
Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Unemployed Individuals:

Scope of the Problem and Testing Evidence-Based Strategies-Part 1

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National Institute of Health Notice of Special Interest

- NOT-MH-21-230: Research on Strategies to Enhance Mental Health Interventions and Services within Employment and Job Training Settings
- The purpose of this Notice of Special Interest (NOSI) is to encourage research focused on detection and intervention to prevent or treat mental health concerns, symptoms or disorders including drug-related conditions among unemployed and underemployed people participating in employment programs and job training settings.
- Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, the sharp rise and potentially long duration of unemployment raises concerns about the development and worsening of mental health symptoms and disorders, drug use behaviors, and suicide risk and necessitates further research to confirm the efficacy or demonstrate effectiveness of strategies in this area.
- Issued by:
 - National Institute of Mental Health
 - National Institute on Drug Abuse

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Polling Question 1

Which best describes your professional role? Check all that apply.

- Mental Health Provider
- Mental Health Researcher
- Workforce Development
- Workforce Researcher
- Other

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Unemployment and Mental Health: The COVID Context & Research Insights

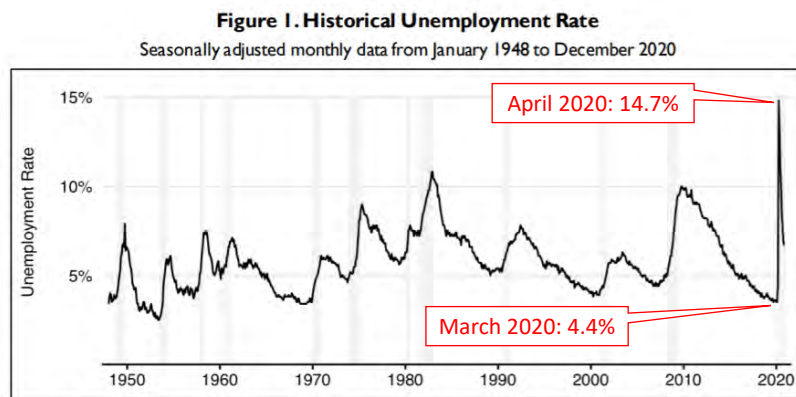
Rajeev Ramchand, Ph.D.

APA Webinar
April 28, 2021



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April 2020 – the largest increase in unemployment since data collection began



Source: Created by CRS using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Notes: Shaded regions indicate recessionary periods as identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

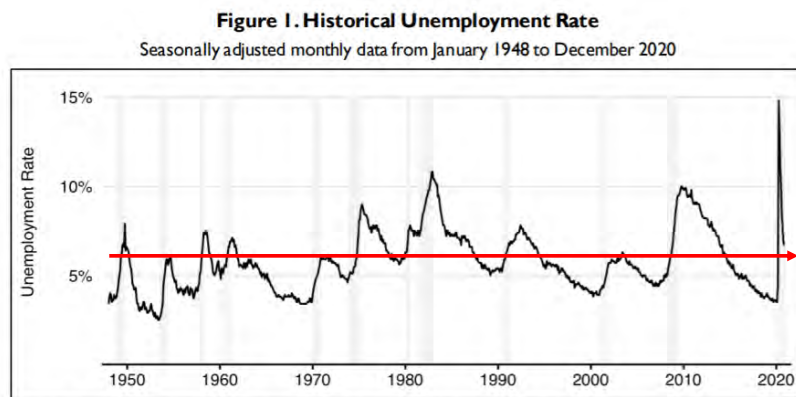
CRS: Congressional Research Service

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Unemployment >6% predicted until 2024



Source: Created by CRS using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Notes: Shaded regions indicate recessionary periods as identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

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See CRS Insight IN11460, *COVID-19: How Quickly Will Unemployment Recover?*, by Lida R. Weinstock



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Unemployment Rates Varied

By State

Unemployment >8% in CA, CT, DC, HI, NV, NM, & NY (2/21)



⁷ All data from Congressional Research Service: *Unemployment Rates during the COVID-19 Pandemic: In Brief* (Updated January 2021) - <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R46554.pdf>



