

A Case Report on the Treatment of Severe Major Depressive Disorder Using Saam Acupuncture: Focusing on Saam Psychotherapy and Mind Acupuncture

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Depression is a prevalent mental disorder, and the primary treatment method, pharmacotherapy, often faces limitations such as low medication adherence, side effects, and delayed onset of therapeutic effects. This study presents a case of treating a patient with severe major depressive disorder using "Mind Acupuncture." Mind Acupuncture is a meridian-based psychotherapy that combines acupuncture and psychological counseling, utilizing the principles of Saam Acupuncture. By applying Mind Acupuncture to a patient with severe depression, this case demonstrates the potential of acupuncture therapy as a treatment for mental disorders.

In this case, a 27-year-old male patient, who had not responded to conventional pharmacotherapy or counseling and suffered from self-harm and severe depressive symptoms, underwent Mind Acupuncture treatment. At the initial assessment, the patient scored 52 on the BDI (Beck Depression Inventory), 27 on the BAI (Beck Anxiety Inventory), and showed significant levels of Hwa-Byung (character: 25, state: 38). After six sessions of treatment over four weeks, all these scores reduced to zero. The results highlight the immediate efficacy of Mind Acupuncture in alleviating negative emotions, reconstructing psychological frameworks, and fostering a positive self-image.

This case study illustrates that Mind Acupuncture is an effective treatment for depression and underscores the need for further research into its application for various mental disorders. Mind Acupuncture can be considered a complementary or alternative therapy to conventional pharmacological and counseling approaches.

Key Words : depression, mood disorder, Mind Acupuncture, Saam Acupuncture, Saam Psychotherapy, meridian-based psychotherapy, BDI, BAI

I. Introduction

Depression, also known as Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), is a mental disorder which features persistent feelings of sadness, lethargy, loss of interest, and sometimes

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irritability or anger.¹ It is one of the most influential factors of suicide.² The annual prevalence rate of Major Depressive Disorder and dysthymia in Korea is 1.7%, while the lifetime prevalence rate is 7.7%. Additionally, 11.3% of the population has experienced levels of depression significant enough to interfere with daily life for over 2 weeks.³

The primary intervention of this prevalent disorder is pharmacotherapy. Yet most of the anti-depressants require 2 weeks or more to show effects. Moreover, 10% of the patients do not take their medication, and 20% to 30% of the patients discontinue their medication in the early stage.⁴ Therefore, there is a need for treatment options that show faster therapeutic effects, have no side effects, and can be maintained continuously alongside medication.

Most of the research in Korea regarding attempts to address depression with traditional Korean Medicine has been limited to case reports, pre-clinical studies of herbal medications and acupuncture, or studies utilizing Chinese research data. Very few studies apply the clinical environment of Korea, targeting Korean patients.⁵

Studies regarding the psychiatric application of Saam Acupuncture do exist, but these previous reports by Jung et al.⁶ and Choi et al.⁷ have identified the effects of specific prescriptions like Heart Jeonggyeok or Pericardium Jeonggyeok in treating Hwa-Byung (a Korean culture-bound syndrome of anger-related depression).

In this case report, Mind Acupuncture has been used to address severe depression and has achieved a dramatic level of remission.⁸ Mind Acupuncture is a structured technique developed to apply Saam Acupuncture in psychiatric treatment.⁸ It induces changes in the Qi flow of the patients, causing changes in emotions and beliefs; these changes instantaneously address specific emotional stressors and amplify the positive desires hidden in the negative emotions.^{8,9}

II. Case Report

1. Patient Information

Kang ○○ (27-year-old male)

2. Chief Complaint

Major Depressive Disorder

3. Onset of Symptoms

April 2018

4. Current Medical History

Symptoms: Lethargy, depression, panic disorder, and agoraphobia.

