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EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS: PRELIMINARY ANALYSES OF A RCT USING A CELLULAR PHONE SELF-MONITORING PROGRAM (MOBILETYPE) TO DECREASE EARLY SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

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Background: Behavioural therapy often involves self-monitoring techniques to increase awareness about mood and stressful events. In turn, emotional self-awareness is likely to decrease symptoms of depression. Self monitoring also has potential as an early intervention tool for young people, particularly when mobile phones are used as a medium. Previous qualitative research indicates that self-monitoring via mobile phones increase emotional self-awareness with five categories proposed: awareness, identification, communication, contextualisation and decision-making.

Aims: This RCT investigates the relationships between self-monitoring, emotional self-awareness and depression using an early intervention mobile phone self-monitoring tool with young people at risk of developing depression.

Methods: Young people (between 14 and 24 years of age) identified by their GP as being at risk of depression were recruited by GPs in rural and metropolitan Victoria and randomly assigned to either the intervention group (where they monitored their mood, stress and daily activities) or the comparison group (where the questions about mood and stress were excluded). Participants completed baseline and follow-up measures of depression as well as measures of emotional self-awareness.

Results: Results will be presented on the effects of self-monitoring on emotional self-awareness, the effects of self-monitoring on depression, anxiety and stress and the relationship between emotional self-awareness and depression, anxiety and stress.

Conclusion: Emotional self-awareness as a mediator in the relationship between self-monitoring and depression will be discussed focusing on the relationships between

- (i) self-monitoring,
- (ii) emotional self-awareness and
- (iii) symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress.

Possible avenues for early intervention are suggested.