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By Gender

Unemployment rates increased more for women



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By Gender

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By Age Group

Unemployment rates increased more for workers <25

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Unemployment rates were higher for Black workers and took longer to improve for Black and Asian workers

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By Ethnicity

Unemployment rates were higher for Hispanic workers

¹¹ All data from Congressional Research Service: *Unemployment Rates during the COVID-19 Pandemic: In Brief* (Updated January 2021) - <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R46554.pdf>



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By Race

Unemployment rates were higher for Black workers and took longer to improve for Black and Asian workers

By Ethnicity

Unemployment rates were higher for Hispanic workers

By Educational Attainment

Unemployment rates were higher for those with < HS or college degree

¹² All data from Congressional Research Service: *Unemployment Rates during the COVID-19 Pandemic: In Brief* (Updated January 2021) - <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R46554.pdf>

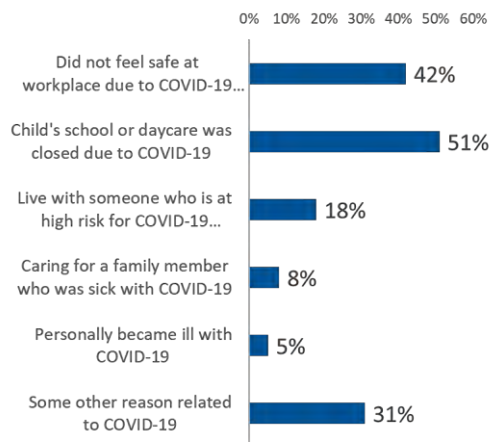


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School or Daycare Closure May Contribute to Job Departures

8%
of women reported
quitting their job
for a reason related
to COVID

Among mothers who quit their jobs:



13 Ranji et al, Kaiser Family Foundation Women's Health Survey, 2021



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COVID's Impact on Businesses



Nearly two-thirds of small business owners are concerned about COVID's impact on mental health – a primary worry is paying fixed operating costs
MetLife & US Chamber of Commerce, 12/15/2020
Neu et al., 2020



75% of small businesses have cash on hand totaling <2 months of expenses
Bartik et al., 2020



As of August 2020, 163,735 businesses that were open in March 2020 had closed
YEA Report, Sept 2020

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(Lack of) equity in Paycheck Protection Program

FIGURE 3 PPP LOAN COVERAGE IN TOP 10 U.S. COUNTIES BY BLACK BUSINESS RECEIPTS

County	Total black-owned firms (2012)	Total number of firms (2012)	Total number of PPP loans (through June 2020)	PPP firm coverage (PPP loans/ Total firms)
Los Angeles County, CA	81,563	1,146,701	176,434	15.4%
Cook County, IL	110,155	549,686	84,256	15.3%
Harris County, TX	71,564	438,793	70,058	16.0%
Prince George's County, MD	45,115	77,204	9,420	12.2%
Wayne County, MI	59,706	151,746	17,610	11.6%
District of Columbia, DC	22,097	63,408	12,484	19.7%
Fairfax County, VA	8,832	115,917	17,921	15.5%
Manhattan, NY	24,859	315,399	61,687	19.6%
Fulton County, GA	44,574	125,745	26,189	20.8%
Miami-Dade County, FL	51,285	468,185	70,447	15.0%

County-level PPP loan counts are calculated based on aggregated zip code data. In cases where zip codes match to multiple counties, the county with the highest share of that zip code's business addresses is used.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Survey of Business Owners; U.S. Department of the Treasury, SBA Paycheck Protection Program Loan Level Data (through June 2020).

National average=17.7%

From: Mills and Battisto, 2020:
https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/smallbusiness/DoubleJeopardy_COVID19andBlackOwnedBusinesses



Job loss affect mental health: The (Pre-Pandemic) evidence



Across cohort studies, job loss has increased risk for depressive symptoms
Berchick et al., 2012; Riumallo-Herl et al., 2014



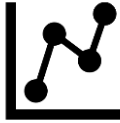
In a nationally-representative US study, job loss in the past year was positively associated with subsequent:

- average daily alcohol consumption,
- frequency of binge drinking,
- probability of alcohol abuse and dependence

Popovici & French, 2013



Is job loss associated with increased suicide risk?