The patient described the feeling as, "I lack vitality; it seems like the energy within me has been depleted," and exhibited extreme passivity. He expressed hopelessness about the future and described feeling paralyzed by fears of the external world. Crowded places made him extremely tense and stiff, with symptoms worsening in his maladaptive school environment. Although he reported a loss of appetite, his weight remained stable due to the side effects of medication.

5. Secondary Symptoms

Self-harm behaviors, attention deficit disorder, sleep disturbances, and social anxiety.

6. Past Medical History

The patient had experienced persistent lethargy and depression since childhood. He struggled to adapt to the rules of group environments like school and would fabricate symptoms to leave early. During high school, his difficulties escalated to the point of school refusal. After entering university, his symptoms worsened, manifesting as severe sleep disturbances, and he became unable to maintain daily life. In April 2018, he began psychiatric treatment and medication. However, his condition worsened, necessitating an increase in the variety and dosage of medications. By 2021, he had developed a habit of self-harm.

7. Current Psychiatric Medications

Lamictal (Lamotrigine) 100 mg * 2

Paroxetine CR (Paroxetine) 25 mg x 2 tabs * 1

Lexapro (Escitalopram) 20 mg * 1

Abilify (Aripiprazole) 5 mg * 2

Wellbutrin XL (Bupropion) 150 mg * 1

Inderal (Propranolol) 10 mg * 1

Seroquel (Quetiapine) 25 mg * 1, 100 mg * 1

Lexotanil (Bromazepam) 3 mg * 1

Tofranil (Imipramine Hydrochloride) 25 mg x 1 tab * 1, 25 mg x 2 tabs * 1

Concerta OROS (Methylphenidate) 54 mg * 1

8. Other Treatments

Received more than three series of counseling sessions (8+ sessions each) from 2016 to 2023, with no significant improvement.

Tried various psychiatric herbal medicines prescribed by Korean Medicine doctors in 2017, each for over a month, with no notable effects.

9. Initial Findings

1) Date of First Visit: November 2, 2024

2) Pulse Diagnosis: Wiry (弦), Rapid (數)

3) Additional Tests:

(1) Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI): 52 (Severe depressive state)

(2) Beck's Anxiety Inventory (BAI): 27 (Anxiety state)

(3) Hwa-Byung Scale: Personality 25 / State 38 (Diagnosed with Hwa-Byung)

10. Constitutional Assessment: Taeumin (太陰人)

11. Treatment Duration

November 2, 2024, to December 5, 2024. Once weekly sessions for a total of six treatments.

12. Evaluation of Treatment Effectiveness

Evaluated using BDI, BAI, and the Hwa-Byung Scale.

13. Treatment Tools

Disposable stainless steel acupuncture needles (0.20 mm × 30 mm, KM).

14. Treatment Methodology

1) Explore and clarify emotional goals, and perform Qi-Transformation & Metaphor.

2) Focus attention on specific emotions or Qi-Transformation & Metaphor.

3) Administer acupuncture therapy to regulate and strengthen meridian functions.

- 4) Perform Qi Circulation Breathing while focusing on treatment goals.
- 5) Confirm changes in the pulse and treatment goals.
- 6) After a 20-minute needle retention, reevaluate the changes in treatment goals.
- 7) Assign self-care exercises for the patient to practice in daily life at home.

15. Treatment Progress

The details of this case are based on the patient's medical records and treatment feedback. After each session, the patient wrote a feedback report and sent it via email to both the attending physician and themselves.

A. Session 1 (November 2)

i. Chief Complaints

The patient's current symptoms were consistent with the medical history outlined above.

ii. Treatment Methods

Eliminating the Pathogenic Factors Technique (祛邪): This technique was used to alleviate negative emotions. Specific negative experiences, such as feelings of "alienation" and "fear of rules," were identified as key elements contributing to the patient's distress. Through the Qi-Transformation & Metaphor (取象) process, these emotions were expressed as sensory and visual imagery. The patient described society as "a hard, sharp, and massive toothed gear with blades surrounding me, pulling me in to be chewed into pieces."

