

Week 1: What is Depression?

Week 1/Video 1: Depression & the Downward Spiral

Welcome to Week One of Virtual Getting Unstuck. In this section we will cover the basics of what depression is, we'll introduce the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Model of Depression, and we'll end by discussing how directing our energy toward basic self-care activities can help us start to push back on depressive symptoms.

Let's start by considering the differences between sadness and depression. Often, we use these terms interchangeably, but they are actually quite different.

Sadness:

- Is a normal, painful, response to challenging life events.
- Usually passes when the challenging event passes.
- Is something we all experience at some point in our lives.

Whereas Depression:

- May or may not include feelings of sadness.
- Is a more persistent experience.
- Includes a cluster of symptoms.
- May or may not arise out of a painful experience, so a person might not identify a reason for symptoms.

When we discuss depression, there are a number of depressive disorders that we could be referring to. If you would like to learn more information about them, I encourage you to take some time after or between sessions to review **page 40** in the Getting Unstuck workbook attached next to this video.

When we experience depression it is common for our brain to get focused on the negative – the negative of ourselves, our future, our world. We often start to feel overwhelmed and our depression continues to cause us to block out any positives about ourselves or our lives. Many people start to feel hopeless and like nothing they can do will make a difference. It can feel like you're in an avalanche of one bad thing after another.

Part of our goal is to begin separating out that big mess of symptoms, so that we can find ways to better manage them. So how do we do that?