

The Effect of Existential Psychotherapy on Depression Disorder and Self-Creativity Using Perceptual-behavioral Flexibility

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ABSTRACT

This study has been conducted to examine how effectively existential psychotherapy works for the treatment of affective disorder (depressive disorder). Existentialism is basically a philosophy of commitment and obligation. This philosophy is based on the assumption that human is nothing more than a creature who freely chooses from among all possibilities to give meaning to his own existence; there is no preconceived aim for or end to human but he should set himself a new target at any moment. In other words, whatsoever he does is out of his own choice and this reshapes his very being. To achieve perceptual-behavioral flexibility and self-creativity based on existential psychotherapy in the treatment of depressive disorder, this question needs to be answered that how important are clinical behaviors in treating depression using psychotherapy approaches. The essential information for this research has been collected through library and document methods. The most important findings are as follows: the effectiveness of such kind of treatment is higher than other treatment methods, and compared to other methods, this kind of treatment enjoyed more acceptance.

KEYWORDS: Psychotherapy, Existential, Depression, Self-creativity, Perceptual-behavioral Flexibility

1. INTRODUCTION

Very basically and generally, existential treatment is defined as an obligation and commitment to life in order to create oneself in a social, functional range based on a free personal choice of all possible things.

According to this definition, all behaviors of an individual is the manifestation of his/her choice and will, and it is just because of this fact that a treatment based on existential psychotherapy creates an individual who is totally self-conscious in his self-creation process. This is what holds existentialism responsible for the freedom of choice and deeds since an existential human is not what he used to be or what he wants to be, but he is solely the outcome of his dynamic functional process. In other words, he is what he has become, which means he always remains at a complete total active level; this is because never can a potential nature be expected for an existential human. An existential human has a commitment to life, and his behavioral transformation is a manifestation of his sole willingness for his choice of action. This explanation shows the self-creation power of an existential human, and is the basic motif for dynamic thought based on existentialism, which makes foundations for existential psychotherapy to create perceptual-behavioral flexibility. Perceptual-behavioral flexibility is a certain outcome of simultaneous freedom of choice and self-creation in the process of action, which harmonizes life (transformation process) in its path of time. Believing in continual creative ability in the path of time with freedom of choice and action defines the mental hope hidden in the essence of existential view, a view which springs from existential ontology (fatalism), and sees human's complete freedom of choice and deeds in his path of self-creation as the end target. In other words, the creation of an existential human amidst his own choice and actions is the immediate realization of his will power in commitment to and challenge of life.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Depression

Depression is a prevailing disorder of our modern era, which has an increasing rate. Approximately half of the population suffering from this disorder are either unaware of their condition or it has been diagnosed as some other kind of disorder. Depression has different kinds, such as reaction depression, endogenous depression, nervous depression, psycho depression, and bipolar depression, all of which spring from affection disorders [1]. Depression is a result of physical energy decline. On a psychological level, depression is defined as feeling the lack of quality. This means that when an individual faces confusion, either physically or mentally, he finds such a feeling. On a spiritual level, depression is defined as a challenge between what there is and what there should be. The individual finds his aims out of reach, and finds no meaning for his future. Little by little he starts hating himself, and overgeneralizes this hatred to the others and the whole humanity. The continual gap between what there is and what there should be changes his life to an absurd hell [2].

2.1.1. Physiology of Depression

Physiologically, depression is an imbalance in the brain's chemicals; therefore, depression is a result of a series of chemical reactions in brain which is limited to the level of nervous transmitters' functionality, which results in clinical symptoms. Factually speaking, when a nervous message, in the form of an electric signal, reaches a neuron, it naturally moves along the neuron to reach the axon where it is translated chemically and is then transferred to the next neuron. These chemical messages, known as neurotransmitters, carry nervous messages which are responsible to establish mental communication in different brain areas. Serotonin is an effective neurotransmitter in the definition of biological depression. A change in this chemical's quantity affects correct communication among brain areas which regulate thoughts, affection, appetite and thinking, sleep, and behavior. The decline of this chemical, as a result, manifest itself in clinical symptoms of depression [3].