Reinforcing the Healthy Factors Technique (養正): This technique was used to strengthen positive emotions. Initially, the patient envisioned an isolated, safe cave as his ideal self. However, when encouraged to imagine a happier version of himself, the patient described "a cool, taut, extremely light, and agile Superman."

Acupuncture Therapy: The points Hegu (合谷, LI4), Zusanli (足三里, ST36), Taichong (太衝, LR3), and Houxi (後谿, SI3) were tonified(補) using the "Following and Opposing Reinforcement and Reduction Method" (迎隨補瀉法).

During the session, the patient focused on the negative imagery of the toothed gear while undergoing the Eliminating the Pathogenic Factors process and then shifted focus to the positive imagery of Superman during the Reinforcing the Healthy Factors process.

Needle Retention Time: 20 minutes

iii. Post-Treatment Response

The patient's pulse slowed to a normal rate, becoming calm and smooth.

The patient described Superman as "a being capable of saying, 'Despite the fundamental tragedies of life, we can still love each other and accomplish wonderful things.'" When instructed to view society from Superman's perspective, the patient stated that the previously intimidating "society" felt trivial, insignificant, and meaningless. This experience was described as almost a sense of omnipotence.

The patient reported feeling Superman's presence in his "heels."

iv. Self-Care Assignment

The patient was instructed to lie down before bed, upon waking, and during moments of solitude to focus on Superman. While engaging in slow breathing, he was encouraged to imagine becoming Superman and feel its associated sensations. Additionally, he was to observe Superman's changes, behaviors, and feelings.

B. Session 2 (November 7)

i. Chief Complaints

The patient reported significant improvement since the first treatment. He described feeling surprised by the absence of his previously passive and self-deprecating tendencies and noted a natural ease in his daily life. The thought of "I can't do it" had shifted to "I can just do it," and he felt a renewed sense of vitality. The patient found it remarkable that his improved condition persisted.

He described himself as calm, capable of planning and executing tasks, and unaware

of these changes until much later, perceiving them as natural. He no longer expressed fear of his existence or the fact that he had survived suicidal thoughts. Additionally, his breathing felt much more comfortable. While he admitted to not fully committing to his self-care assignments, he described a sense of being enveloped in positivity.

ii. Treatment Methods

Acupuncture Therapy: The points Hegu (合谷, LI4), Zusanli (足三里, ST36), Taichong (太衝, LR3), and Houxi (後谿, SI3) were tonified (補).

During this session, the patient asked, "If Superman is what I aspire to be, what does Superman desire?" The practitioner suggested the patient to ask Superman directly, then focus on observing how Superman changes and what Superman desires during the needle retention period. The practitioner explained that the changes in Superman could reflect the meridian's self-regulatory processes in altering Qi.

Needle Retention Time: 20 minutes

iii. Post-Treatment Response

The patient reported that Superman "wants to become a capable person who can help those around him" and "wants to feel strong through this." He observed that his Superman transformed into a carefree, dancing figure, which he felt in his "heels."

The patient recalled hearing the statement, "There is no need to be the sorrowful person in the mirror." He described Superman as rejoicing at finding him, dancing in celebration. The patient reflected on his transformation as mysterious and significant, but also intimidating. Despite these feelings, he expressed a willingness to shed his old, familiar "worn-out clothes" and put on a new outfit that fits him perfectly.

iv. Self-Care Assignment

The patient was instructed to lie down before bed, upon waking, and during solitary moments to focus on Superman. Along with the chest acupressure technique called Opening the Six Organs, he was to practice slow breathing, imagining becoming Superman and feeling Superman's sensations. He was also advised to observe Superman's actions, transformations, and feelings and, if curious, to ask Superman

questions.

C. Session 3 (November 14)

i. Chief Complaints

The patient reported maintaining a stable daily rhythm and no longer experiencing the emptiness he used to feel during the day. He expressed feeling that he was managing well and noted that he no longer needed to consciously remember Superman—it had become internalized naturally.

ii. Treatment Methods

Acupuncture Therapy: The Basic Circulation Acupuncture points—consisting of Hegu (合谷, LI4), Zusanli (足三里, ST36), Taichong (太衝, LR3), and Houxi (後谿, SI3)—along with Quchi (曲池, LI11) were tonified (補).

