

Review of the book »Advances in Psychotherapy«

Evidence-Based Practice

Depression (Volume 18)

By Lynn P. Rehm

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This latest volume in the series *Advances in Psychotherapy – Evidence-Based Practice* is a concise »how-to-do« book, authoritative and user friendly at the same time. From professional clinician to student this is a practical resource book, at each stage referring the reader to relevant studies and their findings while taking him through the central issues of diagnosis and treatment of depression. Depression is the fourth largest global disease based on years lived with disability as ranked by the World Health Organisation and one of the most frequent problems seen in psychotherapy.

Dr. Lynn P. Rehm, PhD, ABPP, recently retired from the Department of Psychology at the University of Houston after 30 years as Professor. His research and clinical interests centre around the psychopathology and treatment of depression. He has published widely on his self-management treatment program for depression and on psychotherapy for depression generally. Dr Rehm continues to be active professionally and is currently President of the Division of Clinical and Community Psychology of the International Association of Applied Psychology.

The book consists of four chapters. Chapter One: *Description* includes a full presentation of terminology and definitions that are primarily taken from DSM-IV-TR and from ICD. It explains the diagnostic criteria, subtypes and specifiers that inform our understanding of depression. A section on epidemiology considers the relevance of age and gender, and is followed by further sections examining prognosis and different diagnostic procedures and documentation.

Chapter Two: *Theories and Models of the Disorder* presents various theories and understandings of depression, such as biological that sees depression as having somatic origins; psychodynamic models that describes depression as a disruption of the grieving process; interpersonal psychotherapy that focuses on unresolved interpersonal problems; behavioural and cognitive models and others. Dr. Rehm's own self-management model emphasises deficits in self-control behaviour.

Chapter Three: *Diagnosis and Treatment Indications* is a short chapter including subtypes of depression and personality factors as treatment indicators, and how life events and stress are influencing the onset and course of depression which are relevant to therapy. The concluding paragraph of this chapter refers to a large outcome study by Keller et al (2000) who suggest that »for depressed individuals with childhood trauma, psychotherapy may be an essential element of treatment«.

Chapter Four: *Treatment* is of particular interest from a practical perspective. The author expla-

ins how over the last several decades treatment procedures have been codified into treatment manuals, so that others can replicate the therapy with a minimum amount of training. Rather than reviewing the brand name therapies as packages, Dr. Rehm reviews components of therapy and discusses what one can learn from the ways in which the components are handled by different therapies. Examples are given of the types of presenting problems to which these components are likely to best apply. He writes: »Any therapist who is competent in these components could treat most depressions competently.« Furthermore, Dr. Rehm refers to research in the section Efficacy and Prognosis and concludes that in general the studies reveal no differences in the effectiveness of different psychotherapies for depression and that psychotherapy appears superior to medication in preventing relapse.

Dr. Rehm writes: »Depression is a widespread disorder that has a major impact on society. Research suggests that both major depression and bipolar disorder are on the rise around the world.« This book will undoubtedly provide assistance in its diagnosis and treatment.
