



TREATMENTS THAT WORK

Self-System Therapy for Depression

CLIENT WORKBOOK

KARI M. EDDINGTON
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OXFORD



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One of the most difficult problems confronting patients with various disorders and diseases is finding the best help available. Everyone is aware of friends or family who have sought treatment from a seemingly reputable practitioner, only to find out later from another doctor that the original diagnosis was wrong or the treatments recommended were inappropriate or perhaps even harmful. Most patients, or family members, address this problem by reading everything they can about their symptoms, seeking out information on the Internet or aggressively “asking around” to tap knowledge from friends and acquaintances. Governments and health care policymakers are also aware that people in need do not always get the best treatments—something they refer to as *variability in health care practices*.

Now health care systems around the world are attempting to correct this variability by introducing *evidence-based practice*. This simply means that it is in everyone’s interest that patients get the most up-to-date and effective care for a particular problem. Health care policymakers have also recognized that it is very useful to give consumers of health care as much information as possible, so that they can make intelligent decisions in a collaborative effort to improve physical health and mental health. This series, *Treatments That Work*, is designed to accomplish just that. Only the latest and most effective interventions for particular problems are described in user-friendly language. To be included in this series, each treatment program must pass the highest standards of evidence available, as determined by a scientific advisory board. Thus, when individuals suffering from these problems, or their family members, seek out an expert clinician who is familiar with these interventions and decides that they are appropriate, patients will have confidence they are receiving the best care available. Of course, only your health care professional can decide on the right mix of treatments for you.

This particular program presents the first evidence-based psychological treatment for depression that focuses on correcting problems with self-regulation. Self-regulation involves the process of setting personal goals and being able to reach them—that is, striving to be the kind of person

you want to be. Problems with self-regulation, such as when you negatively evaluate yourself and don't reevaluate your goals or behavior, can result in depression. Thus, Self-System Therapy (SST), as outlined in this treatment, targets improving the process of self-regulation, thereby decreasing feelings of self-disappointment and increasing self-satisfaction to relieve depression symptoms. This Workbook, to be used in conjunction with your treatment provider, provides a description of SST in simple terms with helpful worksheets and exercises.

David H. Barlow, Editor-in-Chief,
Treatments *ThatWork*
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Self-System Therapy for Depression

What Is Depression?

Depression is among the most common mental health problems in the world. Most people can describe times when have felt down or “blue,” but these experiences are often mild and temporary. Anyone who has been diagnosed with depression by a psychologist or medical doctor knows that feeling a little down is nothing compared with the unrelenting sadness and hopelessness of clinical depression. You are not alone. The World Health Organization estimates that 350 million people worldwide suffer from depression. The rate for women is almost double the rate for men.

Your therapist has probably asked you many questions about the problems you have been having and how long you have had them. You might have discussed with your therapist what it means to be diagnosed with depression, including what the differences are between just feeling down and being clinically depressed. The following is a checklist of symptoms that define clinical depression (also called major depressive disorder), and many of them may be familiar to you:

- ✓ Feeling sad, depressed, or irritable
- ✓ Loss of interest or pleasure in things that you would normally enjoy if you were not depressed
- ✓ Change in sleep (i.e., sleeping too much or too little)
- ✓ Gaining or losing a significant amount of weight
- ✓ Loss of energy or feeling tired
- ✓ Difficulties concentrating or making simple decisions