Ecological studies (correlating changing unemployment rate with changing suicide rate) have produced mixed results

Using data from 1928 to 2007, a 1% increase in unemployment was associated with a 1% to 1.3% increase in suicide rates

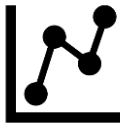
Luo et al., 2011

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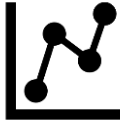
Reeves et al., 2012
Phillips & Nugent, 2014

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Reeves et al., 2012
Phillips & Nugent, 2014

Using data from 2007-2009, one study found no association with suicide rates

Harper & Bruckner, 2017

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The association between job loss and suicide is likely affected by certain factors



Geography (State)
Phillips & Nugent, 2014



Duration of unemployment
Laanani et al., 2015



Differing baseline risk
among those affected



Magnitude of change in
unemployment
Classen & Dunn, 2012



Availability of benefits
Cylus et al., 2014



Pre-recession trends
Harper & Bruckner, 2017

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However, there may be reasons to be cautious of extrapolating from the past



The magnitude of change in April 2020 was unlike any monthly change in unemployment in recent US history



Not all individuals were similarly affected with varying baseline levels of suicide risk



Industries affected by COVID-19 are different than those affected in previous recessions: e.g., during the Great Recession service occupation employment grew, but during COVID, unemployment is concentrated among workers last employed in service industries

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Mitigating mental distress associated with job loss



Mental Health in unemployment settings



Provide useful tips to those who have experienced job loss, from the importance of self-care to available resources



Reduce the “cost” of job loss



Support employees who are struggling

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A Multisite Systems Intervention for Unemployed Persons with Social Anxiety Disorder – A Method for Treating Mental Disorders in Vocational Service Centers

Joseph A. Himle, Ph.D., Michelle G. Craske, Ph.D.

NIMH 1R01MH102263
NIMH 1R01MH102274
NIMH 1R34MH083031

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Almost every new mental
health intervention is
designed, developed and
tested in middle class,
educated, majority
communities

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Why not in an urban-based
center with underserved,
impoverished, multi-problem
participants...

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It takes more effort
It is seen as a risk
It is unfamiliar
It requires cooperation

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What Could We Gain?

- Intervention fits well with study population
- Innovations that come from the study populations that may be useful for many persons with mental health-related work impairments

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Primary Study Goals

- Design, develop and test a vocationally focused, sustainable, intervention for unemployed for persons with Social Anxiety Disorder in a Multisite RO1

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Additional Study Goals

- Learn about the range of psychiatric problems present among consumers at vocational service settings
- Evaluate the feasibility of offering evidence-supported mental health services delivered by vocational service professionals in vocational service setting

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Social Anxiety Disorder

- SocAD involves fear and avoidance of certain social or performance situations like going on a job interview, giving a speech, or meeting new people
- 12.1% of the general population will meet criteria for SocAD in their lifetime (Kessler et al., 2005)
- SocAD negatively affects social relationships, role functioning, activities, overall well being and... WORK

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Social Anxiety and Work

➤ Individuals with SocAD report:

- Reduced work productivity
- Increased absences
- Reduced work performance
- Problems in school (e.g., dropout)

(Davidson et al., 1993; Magee et al., 1996; Mogotsi et al., 2000; Schneier et al., 1994; Stein & Kean, 2000)

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Why Might Social Anxiety Interfere with Employment?

- Avoidance of job interviews
- Few friends to provide job leads
- Poor performance in job interviews
- Problems forming strong relationships at work which can protect against job loss
- Avoid telling superiors/coworkers about problems and successes
- Embarrassment regarding unemployment
- Lower educational attainment
- Growing service-based economy in U.S.