The practitioner explained that the current focus should be on the Reinforcing the Healthy Factors process (養正) to engrain positive energy into the patient's psyche. During the needle retention period, the patient was instructed to focus on Superman and observe any changes.

Needle Retention Time: 20 minutes

iii. Post-Treatment Response

The patient reported that Superman transformed from a dancing figure into a weeping one. He described this as an image of "someone who gives of themselves and feels gratitude towards those who accept his sharing." However, the patient also said he felt overwhelmed by being "too full" and saw this image torn apart into fragments, leaving behind only a sense of coolness and laughter.

iv. Self-Care Assignment

The patient was instructed to practice focusing on Superman before bed, upon waking, and during solitary moments. This was to be combined with the Opening the Six

Organs technique. He was also encouraged to observe Superman's behavior, transformations, and sensations, and to repeat the exercise of imagining himself as Superman.

D. Session 4 (November 21)

i. Chief Complaints

The patient expressed significant improvement, recalling how even simple daily tasks like putting on socks used to feel incredibly burdensome. He was surprised at how easy such tasks had become. For the first time in two years, his psychiatrist reduced his medication dosage, which was met with positive feedback from the doctor.

The patient shared that throughout the past week, Superman had been smiling at him—sometimes teasingly, sometimes with compassion. Superman remarked, "You're too heavy," and continued, "You shrink from the smallest trials, are overwhelmed by daily difficulties, and cling to your past to judge yourself. You act as your own examiner and judge, but you lack a defender. You take life, and yourself, too seriously." Superman laughed and said, "Those who want to dance must have light feet," even demonstrating a dance.

Superman appeared to encourage the patient to dance as well, but the patient felt too heavy to join. He said becoming Superman would require sacrificing too much: giving up his current comfortable but lethargic life, relinquishing the care he received from others, and confronting misunderstandings from others. He found these tasks overwhelmingly difficult.

ii. Treatment Methods

Acupuncture Therapy: The same points as the previous session (Hegu, Zusanli, Taichong, and Houxi) were tonified (補), with the addition of tonifying (補) Shaoshang (少商, LU11) and Lidui (厲兌, ST45).

As part of the Reinforcing the Healthy Factors process, the practitioner guided the patient to internalize the phrase, "I am Superman," by repeating it alongside a naturally accepted statement, such as "I have hands." When the patient showed resistance to

the idea of sacrificing aspects of his current life to become Superman, he was reassured that he would not regret letting go of these elements once he became Superman. The phrase was then modified to "I am becoming Superman" to make it easier for the patient to accept.

iii. Post-Treatment Response

Initially, the patient found it difficult to accept the statement, "I am Superman." However, after practicing the modified phrase, "I am becoming Superman," during the needle retention period, he eventually managed to embrace the original statement. The patient expressed relief upon hearing that he did not need to fully become Superman but that merely moving closer to that goal would make him happier.

E. Session 5 (November 28)

i. Chief Complaints

The patient described this week as his first difficult period since starting treatment. However, compared to his initial condition, where he could not get out of bed without morning medication, he found he could function to some extent even without taking medication, indicating improvement.

The patient displayed a fixation on the concept of "greatness." He recounted Superman asking, "Do you want to become great?" The practitioner explored what "greatness" meant to the patient and suggested it might be about seeking recognition from others. The patient agreed that he often craved external validation due to a lack of self-assurance. The practitioner proposed that this insecurity was likely manifesting as the desire for greatness, a perspective the patient accepted.

