Preventing and Managing Depression and Anxiety

Presented by:
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Workshop Aims

For participants to develop a better understanding of:

❖ The signs of depression and anxiety
❖ How to recognise the signs of depression and anxiety in themselves and others
❖ Different interventions
❖ Ways of seeking further assistance
Case Study - Greg and James

For Greg, his mood was transient. After two weeks he told himself, “It’s not you; it’s the economy going through a bad patch. I’m good at what I do, and there will be a market for my skills. I just need to stick to it.”

James, by contrast, spiralled into hopelessness: “I got fired because I can’t perform under pressure,” he thought. “I’m not cut out for accounting. The economy will take years to recover. There’s nothing I can do.”
Signs of depression and anxiety
What is Depression?

 депрессия — один из самых распространенных психических заболеваний.

 один из пяти людей страдает депрессией в какой-то период своей жизни.

 около миллиона австралийцев и 100,000 молодых людей каждый год живут с депрессией.

 Beyondblue, July 2006
Signs and Symptoms

- Moodiness that is out of character
- Increased irritability and frustration
- Finding it hard to take minor personal criticisms
- Spending less time with friends and family
- Loss of interest in food, sex, exercise or other pleasurable activities
- Being awake throughout the night

- Increased alcohol and drug use
- Staying home from work or school
- Increased physical health complaints like fatigue or pain
- Being reckless or taking unnecessary risks (e.g. driving fast or dangerously)
- Slowing down of thoughts and actions
‘Normal’ vs Clinical

Normal
✦ Feel sad after loss of something/someone
✦ Have a ‘bad day’
✦ Tired from being busy
✦ Wanting ‘time out’ from family/tasks

Clinical
✦ Inability to stop crying/unpredictable tears
✦ 2 consecutive weeks of ‘bad days’
✦ Inability to get out of bed
✦ Actively avoiding social situations
Recognising the Signs in Yourself

Behaviours
- Decrease in activities
- Lack of energy and motivation - lethargy
- Unable to concentrate
- Difficulty in decision making
- Social withdrawal or dependency on people
- Agitation, restlessness or irritability
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Increased use of alcohol or sedatives

Thoughts
- “I’m a failure”
- “I’m worthless”
- “It’s all my fault”
- “Why doesn’t anyone like me?”
- “I can’t cope with this”
- “My life is out of control”
- “Why do all the bad things happen to me?”
- “Life is not worth living”
Recognising the Signs in Yourself

Feelings
- Worthlessness
- Numb
- Guilt
- Anxiety
- Dread
- Despair
- Miserable
- Indecisive
- Irritable
- Overwhelmed

Physical
- Changes in appetite or eating pattern
- Over-eating or food cravings
- Tired all the time
- Headaches and muscle pains
- Disturbed sleeping patterns
- Feeling physically ill
- Loss of interest in sexual activities
- Memory loss
Recognising the Signs in Others

- Frequent absenteeism or lateness for appointments
- Tearfulness
- Irritability or impatience with friends/family, colleagues or supervisor
- Work not getting done – everyday tasks that would normally be no problem
- Indecisiveness
- Reduced ability to concentrate – not being present in conversations, asking to repeat what you just said
- Social withdrawal – making excuses, avoidance
- Increased negativity
What is Anxiety?

- Feelings of stress that last long after the stressor has passed
- An overwhelming feeling/perception of impending doom
- Excessive worry around things that are seemingly inconsequential
Signs and Symptoms

- Hard to stop worrying
- Levels of stress/worry make it difficult to engage in everyday activities
- Feel restless or on edge – find it hard to settle
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling irritable even without an obvious trigger
- Enduring muscle pain (e.g. sore jaw or back)
- Difficulty sleeping (e.g. difficulty falling or staying asleep or restless sleep)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Clinical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nervous before a big meeting or presentation</td>
<td>Stress filled thoughts/feelings for no apparent reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety around engaging in a new activity</td>
<td>Paralysed by fear at a new activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being wary of a potentially dangerous situation</td>
<td>Avoidance of aversive triggers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a ‘bad day’</td>
<td>Inability to engage in daily tasks due to levels of anxiety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recognising the Signs in Yourself

✦ Inability to calm down or relax
✦ Enduring sleep disturbances
✦ Unable to eat due to upset stomach
✦ Not wanting to go anywhere by yourself due to fear of what might happen
✦ Doom filled thoughts of the future
✦ People telling you to ‘chill out’
Recognising the Signs in Others

🔹 Inability to relax – constant fidgeting
🔹 Seemingly preoccupied with thoughts
🔹 Excuse making at new activities and reasons given due to possible dangers
🔹 Always wanting company for innocuous activities (ie: grocery shopping)
🔹 Alarmist comments/actions
Interventions
Interventions

1. Cultivate supportive relationships
2. Taking care of themselves
3. Get regular exercise
4. Eat a healthy, mood-boosting diet
5. Challenge negative thinking
6. Spiritual practices
7. Know when to get additional help
Interventions

1. Cultivate supportive relationships
Isolation and loneliness make depression even worse, so maintaining close relationships and social activities are important. Encourage the person to:

✧ Turn to trusted friends and family members.
✧ Try to keep up with social activities even if they don’t feel like it.
✧ Join a support group
2. Taking care of themselves

In order to overcome depression and anxiety, a person needs to nurture themselves. This may include:

- Doing things they enjoy (or used to)
- Adopting healthy lifestyle habits
- Aiming for 8 hours of sleep.
- Exposing themselves to a little sunlight every day.
- Practicing relaxation techniques.
Interventions

Fight depression by managing stress
Not only does stress prolong and worsen depression, but it can also trigger it.

