

# **The Effects of Psychological Well-Being on Health Behaviors**

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Psychosocial interventions for persons living with HIV/AIDS are founded on the assumption that there exist direct and indirect effects of psychological well-being on health behaviors. This talk will introduce the concept and measurement of psychological well-being from a psychosocial perspective, concentrating on mood as a major construct. It will present models from psychosocial research and intervention literature through which various aspects of well-being have been found to directly and indirectly (e. g., through coping efforts and social support) influence health-related behaviors. Two behaviors especially important to consider when working with persons living with HIV/AIDS – medication adherence and safer sexual practices– will be discussed in detail.

## **Group Interventions for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS I: Supportive and Expressive Perspectives**

David Spiegel and colleagues at Stanford University (California, USA) have conducted research on psychosocial treatments for breast cancer patients since 1976, with its first publication in this area in 1979 (Spiegel & Yalom, 1979). They have devoted more than two decades to the systematic development and evaluation of treatment interventions for breast cancer patients, including the preparation of treatment manuals and randomized assessments of outcome. They have been able to demonstrate significant improvements in mood (Spiegel et al, 1981), pain control (Spiegel & Bloom, 1983), and surprisingly, in survival of metastatic breast cancer patients randomly assigned to supportive-expressive group therapy time (Spiegel et al, 1989).

This talk will introduce the goals and principles of Supportive-Expressive Therapy (SET), which include the exploration of emotions and thoughts associated with one's disease process and the facilitation of supportive interaction among group members. In addition, the talk will describe how SET has been modified for a recently-funded, community-based intervention study for men and women living with HIV and AIDS.