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What About Other Mental Health Conditions

- Depression (Adler et al., 2006).
- Substance use disorders (Frone et al. 2006)
- ADHD (Adamou et al., 2013)

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Our First Intervention Project

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Work Related CBT for Unemployed Persons With Social Anxiety Disorder (WCBT) – A Pilot Study NIMH 1R34MH083031

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Behaviour Research and Therapy 63 (2014) 169–176

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Behaviour Research and Therapy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/brat

ELSEVIER

Shorter communication

Work-related CBT versus vocational services as usual for unemployed persons with social anxiety disorder: A randomized controlled pilot trial

Joseph A. Himle ^{a,*}, Deborah Bybee ^b, Edward Steinberger ^c, Wayne T. Lavolette ^c, Addie Weaver ^a, Sarah Vlnka ^a, Zipora Golenberg ^c, Debra Siegel Levine ^a, Richard G. Heimberg ^d, Lisa A. O'Donnell ^d

^a University of Michigan, USA
^b Michigan State University, USA
^c Jewish Vocational Services, Detroit, USA
^d Temple University, USA

CrossMark

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Study Site

- Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), Detroit Michigan
- Primary clientele are economically disadvantaged, African Americans

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WCBT – Initial Screening

- Screen all clients at JVS for SocAD using MINI-SPIN (Connor, et al., 2001)
- Rates of screen positive
 - 24% (Detroit site)
 - 32% (Southfield site)

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WCBT - Intervention

- Begin with existing group cognitive-behavioral treatment (CBT) for social anxiety (Heimberg & Becker, 2002)
- CBT for SocAD involves:
 - Gradual exposure to anxiety provoking situations
 - Cognitive restructuring

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Building an Intervention

- Review existing treatment manuals
- Innovate to fit vocational setting and work focus
- Site visit to Baltimore – JOBS program (Vinokur et al., 1995)
- Input from consultants
- Semi-structured interviews with JVS clients and staff
- Pilot groups with in-vivo adjustments and post-group focus interviews

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WCBT - Intervention

- Current providers at JVS lead WCBT
- Offered as one of several classes in an average day of JVS programming
- Two 2-hour sessions/week over 4 weeks

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Design

- Experiment:
 - WCBT + Vocational Services (N=29)
 - Vocational Services alone (N=29)

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Sample Characteristics

- 58 Participants
- 86% African American/Black, 10% White
- 67% Men
- 60% At Least High School Education
- Homeless
- 44 mean age in years
- High levels of psychiatric comorbidity

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Results

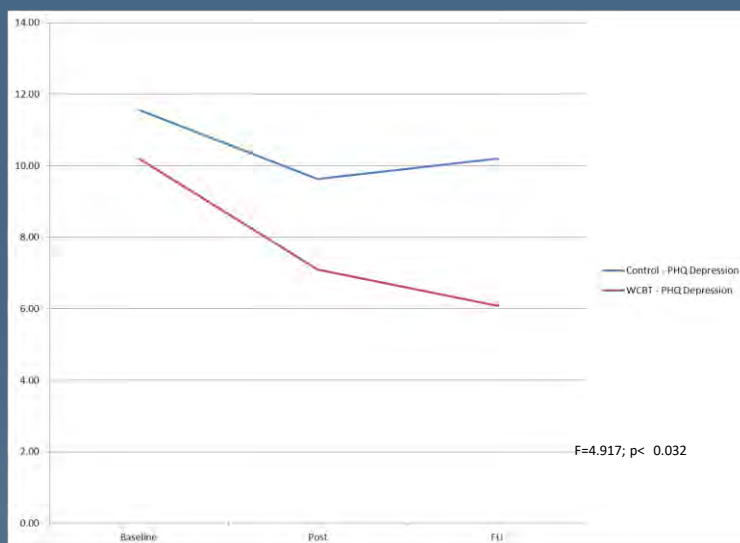
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Social Anxiety Score Total