The practitioner explained that as Superman becomes internalized, conflicting thoughts and obstacles may surface, which is part of the meridian's self-healing process. These challenges arise to resolve the barriers preventing the full internalization of Superman.

ii. Treatment Methods

Acupuncture Therapy: The Basic Circulation Acupuncture points (Hegu, Zusanli, Taichong, Houxi) and Quchi (曲池, LI11) were tonified (補), with additional points Shaoshang (少商, LU11) and Hangu (陷谷, ST43) also tonified (補).

The patient was instructed to imagine himself as Superman and observe how Superman transforms and behaves.

Needle Retention Time: 20 minutes

iii. Post-Treatment Response

The patient reported having an answer to Superman's question, "Do you want to become great?" He responded, "I don't want to be someone great; I just want to be myself, and that will be something resembling you."

F. Session 6 (December 5)

i. Chief Complaints

The patient expressed frustration with self-guided Reinforcing the Healthy Factors exercises, comparing them to "pouring water into a bottomless jar." However, the practitioner highlighted the progress he had made, reminding him of the transformation in his perception of "society." Previously described as "a cold, sharp, massive gear that surrounds me and devours me," society was now perceived as "a stage full of possibilities prepared for me." The importance of continuing self-guided Reinforcing the Healthy Factors exercises was reemphasized.

ii. Treatment Methods

Acupuncture Therapy: The Basic Circulation Acupuncture points and Quchi were tonified (補), with additional points Shaoshang (少商, LU11) and Hangu (陷谷, ST43) also tonified (補).

The patient was instructed to imagine becoming Superman and observe how Superman transforms and behaves.

Needle Retention Time: 20 minutes

iii. Post-Treatment Response

The patient reflected that he had become accustomed to attacking his self-esteem since childhood. He shared that he used to equate confidence with arrogance and felt guilty about self-acceptance. However, he realized the importance of embracing his current self without shame.

Four weeks after the initial session, the patient's BDI and BAI scores were retested, both reducing to 0. The Hwa-Byung Scale also showed no remaining state of Hwa-Byung. The patient expressed astonishment and described his depression as having "vanished completely."

16. Treatment Outcomes

- 1) BDI (Beck's Depression Inventory): 0
- 2) BAI (Beck's Anxiety Inventory): 0
- 3) Hwa-Byung Scale: Personality 13 / State 0

The BDI score decreased from 52 to 0. The BAI score decreased from 27 to 0. The Hwa-Byung Scale also showed a reduction: the personality subscale decreased from 25 to 13, and the state subscale dropped from 38 to 0.

The patient's psychiatric medications are being tapered weekly. Aside from minor sleep issues, he reports living a healthy and comfortable daily life without any significant discomfort.

III. Discussion

Depression is a common psychiatric disorder, with a global lifetime prevalence of approximately 12% as of 2011, and a continuing rise in the prevalence rate.¹⁰ This growing trend imposes a significant societal burden, leading to increasing interest in finding more effective methods to address depression. Antidepressants rank as the third-largest pharmaceutical market category worldwide and show an annual growth rate of 10–15%.¹¹

Pharmacological treatments, including antidepressants, which are often considered essential and widely used over Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) or Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, typically fail to provide immediate therapeutic effects. Additionally, concerns about side effects and resistance to psychiatric care contribute to low adherence to medication.⁵

The BDI (Beck's Depression Inventory) and BAI (Beck's Anxiety Inventory) used to evaluate the treatment outcomes are self-report tools developed by Beck et al. The BDI assesses the severity of depression, while the BAI evaluates anxiety-related symptoms. Both tools consist of 21 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale (0–3). For the BDI, scores are categorized as follows: no depression (0–13), mild depression (14–19), moderate depression (20–28), and severe depression (29–63). Similarly, the BAI classifies scores as normal (0–7), mild anxiety (8–15), moderate anxiety (16–25), and severe anxiety (26–63).^{12,13}

In traditional Korean Medicine, the pathology of depression is explained through concepts such as Liver Qi stagnation (肝氣鬱結), overthinking (憂愁思慮), emotional suppression (憂思鬱怒), extreme emotional distress (情志過極), and weakened Spleen function (脾失健運). These conditions are often associated with the Liver (肝), Heart (心), and Spleen (脾).¹⁴ Treatments in Korean Medicine for depression typically involve acupuncture, herbal medicine, and traditional psychiatric therapy.^{15,16} While there are consistent reports on the antidepressant effects of herbal medicine and its improvements on systemic symptoms,¹⁷ such as those of An et al.⁵ evaluating effects in four week intervals, existing research on the immediate effects of traditional Korean Medicine treatments remains limited.

