

## A Short Review of Factors and Interventions for Reducing Depression

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### Mini Review

Volume 1 Issue 1

**Received Date:** July 19, 2017

**Published Date:** August 10, 2017

### Abstract

This short review of some factors and interventions for reducing depression is focused on the role of multiple agents and activities in different kinds of relationships and various types of environment. It aims to reveal the complex co-action of such factors, not to point out the primary importance of one or few of them. Some research findings regarding the efficiency of some psychotherapeutic, school, family, community and activity-focused interventions for recovery from depression are described and summarized.

**Keywords:** Depression; Intervention; Recovery

### Introduction

Early diagnostics and detection of depression is important for facilitating treatment efforts for many kinds of illnesses, because it has been found that depression comorbidity diminishes longevity in the case of some somatic diseases [1]. Screening for depression could help children and adolescents benefit from care by mental health specialists [2]. Satisfactory communication of doctors and other mental health specialists with patients and their relatives could contribute to diminished levels of depression [3], so its improvement is important.

Medical staff's good communication skills contribute to placebo effect for treatment of depression creating a positive attitude in patients. It has been established that taking pill placebo is effective in treatment of depression, almost as well as taking antidepressants [4-6]. Placebo effect for successful treatment of depression could be explained by hope and the expectations of improvement, belief in given support by an expert, and a healing ritual [4,5]. Cross-over research design (the same patients

received both medication and placebo at different time periods) also indicated the efficacy of placebo treatment for depression, not only of antidepressants [7-9], as the studies with a parallel control group receiving placebo did [6,8].

Treatment of depression is complex. It includes some medicines, psychotherapy, training, and the possible changes of the way of life and the environment [10,11].

Even Aromatherapy has been applied for diminishing depressive symptoms and it has been found that some flower essences (such as Chestnut, Chicory, and Wild Rose) may facilitate recovery of mild depression [12].

Different types of psychotherapy could be effective for recovering depression – individual and group therapy, Cognitive Behavioural therapy, music therapy, relaxation training, school and family focused interventions such as

increasing knowledge about depression, providing family support, etc. [10,13].

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is effective for treatment of depression [14-16]. Some studies have been focused on comparing CBT and other therapies, and superiority of CBT has been proved, is evident for depressive disorders [17].

The group music therapy, rhythm and movement training, relaxation training and painting training are effective for diminishing depression [18]. Active group inclusion, talk and sharing diminish the levels of depression [15] that could be efficiently practiced in the school environment.

School-focused interventions may be more effective for boys; family-focused interventions may be more beneficial for girls for diminishing depression [19]. A 3-hour curriculum to teach high school students about the illness of depression was effective on increasing their knowledge about depression and decreasing morbidity, mortality, and stigma associated with adolescent depression [20].

Improving cognitive functioning (information processing speed, attention control, short term memory, learning and cognitive planning, sensory discrimination) is important for diminishing the negative effects from depression [21,22]. Self-expression by means of overt and assertive behaviour, as well as self-realization give the possibilities for students' improved cognitive functioning in the academic environment [23], and aesthetic experiences in the learning process also contribute to positive emotions and further development of cognitive functioning by means of complex processing of information [24].

Negative emotional states, including depression, could be reduced by means of improving satisfaction from the learning process and from the relationships between the participants in the learning process [25]. Interventions focused on diminishing anxiety, neuroticism (for example by meeting one's expectancies) and psychoticism (developing empathy and altruism), as well as on increasing extraversion (better communication, social support) could be effective for diminishing depression throughout the whole school year [13]. Motivating students, participating in more extra-curriculum activities related to students' plans for further realisation in universities and workplace would be useful for diminishing students' depression [13]. Positive

reappraisal and planning are related with low levels of depression [26].

Spending time on preferred activities could enhance positive emotions and diminish depression [13], especially self-chosen activities whose proportion varies cross-culturally [27]. Moderate physical activity and exercise are important in preventing depression [28,29]. Sports practice could reduce negative emotional states [30].

Active civic participation increases the interest in communication with diverse individuals, groups and communities that may improve the relationships and emotional state [31]. Internet use (using social networks and instant messaging) is associated with decreased levels of depression in adolescents [32]. Social identities and social identification provide meaning to life, encourage the provision and receipt of social support, facilitate positive social influence, and engender a sense of belongingness and community that all protect against depression [33].

Positive parent-adolescent relationships provoke more positive self-assessment in adolescents and reduce the risk of adolescents' depression [34]. Decrease of mothers' rumination and increase of mothers' forgiveness can be efficient in diminishing adolescents' depression [35]. One of the protective factors for depression is social support [36].

Improving emotion recognition and social functioning (romantic relationships, communication, motivation, and social support) could diminish depression [37-39]. Prevention of depression is assisted by means of enhancing self-esteem, independence and autonomy in making one's choices [13]. Higher self-esteem negatively correlated with depression [40].

There are different possibilities for diminishing depression. Different factors have been described that may complement each other for diminishing depression. Besides, Mental Health & Human Resilience International Journal (MHRIJ) gives the possibility for disseminating useful scientific information regarding mental diseases increasing in such a way human resilience against such diseases and contributing to good mental health condition.

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