

Ernst Bohlmeijer

(Sub) clinical depression is a common and disabling disorder among the growing number of older adults. This warrants a public mental health approach in which prevention has to play a major role. Reminiscence, and life-review in particular, is possibly an attractive preventive intervention for older adults with depressive symptomatology. This thesis aims for a evidence-based implementation of reminiscence in mental health care in the Netherlands. In the first part of the thesis a review of the progress and emerging trends in conceptual and applied understanding of reminiscence is presented. In addition the results of two meta-analysis on the effects of reminiscence interventions on depression and psychological well-being are reported. The second part of this thesis introduces two new preventive reminiscence interventions. The effects on depressive symptomatology, meaning in life and mastery were explored in two pilot-studies. The results are presented and are followed by a general discussion about the future of reminiscence in mental health care.

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Reminiscence and depression in later life

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A landscape photograph showing a large, leafless tree in the foreground, standing in a field of green grass and white rocks. In the background, there are rolling hills under a clear blue sky. The tree has a thick, gnarled trunk and sparse, brownish leaves. The hills are covered in green grass and some white rocks. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

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