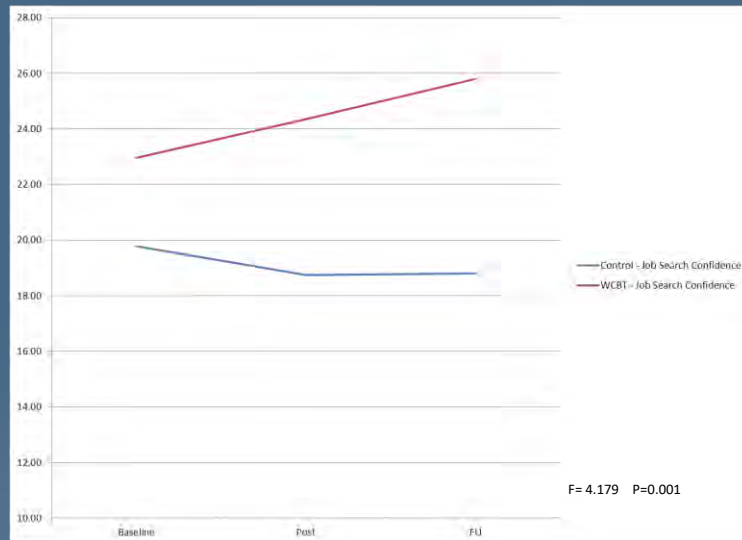
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PHQ - Depression



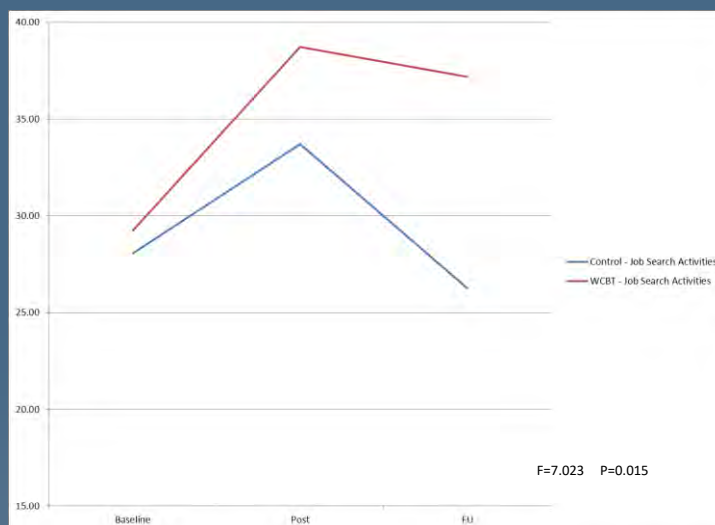
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Job Search Confidence



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Job Search Activities



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Attendance and Fidelity

- Only three (10%) dropped out of WCBT
- All of the remaining 26 attended at least five sessions, meeting criteria for completion
- Mean sessions attended 7.38 (SD=0.98)
- Modified Treatment Adherence Scale for SAD score of 4.23 (SD=0.66), which is above protocol threshold of 4

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Step Two...

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Current Project

➤ NIMH 1R01MH102263 - *A Multi-site Systems Intervention for Unemployed Persons with Social Anxiety*

(J. Himle, PI – U of Michigan; M. Craske, PI - UCLA)

- Increase sample size (n=300)
- Increase diversity – race/ethnicity/region
- Extend follow-up to one year
- Computer assisted treatment delivery and group leader training
- Implementation methods

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Study Aims

1. Evaluate effects of WCBT vs VSAI on employment, mental health and functioning
2. Evaluate whether improvements in social anxiety mediate effects of WCBT upon employment-related outcomes
3. Explore moderators of WCBT (e.g., site, race/ethnicity, education, prior work experience, medication status and comorbid depression)

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Study Aims (cont.)

4. Describe uptake of WCBT across multiple sites, including agency and employer acceptance of WCBT and incremental costs associated with WCBT training, delivery, and maintenance

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Our Community Partners JVS Detroit – JVS Los Angeles



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Key Intervention Modifications

- Computer-Assisted Delivery
 - e-outline to guide session
 - Video for key concepts
 - Charts/worksheets/etc.
- Updated exposure therapy approach
 - Inhibitory retrieval model
 - Cognitive restructuring reinforces exposure-based learning

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A Look Inside the Intervention

- CBT Basics
 - Negative cycle of anxiety (Session 1)
- Key Work-Related Interventions
 - Finding Your Strengths (Session 6)
 - Strength slips and sharing
 - Sharing weakness
 - Turning weaknesses into strengths
 - Self-Defeating Behavior at Work (Session 4)
 - Responding strategically to unfair treatment and disrespect in the workplace
 - Mock interviews via computer