Depression periods will mostly come to an end after a few months, but this period may look like ages for the one suffering from it and for his/her relatives. Since committing a suicide threatens people suffering from disorders of affection, treating such disorders are absolutely important [1].

Studies show that three fourths of people suffering from depression disorder do not receive effective treatment [4].

2.2. Psychotherapy

From among effective psychotherapies, we can mention interpersonal psychotherapy which makes use of some psychoanalytical thoughts. Unlike traditional psychoanalytical treatment, interpersonal psychotherapy has functioned very successfully in clinical tests. Interpersonal psychotherapy emphasizes the idea that there is a close relationship between depression and interpersonal problems. Unlike psychoanalytical treatment which focuses on suppressed emotions rooted in a person's childhood, however, interpersonal psychotherapy focuses on a person's present life. This treatment includes the analysis of major interpersonal problems such as transfer of roles, interpersonal conflicts, loss of a relative, and interpersonal isolation [5].

However, what should be considered about depression disorder with a treatment approach is that although the outbreak of this mental condition is specifically and undeniably related to biological and genetic factors which have quantitative and experimental characteristics, a third factor is also involved which makes depression an issue of qualitative and analytical. This makes complete psychological explanation difficult. This third factor is the environmental factor (or socio-psychological factor) whose reconstruction to cure depression is the main focus of psychotherapy, and where mutual conflicts between mind and body exist.

In the field of psychotherapy, this kind of mind-body conflicts can be specifically called clinical psychology behaviors. Examples of these behaviors can be found in the area of cognitive exercises which are related to depression. Such exercises have qualitative and descriptive nature, and cannot be defined on the basis of basic standards of scientific descriptions for clinical depression. This is due to the fact that although there exist a meaningful relationship between these two behavioral symptoms, the nature of this relationship is not a causative relationship. Based on quantitative changes in parameters of each of these two groups especially in the groups of clinical signs dependent parameters can be found which can show meaningful quantitative reactions to these changes, and the relationships between these two groups of signs are correlative relationship, so there is a relationship between them. However, there is no proof to show that a change in a variant in one group can totally result in a change in the variant in another group.

Therefore, to define the issue under question, this research has been based on modeling a description (both analytical and philosophical) through the explanation of a concept such as psyche in a way that the correlation between psyche and body can be defined and tested. The boundary here is that the concept of psyche should be considered a subset of the functional definition for the power of thought, and unlike the classical definitions in traditional psychology which used to present general theories in a solely abstract way, the new concept must have descriptive and scientific value. This way, the issue under question in this research can be well defined and presented. In other words, using an "analytical-philosophical" method and on the basis of a psyche model, the origin of "psycho-clinical" behaviors can be defined, which play substantial conceptual role in describing the relationship between clinical symptoms and behavioristic symbols.

2.2.1. Psychotherapy for Depression

How important is the origin of "psych-clinical" behaviors in the treatment of depression with a psychotherapy approach?

In clinical psychology, depression is defined based on seven basic standards, the occurrence of half of which is psychologically regarded as suffering from a sickness-like depression and the person is said to need a clinical treatment. These symptoms generally result from a decline in serotonin; thus, the treatment relies on medication which controls the level of this hormone and reduces the clinical symptoms by controlling the re-absorption of serotonin. However, the undeniable point in the treatment of depression is that the medication alone cannot improve depression disorders at a "behavioral-cognitive" level, but controlling the re-absorption of serotonin through medication cannot answer this fundamental question: "What factor or factors can change the amount of serotonin to an abnormal level?"

Nowadays, much research deal with the effectiveness of treatments. Researchers have shown that successful treatments, either through psychotherapy or medication, change the activities of brain areas which are related to depression [6]. Trying to answer this question, it should be noted that, psychologically speaking, if clinical symptoms appear in a period less than two weeks and without daily continuation, or if some symptoms appear slightly and non-continuously, sickness-like depression cannot be diagnosed. This is part of a mental condition which is close to depression and appears every now and then although it is physiologically the result of a change in the amount of brain serotonin. This condition is

regarded natural; in other words, "quantitative changes in serotonin level cannot be considered as an immediate symptom of sickness-like depression."

