortified milk and orange juice*
 - *Fortified cereals*



Adapted from: vitamindcouncil.org

Loving-Kindness Meditation

Jon Kabat-Zinn

May I be safe and protected, and free from inner and outer harm.

May I be happy and contented.

May I be healthy and whole to whatever degree possible.

May I experience the ease of well-being.

May he/she/they be safe and protected, and free from inner and outer harm.

May he/she/they be happy and contented.

May he/she/they be healthy and whole to whatever degree possible.

May he/she/they experience ease of well-being.

Progression of meditation: Loved ones, neutral feelings toward others, difficult relationships, the community, etc.

May all beings, near and far be safe and protected, and free from inner and outer harm.

May all beings be happy and contented.

May all beings be healthy and whole to whatever degree possible.

May all beings experience ease of well-being.

Home Practice: Session 7



MIND-BODY PRACTICE

- Alternate practicing the body scan and yoga every other day, 6 out of 7 days
 - OWL audio: body scan and yoga
 - OWL video: yoga
- Practice loving kindness meditation, 6 out of 7 days
 - OWL audio: loving kindness meditation

DAILY LIFE PRACTICE

- Pay attention to the food you put in your body: how does your body respond?

MANUAL ACTIVITY

NONE

HEALTH TOPIC VIDEO

- Approaches to Depression

Vegetable Stir-fry with Brown Rice

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 package of extra-firm tofu, cut into 1 inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 inch of fresh ginger, minced (or 1 teaspoon of dried ginger)
- 1 yellow onion, roughly chopped
- 1 bell pepper, roughly chopped
- 2 medium-sized carrots, roughly chopped
- 1 cup of broccoli florets
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 3 cups cooked brown rice



www.marthastewart.com

***tip:** squeeze out as much water from the tofu as possible before cooking so that it browns nicely and absorbs more flavor.

***tip:** marinate the tofu overnight in the fridge or for at least a few hours to increase flavor absorption.

***tip:** add any colorful variety of vegetables that sounds delicious to you! Keep in mind cooking times of individual vegetables as you add them into the stir-fry. For example, root vegetables can take the longest time to cook, versus greens, which should be added at the very end to ensure that they retain their vital nutrients, flavor, and texture.

***tip:** frozen veggies and fruits are an equally nutritious, and often more affordable option! Choose frozen over canned because there is no added sodium to frozen vegetables, and they retain their nutrient density better.

Preparation:

1. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, garlic and ginger; stir-fry until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
2. With the heat still on medium-high, add tofu; stir-fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Add pepper, broccoli, and carrot; cook, stirring, until veggies are crisp but tender, about 3 minutes.
3. Stir in soy sauce. Serve hot over brown rice.

Health Benefits:

- ✓ Choose “smart carbs”- brown rice, and other whole grains, are loaded with feel-good vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein. They keep you fuller longer, give you sustained energy, and even contain mood-boosting properties.
- ✓ Plant foods never contain cholesterol.
- ✓ Tofu is an excellent source of protein, is low in calories, and contains compounds that prevent diseases like cancer and heart disease.