

How Faith Can Affect Therapy

July 12, 2013

The New York Times:

Can belief in God predict how someone responds to mental health treatment? A recent study suggests it might.

Researchers at McLean Hospital in Belmont, Mass., enrolled 159 men and women in a cognitive behavioral therapy program that involved, on average, 10 daylong sessions of group therapy, individual counseling and, in some cases, medications. About 60 percent of the participants were being treated for depression, while others had bipolar disorder, anxiety or other diagnoses.

All were asked to rate their spirituality by answering a single question: “To what extent do you believe in God?”

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“Patients who had higher levels of belief in God demonstrated more effects of treatment,” said the study’s lead author, David H. Rosmarin, a psychologist at McLean Hospital and director of the Center for Anxiety in New York. “They seemed to get more bang for their buck, so to speak.”

One possible reason for this, he said, is that “patients who had more faith in God also had more faith in treatment. They were more likely to believe that the treatment would help them, and they were more likely to see it as credible and real.”

Read the whole story at: [The New York Times](#)