As a result, theoretical definition of the origin of "psycho-clinical" behavior through the explanation of the relationship between symptoms and signs of "behavior-cognition" tries to answer the following fundamental question at a theoretical modeling level, which clarifies the functional and therapeutic importance of psychotherapy on the one hand, and encompasses the answer to the pervious question, on the other hand:

Do environmental factors cause disorders in body's biological function in a way that they influence individual's reaction with the environment and causes mental discomfort which will in turn influence his/ her biological function, and in the case of depression will cause a change in the level of serotonin?

The question that how the concept of psyche can be added to the nature of "behavior-cognition" will become more meaningful by answering the above-mentioned issue. However, there must exist the ability of physiological research and explanation, and the issue must be categorized in clinical psychology. This subject is the main issue in producing a model for psyche to be used in theoretical research.

2.3. Existential psychotherapy

Existential psychotherapy is a kind of dynamic psychotherapy. In the realm of mental health, dynamics is very often used as dynamic psychology, and if one aims to fully recognize the most fundamental characteristics of existential approach, he/ she needs to fully understand the concept of dynamic psychotherapy. Existential therapy well fits in the category of dynamic therapies. However, the question is: "What are those conflicting forces, fears and motifs? What are the contents of these internal unconscious conflicts?" Answering these questions, dynamic existential therapy moves away from other dynamic therapies. Existential therapy has been defined based on completely different reactions between internal forces and fears. It is not at all easy to precisely identify deep-rooted internal conflicts. A therapist dealing with problematic patients can very hardly come in contact with their pure conflicts. In contrast, the patients have a very complex collection of anxieties. Fundamental anxieties are buried in the deep, covered in the layers of rejections, denial, displacement, and symbolization. Clinical therapist must deal with many complexities, which can be really difficult. To recognize these fundamental conflicts, many access methods must be used such as deep thinking, dreams, nightmares, insight, deep-rooted experiences, psychopathic talks, and children studies [7].

2.3.1. Psyche in Existentialism

When speaking of human in its general sense, we mean a creature which has the capability of conscious thinking, and besides those behaviors that result from instinctive stimuli, possesses more complex behaviors which, compared to those of other living things, result from a rational process beyond physiological power. This rationality comes from human's conscious choice and defines his "behavioral-cognitive" nature.

Generally speaking, although human behavior is somehow influenced by his instincts and tendencies, it can also be affected by social norms and ills which are specifically unique to human. Therefore, such environmental actions can undeniably affect his reactions. As a result, although human rationality is physiologically from the same nature as the common physiological rationality among all animals, considering its qualitative functionality and the influence on behaviors, it is at a higher level than physiological mind.

Physiological mind is the mental activity which is the same among all living things, and is defined as choosing the best behavior in facing with stimuli. Such stimuli can be divided into groups: external and internal stimuli which cause the superficial behaviors of living things at a physiological rational level, those behaviors which manifest themselves in the form of environmental interactions.

But the basic difference between physiological mind and human rationality is that human possesses a quality of the memory which enables him to recognize, enables him to explore and judge himself; thus, to define psyche, two points must be paid attention to: 1) psyche as a concept is a subset of rationality (cognition), 2) the internal self-judgment resulting from self-exploration is an outcome of the reactions among three internal aspects of human interactions (psyche, cognitive, memory). Self-judgment is not a behavior, but a motivation which results from the internal functions of human rationality, and internally influences his behavior or his "cognitive-behavior" analysis in an interaction with his environment.

2.4. Existential Approach

Considering that all human have the power to choose and that how they choose to live, existential theory focuses on individuals' choice and tries to change it, rather than attempting to treat the individuals. The main target in such kind of treatment is to control life through decision making. In other words, once the person recognizes his independence, challenges his decisions and thus his life style changes; as a result, his behaviors toward the environment and situations differ [8].

Human existential approach believes that existential anxiety results from nervous anxiety, and nervous anxiety results from a collection of fundamental human concerns, and considering that all creatures are unique and emphasizing that man needs to have individual experiences rather than coping with other individuals' needs, this approach believes in human's tendency for growth and action [9].

According to human existential approach, an individual is only struggling to find his own way in a chaotic and uncertain world, and considering this characteristic, existential approach mixing with activism spirit is the best approach [10].