Ways of minimising and coping with stress include:

- Identifying stressors and then trying to minimise their impact
- Going easy on yourself – tackling perfectionist traits
- Plan ahead – attempt to identify and avoid risky situations
Interventions

3. Get regular exercise

✧ Exercise is a powerful tool for dealing with depression. In fact, studies show that regular exercise can be as effective as antidepressant medication.

✧ Evidence suggests that physical activity increases mood-enhancing neurotransmitters in the brain, raises endorphins, reduces stress, and relieves muscle tension.

✧ To get the most benefit, aim for 30 minutes of exercise per day. Even short 10-minute bursts of activity can have a positive effect on mood.
Interventions

4. Eat a healthy, mood-boosting diet

What a person eats has a direct impact on the way they feel. Aim for a balanced diet of protein, complex carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables. Also:

✧ Don’t neglect breakfast or skip meals.
✧ Minimise sugar and refined carbs.
✧ Focus on complex carbohydrates.
✧ Boost B vitamins.
✧ Omega-3 fatty acids - They play an essential role in stabilising mood.
Interventions

5. Challenge negative thinking

- Depression puts a negative spin on everything, including the way a person sees themselves, the situations they encounter, and their expectations for the future.
- But a person can’t break out of this pessimistic mind frame by “just thinking positive.” Rather, the trick is to replace negative thoughts with more balanced thoughts.
5. Challenge negative thinking (Cont’d)

Particularly unhelpful thinking styles include:

- Internalising the cause of a negative event ("It’s all my fault")
- Having a negative self image ("I’m not good enough"/"I can’t cope")
- Being pessimistic ("There’s no hope")
- Externalising the source of the solution ("There’s nothing I can do"
5. Challenge negative thinking (Cont’d)

Ways to challenge negative thinking:

✧ **Think outside yourself.** Ask the person whether they would say what they’re thinking about themselves to someone else. If not, encourage them to not be so hard on themselves.

✧ **Keep a “negative thought log”.** Whenever a person experiences a negative thought, write down the thought and what triggered it in a notebook. Review the log when a person is in a good mood. Consider if the negativity was truly warranted.

✧ **Ask, “What’s the evidence for it?”**. Reviewing the negative thought log, the person can be encouraged to take a different perspective by asking such questions as, “What’s the evidence for that?”, “If a friend thought like that, what would you say to them?”.
Interventions

6. Spiritual practices

- Spiritual beliefs can also help to prevent or promote recovery from depression.

- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is effective for individuals with recurrent depression.

- Neurobiological studies have found that it has an effect on the part of the brain known as the *anterior cingulate* which acts as a buffer against intrusive images and emotions from the *amygdala*.

- The principle component of this therapy is daily meditation practice, characterised by breathing, staying relaxed and focused attention.
7. Know when to get additional help

- If the person’s depression is getting worse, (i.e. express suicidal thoughts, engage in self-harming or excessive substance misuse), encourage them to seek further professional help.
- GPs are able to prescribe antidepressants and/or refer the person to cognitive therapy.
Details for further assistance
OnTrack Website
OnTrack aims to support people achieve mental and physical health and wellbeing. OnTrack offers free access to online programs, information, quizzes and advice for a wide range of difficulties.

Website: www.ontrack.org.au
Interventions for alcohol misuse

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/alcohol_abuse_alcoholism_help_treatment_prevention.htm
### Seeking Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SANE Help Line</td>
<td>1800 187 263 Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm EST</td>
<td>For people with problems and their carers. Information, where to go for support. Email helpline (reply in 3 working days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.sane.org">http://www.sane.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>beyondblue</td>
<td>1300 22 4636 <a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">http://www.beyondblue.org.au</a></td>
<td>For people with depression or anxiety, and for people wanting to support them. Information and how to get help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Clinical Interventions</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au">www.cci.health.wa.gov.au</a></td>
<td>Self-help programs that individuals can work through at their own pace for a range of problems.</td>
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<td>Mensline Australia</td>
<td>1300 789 978 24 hours, 7 days</td>
<td>For men with family or relationship concerns</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.menslineaus.org.au">www.menslineaus.org.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifeline</td>
<td>13 11 14 24 hours, 7 days</td>
<td>For distress or other mental health issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Help Line</td>
<td>1800 551 800 24 hours, 7 days</td>
<td>For young people 5 to 25 years old Web, email counselling also available</td>
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Seeking Help

Or visit the OnTrack website for an extensive list of organisations that provide assistance:

Self Help Books

Self Help Books

Thank You for Your Time