Mind Acupuncture or Saam Psychotherapy follows a distinct process from conventional acupuncture, as it integrates psychological counseling with acupuncture into a meridian-based psychotherapy. This approach modifies the patient's mental state by altering Qi (氣) flow in the meridians. Psychological counseling utilizes thoughts and emotions as both tools and objectives, while acupuncture aims to transform the Qi in the meridians. The combination of these methods allows for quicker changes in thoughts and emotions, with the added advantage of setting more concrete treatment goals compared to traditional acupuncture.⁹

Mind Acupuncture begins by concretizing the target emotion and diagnosing it in terms of Yin-Yang (陰陽), the Five Elements (五行), and Six Qi (六氣) or Three Yin-Three Yang (三陰三陽). The state of Qi is then addressed using the principles of Saam Acupuncture by applying the Five Shu Points (五輸穴) of the 12 meridians to stabilize or enhance the patient's emotional state. This process enables the rapid resolution of conscious emotions.⁸

Through the method of Qi-Transformation & Metaphor (氣化取象), Mind Acupuncture also facilitates treatment on an unconscious level. This process involves expressing emotions or physical responses through sensory metaphors and symbols, making unconscious conflicts conscious and allowing for their transformation.¹⁸

The treatment process of Mind Acupuncture is primarily categorized into Eliminating the Pathogenic Factors (去邪) and Reinforcing the Healthy Factors (養正). The Eliminating the Pathogenic Factors stage involves adjusting the Qi to clear negative emotions, while the Reinforcing the Healthy Factors stage focuses on strengthening positive emotions. Negative emotions often arise when healthy desires are frustrated. Mind Acupuncture encourages the simultaneous observation of both positive and negative emotions and desires. These positive desires and emotions are considered the most critical components of the entire treatment process. As such, Mind Acupuncture is sometimes referred to as a form of positive psychotherapy in traditional Korean Medicine. This aligns with the principle of "nourishing the positive naturally eliminates the negative" (養正即積自除). This process ensures that the goal of treatment is not just to alleviate suffering but also to promote personal growth and a better quality of life.⁸

Mind Acupuncture places significant emphasis on self-care by assigning "homework" to patients. In traditional treatments, patients often play a passive role. However, self-care in Mind Acupuncture actively engages patients in the therapeutic process, enhancing their self-efficacy and treatment effectiveness.

The acupuncture treatments in Mind Acupuncture are based on Saam Acupuncture principles, focusing on the specific functions of the Five Shu Points. Its primary prescription, the Basic Circulation Acupuncture,⁸ enhances the water-fire circulation (水昇火降), thereby optimizing meridian function. This method involves tonifying the wood

acupoint Taichong (太衝, LR3) from the wood meridian, the metal acupoint Hegu (合谷, LI4) from the metal meridian, the earth acupoint Zusanli (足三里, ST36) from the earth meridian, and the wood acupoint Houxi (後谿, SI3) from the Small Intestine meridian. By strengthening the elements of wood and metal, the method facilitates overall Qi circulation. Additionally, tonifying the earth element helps promote communication in the Middle Burner (Zhongjiao, 中焦), further supporting the upward-clearing, middle-communicating, and lower-warming (清上通中溫下) process of water-fire circulation. In Saam Acupuncture theory, the Small Intestine meridian is believed to play a role in promoting blood circulation and resolving blood stasis (瘀血). In the Small Intestine Jeonggyeok (小腸正格) prescription, the use of Houxi (後谿, SI3) as a representative point helps to improve blood flow and further aids in resolving blood stasis.