2.5. Human as seen in Existentialism

One of the greatest mental challenges in facing with the human who has become accustomed with his everyday life and is undeniably observable and considerable has always been the fact that human sees life as a result of his own internal moods and affections which encourage him to shape himself for what he calls life. Although we cannot say that this is totally away from the reality of life, it does not favorably cope with the reality of life. It means that in his everyday life, man requires something from himself or from life that does not suit his will power and his courage for action and choice, and thus cannot create a balance between what he imagines and requires and what he has done, liked, achieved, and manifested in his life which embodies a realistic view toward the inevitable conflict in life. It seems that in his real everyday life while he is engaged in real earthy life, man is looking at his idealistic side of life looking for his star of luck. This imbalance between human's idealistic view toward life and what life practically presents to him makes a gap in man's internal characteristic which he attributes to the realities of life and causes inaccurate judgments. This way, man accuses life, and attributes his deficiencies to all but not himself. Such a person is always complaining about everything and sees himself imprisoned in the unfair treatment of life. He is always looking for a miracle to happen to bail him out of his miseries and to pave his way toward happiness and a better life. And though trapped in failures, he is optimistically looking out into the future. All of these seem like an apparent contradiction between the reality and the image that this person has formed of himself and of his life, which is not at all observable and comprehensible for an outsider observer (the psychologist) more than a series of personal and psychological unrest.

Albert Camus believes that human must be the observer of his own life. What he is referring to is the fact that what a person can require from himself and comprehend is the same as what he has demonstrated in his life as a result of his own choice and behavior. Such a view, which represents Camus's existential idea toward human and life, is a humanistic and ethical attempt to free mankind from anxieties and concerns; a view which looks at the idealistic side of the future of the mankind. In the shadow of such hope which springs from a super-human belief, man becomes ignorant of what is happening at the very moment and of the realities of his life. This can be better understood and proven when we recall what Camus says as man is none but will power. In other words, human will power is the most important teaching of existentialism school to the mankind who is roaming the skies of his ambitious dreams instead of choosing and acting based on realities.

Rolomi believes that "existing" needs courage, and these are choices which define what kind of person we will become. There are continual conflicts inside us. Though we wish to grow into maturity and independence, we recognize that this development is a torturing process. Therefore, there is a conflict between security and independence, and joys and pains of growth [11].

2.5.1. Human in Existential Psychotherapy

Yalom and Joeselson [12] define the nature of this approach as follows:

Existential psychotherapy is a view to human pain, one who has no task guide. This approach asks fundamental questions about the nature of human and anxiety, hopelessness, sorrow, loneliness, isolation, and ill-being.

Brain, as a central nervous system which controls vital functions of an organism, directly influences behavior based on instinctive preconceived decision making, and shapes natural reactions of a living things to external stimuli and conflicting behaviors in an environment considering survival rules of the organism. To define behaviors resulting from physiological functioning of the mind, we can make use of two concepts, namely need and desire, and thus present an explanation for the concept of natural selection.

Need is an instinctive tendency toward something for the survival of a living thing, and as an internal stimulus for the physiological mind, makes the organism to search for things to survive in the environment. Being a need removal, that thing is regarded as a main parameter for the survival of an active organism. The functional system of instinctive need can be described as follows:

When the organs in an active organism face with a shortage of effective material (a), this shortage in the brain (the central nervous system) manifests itself as physiological sorrow (X), which leads to the production of hormone (b), and the physiological mind reacts by deciding on a particular behavior (Y) based on that instinctive stimulus. This behavior of the living thing is a partial reaction to the internal action, but besides these action behaviors, there are reactive behaviors, known as reflective instinctive behaviors, which are described as response of the living thing to external stimuli on the basis of instinctive analysis.

However, desire, as an internal preference and a removal agent, is defined against other removal choices, which unlike instinctive needs does not necessarily induce a behavior, but influences the behavioral cycle resulting from instinctive stimuli and this influence can be tested.

