Depression support groups

- do they work and what are the benefits of being in a group versus individual counseling in the eyes of the student?

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The purpose of the Depression support groups was to deal with depression as an early intervention.
Aim of the depression support groups?

- Increase students information of depression
- Give students means and tools for coping better with depression
- Break a vicious circle
- Help students recognize depression symptoms and warning signs
- Chance to share feelings and experiences
- Peer support for depression
Group collection

- Advertisement of the depression group was on FSHS website and on our message boards

- Doctors, nurses, psychologists and psychiatrists recommended the group to students

- Tina Wikström interviewed and selected participants to the depression group
Depression Group

• The group consisted of 7 meetings
• The program contained:
  • Group tasks
  • discussion with other students
  • information about depression and depression problems
  • homework between the meetings
  • relaxation exercises
• Rules in the group
• Open and relaxed atmosphere in the group
• Give enough time and opportunities for free discussion
• Important not to be too critical of oneself and not worry about getting everything 100 percent right
• What has happened in our groups
• In spite of all we got to the end of every group and we didn`t get depressed
Data from the groups

• We have collected data both for the purpose of seeing if the groups are effective at alleviating depression and to be able to learn and develop as group leaders.

• We have data from four groups, held in 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

• Total of 30 participants.
Do you think you have benefited from the depression group?

- a. I haven’t benefited from the group
- b. I benefited somewhat from the group
- c. I benefited moderately from the group
- d. I benefited a lot from the group
I’m able to study

- a. most of the time
- b. sometimes and sometimes not
- c. most of the time
- d. I’m not able to study

(before) vs. (after)
How often does your mood affect your life in a negative way?

- a. almost every day or every day
- b. 3-4 times a week
- c. about 1-2 times a week
- d. a few times a month
- e. not at all or once a month

- before group
- after group
Which of these alternatives have been achieved during the group (you can choose several alternatives)?

- a. I have had the chance to talk to others with similar problems
- b. I have gotten information about depression
- c. I have got ways to prevent or lessen my depression
BDI (Beck’s depression inventory) before and after the group
Thoughts about suicide
(from question 9 in BDI)

- I would like to kill myself: Before - 5, After - 10
- I have thought about killing myself, but I will not do it: Before - 40, After - 30
- I don’t intend to kill myself: Before - 20, After - 60
Group versus individual counseling

The feedback from students tells us groups can be a less anxiety-provoking way to deal with the problems because:

- You don’t have to be the center of attention for a whole session
- You can choose when you want to speak and when to remain quiet (without the room quieting down completely)
- It’s easier to regulate how much information you want to share and when you want to share it
Thank you for listening!