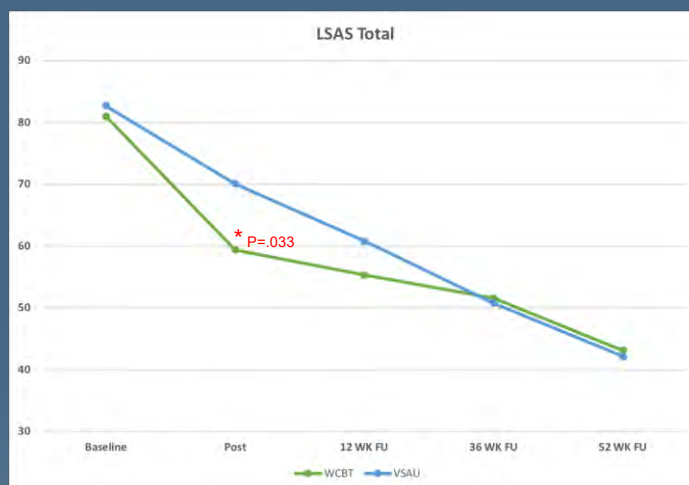
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Study Sample

- 250 Participants Randomized
- 40% Men
- 41% African American/Black, 36% White, 23% Other
- 86% High School Education or more
- 44 mean age in years
- High levels of psychiatric comorbidity

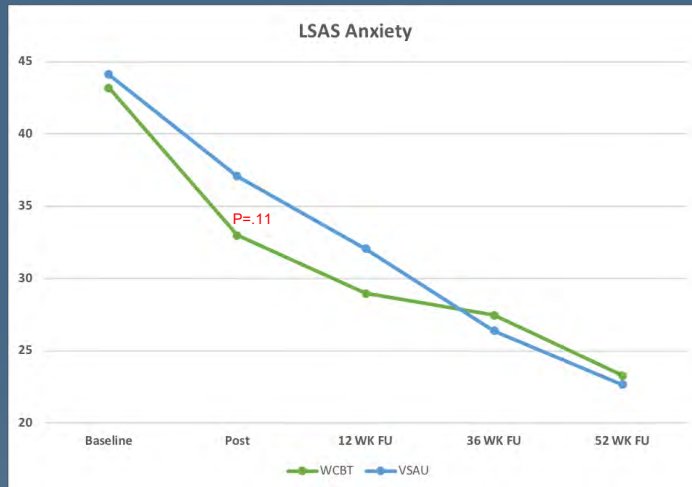
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Study Results – LSAS (Total) from Baseline to 52 Weeks



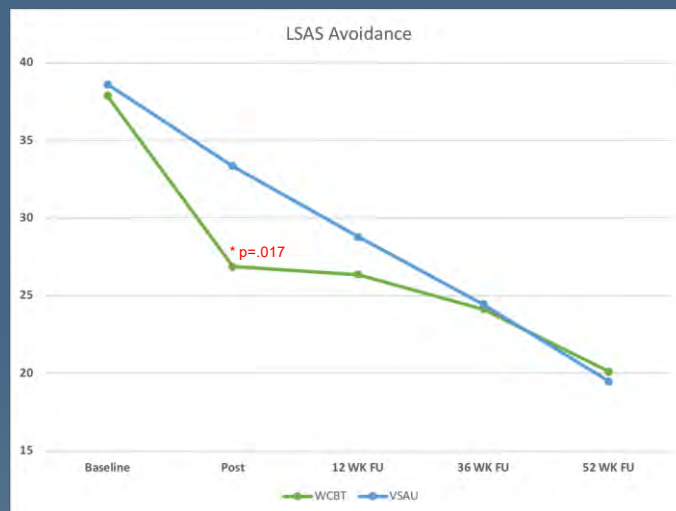
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Study Results – LSAS (Anxiety) from Baseline to 52 Weeks