Based on these two concepts, i.e. desire and need, natural selection can be thus defined as a creature's existing behavior toward a removal agent of a need springing from an internal stimulus which leads to getting an internal reward. It should be noted that the internal reward of the physiologic mind is the result of a proper instinctive behavior and a parameter related to the initial choice. The initial choice creates a behavior (X) along with environmental factors which are effective in the effect of physiological behavior relevant to the reaction (Y). A combination of these Y's constitute a behavioral judgment reference for the physiological mind. Generally speaking, this behavioral judgment reference in living things is a behavioral developmental factor in responses to internal actions and environmental external reactions. In effect, behavioral judgment reference for the physiological mind is a kind of behavioral memory which affects behaviors.

It is noteworthy that behavioral mind that is related to animals' physiologic mind does not give them the ability of internal remembering, but will only appear as the development of behavioral ability when facing external stimuli.

Therefore, in all levels of the function of the power of physiological thought, behavior has a reflective characteristic. This means that when a feeling results from an external stimulus and causes an internal action, this behavior shows itself as an environmental reaction, but it is inactive in the absence of an external stimulus. In an attempt to show the difference between physiological mind and human power of thought, two important factors must be mentioned which play an important role in understanding the transition from natural selection to conscious selection: 1) Because of the recognition ability, an internal stimulation can be considered for human power of thought which continually influences behavioral memory and keeps it active. This produces a cycle which can be called internal vision. 2) On the other hand, human power of thought has a subset called spirit which affects on the qualities of the recognition resulting from external stimuli and in an internal interaction with human internal memory and recalling memory stores the recognition effects resulting from the internal vision in a subset of memory. This collection is psychological background, and its theoretical plan is based on this fact that "the quality of feelings resulting from the same natural event or even from personal introversion is different among different people. This can be considered as a psychological principle because considering that all environmental conditions in one analytical system consisting of two individuals and one event are the same, given that they both of the same psychological backgrounds, the feelings resulting from that event are the same in both of those individuals.

As a consequence, psychological background can be defined as a collection of all background psychological feelings with subtle influences still present in the memory which can affect recognition and behavior.

As a matter of fact, the psychological background in reaction with psychological stimulus, creates the psychological effect of an event in human power of thought. In reality, although past experiences of an individual are not present in his present-time events, the diagram below this past psychological experience should not show any effective interference in his reaction to present-time stimuli.

Although because of active behavior memory of the thinking power which is a result of a continual introversion process we are facing with a continual change of the background psychological content, a research plan for psychological interaction of the thinking power must be presented to define and diagnose psychological disorders, and on this basis, to define depressive disorder. Hence the issue under question can be well related to existential psychotherapy.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Existential Psychotherapy and the creation of perceptive-behavior Flexibility (Self creation)

It might be firmly said that human can change his view toward life and himself based on the existentialism school, and this can relatively free man from his illusions of life, which is quite different from what is really known as life and living, and is in obvious contradiction with the notion of life. Solving these seemingly minute contradictions in man's view of life and judgment about his life from one hand, and the reality of events in which human actively plays roles on the other hand, can be a way to treat or at least soothe the pains that man is unconsciously suffering throughout his life.

However, the question is: "How can existentialism, as a school of thought which emphasizes on the principles of individualism, treat part of these individuals' psychological unrests in societies?" Although without planning an evaluable test and analyzing the results in a scientific way it would be impossible, or at least illogical to answer this question, we can start from defining human in an existential view to make a hypothesis in an attempt to get a scientific answer to the question.

Sartre views human as a collection of deeds and behaviors instead of a collection of needs and wishes. In his path of life, though he is inundated with needs and likes, it is literally his willingness which directs him in this path when he is faced with endless possible choices. With his choices, man sees what really exists as a result of a possibility that has fallen into his area of activity. In other words, man is the result of the realization of his own will in choosing an action, which explicitly shows man's responsibility toward himself and of course toward others as Sartre believes that man chooses a human society by choosing himself.

He cannot hope for anything that does not fall into his area of activity; therefore, existentialism as a school of thought that looks at human and his life in an action- oriented way, can somehow favorably solve the contradictions which exist between the concept that human has of himself the way that he wants, and the concept of human as is shaped throughout life and the life events. Existentialism doesn't allow human to look beyond the realities of life in an attempt to keep him free for his choices in the realities of his life activities (Man with his wills and on the basis of his choices from among many possibilities has made an active role for, and an achieved legend out of himself). In other words, existential human in the area of his willingness and actions is that realized legend and that certain result of what he really is not of what he wants from himself in the course of his life. Such an existential human gets free from his illusions and false hopes for an idealistic future, and in the course of his life, acts totally based on the realities.

