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Live life: an integrated co-therapy intervention for complex patients.

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To present an integrated co-therapy intervention model for complex patients suffering from major depression in comorbidity with a personality disorder, which has been carried out since 5 years in our institution, and to illustrate its effectiveness.

Methods: The intervention was carried out on a sample of 40 patients aged between 18 and 50 years. Theories of reference: CBT depression treatment and Linehan's co-therapy. The psychotherapeutic path provided the intervention form various therapists who have worked in an integrated manner on a single shared project. In a multiple setting providing both individual and group therapy, the initial stages of treatment primarily focused on motor re-activation, suicidal behaviors reduction and the acquisition of mindfulness skills accompanied by emotional, behavioral and cognitive validation strategies. In later stages of treatment skills training, problem solving, gradual exposure and cognitive modification were provided in order to promote change.

Conclusions: The model adopted has demonstrated co-therapy effectiveness in maintaining and completing treatment, making significant changes in the global and social functioning and in preventing drop-outs of complex patients.

Keywords: Depression, Co-therapy, Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Personality disorder, mindfulness.