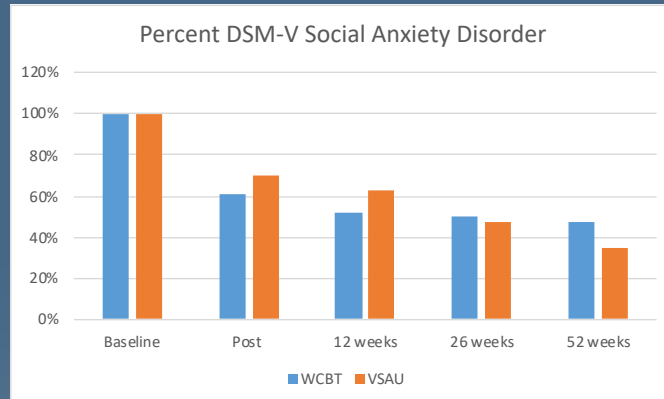
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Study Results – LSAS (Avoidance) Drop from Baseline to 52 Weeks



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Social Anxiety Diagnosis (MINI)



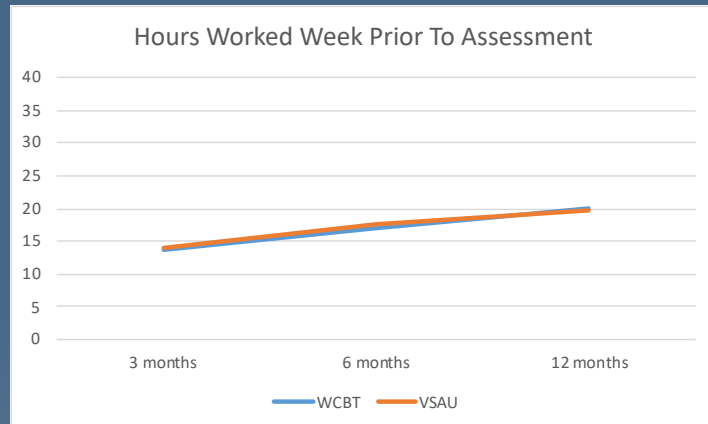
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Study Results – PHQ-9 from Baseline to 52 Weeks



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Study Results – Hours Worked Last Week



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Key Lessons Learned Community-Based RCT

- Potential reasons for improvement in VSAU
 - Job attainment
 - JVS service use
 - Access to resources
 - External services provided to homeless populations in Detroit

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Key Lessons Learned Community-Based RCT

- Turn over/transfer of group leaders
- Some potential leaders not motivated or do not have basic skills required
- Need for efficient cross-site training
- Changes in JVS programming & location
- Changes in participant flow for group enrollment

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Key Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Keeping community partners engaged
- Departure of site champions
- Economy can affect enrollment and attrition while waiting to form groups
- Many people with substantial mental health problems seeking help at vocational service centers

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Key Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Can deliver work-related mental health interventions in vocational service settings
- Vocational service professionals enjoy delivering WCBT – Computer Assistance Helpful
- Potential Distribution Conduits
 - JVS Agencies in US (58)
 - American Job Center Network (2400+)

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Take Home Points for Mental Health Clinicians

- CBT can be supplemented with job-related psychoeducational content
- CBT exercises can be tailored to fit the workplace
- Computer assisted models are likely a good route for mental health clinicians

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Our Investigative Team

- Joseph Himle, Ph.D., U of Michigan, Principal Investigator
- Michelle Craske, Ph.D., UCLA Principal Investigator
- Richard LeBeau, Ph.D. UCLA Co-Investigator, UCLA
- Addie Weaver, Ph.D., Co-Investigator, University of Michigan
- Amy Kilbourne, Ph.D., Co-investigator, University of Michigan
- Raphael Rose, Ph.D., UCLA Co-Investigator

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Thank You

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Polling Question 2

How confident would you be guiding an individual to unemployment services (e.g. Job Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, etc.)?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident

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Polling Question 3

If you are a mental health provider, what intervention strategies do you use to address unemployment issues for your clients? Check all that apply.

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Problem solving therapy
- Interpersonal therapy
- Supportive therapy
- Case management (making calls, helping with referrals)
- Other
- Not applicable

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