Sartre believes that man should commit himself to life, and make something out of himself through his engagement with life by choice, action and judging himself based on what lies in his areas of activity, not on the basis of what he wants to be in an uncertain future which is not in the circle of his power and will. Sartre also believes that man cannot be identified based on those characteristics which are known as intrinsic characteristics prior to action and the realization of his wills. He believes that no one is born a hero, but a hero is one who makes a hero of himself based on his wills and actions throughout his life.

In fact, based on existentialism school of thought, human spirit is totally an existence prior to nature. In other words, man is literally nothing without his wills and actions, but he will eventually become what he has made of himself. Therefore, inspiring such kind of existential concept and emphasizing on man's action-orientation based on freedom and personal choice while having him accept his responsibilities, defines man, as Camus believes, as a spectator of his life. Admitting the fact that man is responsible for what he has practically made of himself brings about a cognition which

empowers man with responsible power of action for changes, a fact which cannot be seen in the life of illusion-stricken human who looks away from the realities of life toward dreams which fall far out of his areas of activities.

Existential psychotherapy, depicting human's real position in the universe, makes man first accept some fundamental and inevitable principles, and then informs him of his power to make changes in his situations by emphasizing on his capabilities of choice and free will. This was, existential approach first puts man against himself, and then defines him in his relationship with others in the realities of social life [13]. This approach specifies a behavioral judgment reference (i.e. man himself) and emphasizes on his free choice and the resulting responsibility prior to the formation of man's relationship and conflict with others and his environment. This way, individuals' negative effects of depression can be controlled since, generally speaking, recognition mistake in viewing the present situation is not external, but is basically the individual's method of analyzing based on his psychological backgrounds that turns his judgments toward a situation or another individual negative.

Therefore, it can be said that one of the greatest cognitive effects of existentialism toward human and life is to inspire the ability to change and revolute willingly which helps man to require what he knows that falls in his area of activity and willingness based on his wills and courage. However, another key point is that existentialism emphasizes on quantitative differences between possible choices and certain choices (i.e. those choices that have fallen in man's areas of activity), and that human is as free in his requirements as he is free in choosing from among possible choices. In other words, his limitations in areas of activity do not limit him in choosing what he wants. This emphasizes the fact that man, as a creature whose existence is prior to his nature, must search for himself in what he has done not what he wants in order to be able to present a definition of himself. This can prove what Sartre believes: "Man is freedom and freedom is man." This means that choosing from among possible choices that he has in his life does not confine him to what he has chosen and what falls in his areas of activity, but choice itself is a real representation of freedom and willingness. Therefore, what that exists is what he has already wanted from himself.

From the realistic nature of existentialism it can be understood that in existential psychotherapy there is no need to refine the mind patterns through either completion or changing cognition. In other words, existential approach does not have anything to do with understanding human or his cognitive patterns. This approach sees man as a role player in the present time, one who is always freely choosing and freely acting according to his wills, and his view is always toward the present and whatsoever there is in the present time, not a step forward or a step backward. As a result, in a process of choice and action based on a change of existential view toward self and life, a practical plan for the possibility of change can be made. According to this plan, man learns how to choose the best choice and act according to that choice without being exposed to a theoretical cognition. Man will not be exposed to advice to find out his responsibility and to accept it, but through his free choice and actions, he finds out that he is responsible against what he has made of himself. It seems that by existential psychotherapy, man learns to be responsible through his own actions.

Psychologically speaking, man is generally moved by his moods and fluctuates over his balanced conditions. The passage of time will balance his moods in accord with the qualities and magnitude of these psychological moves. As a result, any psychological effect which takes him away from his normal mood and stays stable in the course of time is regarded as psychological disorder. This disorder effects moods, behavior, quality of understanding and thought with clinical and cognitive symptoms.

An explanation for psychological reaction:

Human psychological response to psychological stimulus that maintains his psychological stability with the passage of time is defined as psychological reaction. In fact, an individual's psychological reaction is like a restoring force which restores his psychological deviation resulting from psychological stimuli (X) to normal.