The Basic Circulation Acupuncture method centers on enhancing the overall flow of Qi through water-fire circulation, and additional Five Shu Points (五輸穴) are selected and applied based on the patient's specific condition. The method for selecting these Five Shu Points (五輸穴) is based on Hong-Gyeong Kim's theory, which classifies the points according to their three levels of Five Element attributes—Cheonbu-hyeol (天符穴), Ibu-hyeol (二符穴), and Sambu-hyeol (三符穴).¹⁹

The Qi Circulation Breathing technique employed in Mind Acupuncture lengthens and deepens the respiratory cycle. Inhalation strengthens the wood element (厥陰), while exhalation reinforces the metal element (陽明), further promoting the grand cycle of water-fire circulation.⁸

In this case study, the Eliminating the Pathogenic Factors process concretized the negative therapeutic target and applied Qi-Transformation & Metaphor, while the Reinforcing the Healthy Factors process focused on positive goals and applied Qi-Transformation & Metaphor. Combined with Saam Acupuncture principles, the treatment successfully adjusted meridian function, alleviated negative emotions, and strengthened positive ones.

The first session identified the patient's repetitive expressions of fear regarding "society." Using the Qi-Transformation & Metaphor technique, these fears were visualized and symbolized, enabling their processing. The Reinforcing the Healthy

Factors process further uncovered positive emotions and desires hidden beneath these fears. The initial resistance to imagining improvement eventually gave way, resulting in the creation of a "Superman" image as a representation of positive transformation. This process strengthened Qi circulation, enhanced self-regulation, and fostered a sense of empowerment.

Throughout treatment sessions two through six, immediate improvement continued to be observed, with the Reinforcing the Healthy Factors process contributing to maintaining the improved state.

In summary, this case study demonstrates the therapeutic potential of Mind Acupuncture for patients suffering from Severe Depressive Disorder, as evidenced by the following effects:

1. Immediate Emotional Relief:

The patient reported a sense of psychological liberation akin to "omnipotence" during the early sessions, indicating a rapid release of negative emotions.

2. Cognitive Restructuring:

Initially, the patient's thoughts and interpretations were dominated by negative beliefs. However, throughout the treatment, these were restructured positively. For example, the patient's negative perception of "society" was transformed into the idea of a "stage full of possibilities."

3. Unconscious Transformation:

Through the Qi-Transformation & Metaphor technique, unconscious contents were brought into awareness and processed therapeutically. Changes in the imagery—such as the behavior and dialogue of the symbolic figure "Superman"—reflected shifts in the unconscious.

4. Sustainable Self-Care:

A self-treatment protocol using Mind Acupuncture was introduced, enabling the patient to actively participate in his healing process and maintain a positive psychological state in daily life.

5. Reduction of Medication:

Throughout the treatment period, the patient gradually reduced his psychiatric medication while continuing to show improvements in depressive symptoms. This suggests that Mind Acupuncture may function as a complementary approach to pharmacological treatment.

IV. Conclusion

This case study demonstrated significant remission in a patient with severe Major Depressive Disorder following treatment with Mind Acupuncture within a short period. The results highlight the effectiveness of Mind Acupuncture in alleviating negative emotions, facilitating psychological restructuring, and fostering the formation of a positive self-image. By integrating psychological counseling and acupuncture, Mind Acupuncture offers a novel approach that induces rapid changes in emotions and thoughts. Compared to traditional pharmacological treatments, it addresses key limitations such as low adherence to medication and the initial time required for therapeutic effects to manifest, thereby positioning itself as a viable alternative treatment.

However, to generalize the therapeutic effects of Mind Acupuncture in treating depression, additional cases are required. Further research is also needed to confirm its long-term effects and applicability to various mental health disorders. Continuing systematic clinical studies and diverse case applications will be essential to further explore and expand the therapeutic potential of Mind Acupuncture in the future.

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