

# Hypnosis and Depression – Leon Cowen

Depression has been called many names; 'black dog' and 'black hole' are just two. But for those suffering with the condition, no terminology adequately denotes the true dimension. In some cases additions to medication are indicated. Research data has indicated that psychotherapy, especially augmented by hypnosis, may be a better choice for depressed individuals" (Kirsch, 2005). Kirsch quoting Hollon, Shelton and Loosen's 1991 research, indicates that psychotherapy is as effective as medication and its effects may be longer lasting.

Hypnosis has been quoted as a potential intervention in conditions which are associated with reactive depression. Conditions such as cancer, pain, anxiety, panic attacks have had hypnosis linked as an adjunct to successful interventions. Hypnosis has been associated as a Mind-Body Intervention (Mamtani and Cimino, 2002), an intervention in panic attacks (Tsao and Craske, 2003), and mood elevation by (Gruzelier, 2002).

Kirsch summarises "there is a strong therapeutic response to antidepressant medication. But the response to placebo is almost as strong" and "psychotherapy, especially in a hypnotic context, might be considered as a first choice treatment for depression."

The side effects of hypnosis are relaxation, enhanced sleep and clearer cognitive functioning, Considering this, hypnosis could be considered as a component of team care model for the treatment of depression.

For more information on how hypnotherapy can help you contact the Australian Hypnotherapists Association Free Advisory Line on 1300 552 254. The Advisory Line is a free service to the general public.

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## References:

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- Tsao, J. C. I. & Craske, M. G. (2003) Reactivity to imagery and nocturnal panic attacks. Depression & Anxiety, 18, 205-13.*