The important point here is that based on the explanation for psychological background, it cannot be considered that with the passage of time psyche can be restored to normal even if it is under the effect of restoring forces, but because of the effect that the stimulus (X) has on the individual's psychological background, in an attempt to restore his psychological balance, the psychological reaction leads him toward a secondary normal mood. The difference between these two psychological balancing moods leads to the formation of a mental pattern that can cause extreme disorders in long run.

According to what has been said in this article, depression can be meaningfully defined as follows:

Psychological disorder resulting from mutual tension effects between mind and body with an obvious characteristic of a suppressing self-judgment which springs from the formation of cognitive patterns, which will result in self-destruction and suicide in chronic conditions.

Another effect that existential thought rather than idealistic-mythical thought has on human's individual nature and social behavior is that this view frees man from external (social) judgmental looks by turning his look toward his individualistic and free-will view. This approach, by drawing man's attention from his social identity or what he has made for himself on the basis of his social likes to an individual identity which is totally based on his existential nature, tries to teach him that he should become what he willingly and selectively wants and can, not what he thinks he should manifest of himself in order to gain the satisfaction of the social judgmental look which is based on a series of values which are dictated by the society. This is an undeniable fact that social preconceived notions engage man in finding some possibilities which might not fall into his present-time areas of activity or action. The possibilities that society offers will put man in this illusion that what he had wanted to make of himself might have existed in his areas of possibility but he has been deprived of a chance to gain them for some uncertain reasons. In addition, this means the penetration of a sense of failure in an individual who is wishing for an apparent success.

Existential approach, on the other hand, by emphasizing on the general absurdity, and then by obliging man to accept fundamental principles, absurdity being one of such principles, and by mixing man into the reality of his current life in order to play a free and active willing role, can also overcome the felling of absurdity in depressed individuals.

Finally, the instability of individuals which occurs in a case of bipolar depression can be treated through the creation of a favorable image of the individual where he can see his identity based on his personal choice and action. Using this approach, the self-image of the independent and active individual can be shaped in a way that he can see himself as a decision maker in his path to change the present day condition to a favorable condition based on his free choice and actions. Man will view himself so central that the environmental inevitable actions especially in relation with others and the environment will improve.

This treatment approach emphasizes on factors such as a feeling of absurdity in depression and negative thought which provoke other symptoms of different kinds of depressions. This is so because other depression factors follow the above-mentioned factors. The treatment effect of this approach is longer lasting because it changes the view of the depressed person and emphasizes the reality of existence (i.e. self-judgment).

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Existentialism differs from the common human approach toward life which is based on the likes of the majority of the society. Agreeing to man's free will and choice, existentialism places man in the center of life where from among possible choices, he chooses what makes him what he is. This will take the shape of the aim that man has chosen for himself. As a result, in a society that tries to propagate one or a few target for man according to its own central norms, man becomes a core whose aim is uniquely what he has already chosen by his free will and actions, as was explained before.

An existential man, choosing freely from among all the possible choices, decides on his own aim freely instead of trying to find a possibility which has already been defined for him by the society. Because if the ultimate goal of a man which eventually forms his real identity is what he has made of himself, the choice of each possibility is a partial aim. In its macro level, it can be defined as man's ultimate aim for existential being.

It can be concluded that in a given society having a certain number of individuals who are trying to find their own existence in life, there are the same number of unique aims. This existential view toward man and his life removes his internal judgment which compares himself with others on the basis of the social life and according to the social identity. Such a comparison (on the basis of social differences) obviously works as a deterrent force which can disable man in his way to find his own path of life. In existentialism, however, man is not comparable and definable with anything but what he has made of himself in the course of his activities.

Finally we hope that by using existential psychotherapy we can gain "perceptual-behavioral flexibility" to define life and man's place in life, which can change the view point of individuals toward life and the interaction between society and existential isolation.

Existential isolation considers the individual as the reference of judgment and behavioral evaluation, and always emphasizes on free choice and personal responsibility from one hand, and social life on the other hand. This approach leads man to adopt to the social environment and interpersonal relationship, and therefore, perceptual-behavioral flexibility as (synthesis), dialectic contradiction as (thesis) individualism or existential isolation as (anti-thesis) appear.

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