

## Roadmap for Relief from Psychiatric Symptoms - Recent Approach

Sivaraman S and Rajajeyakumar M\*

Chennai Medical College Hospital and Research Centre (SRM Group), Tamil Nadu, India

\*Corresponding author: Rajajeyakumar M, Assistant Professor, Department of Physiology, Chennai Medical College, Hospital and Research Centre (SRM Group), Irungalur, Trichy, Tamil Nadu-621105, India, Tel: +919751382650; E-mail: [rajakumar60@gmail.com](mailto:rajakumar60@gmail.com)

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### Introduction

Mental health is an integral component of a Healthy life. Mental health is a set of positive attributes. It is defined by WHO as “a state of wellbeing in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community” [1]. Mental health problems affect society as a whole, and not just a small, isolated segment. They are therefore a major challenge to global development. No group is immune to mental disorders [2]. Experiencing a mental illness is like a journey with a series of stages. Understanding the different impact of these stages helps us to manage them better and move towards recovery [3]. The individual having symptoms of Psychiatric illness passes through several levels before they get relief from the symptoms. In my understanding there are six various levels from which a person get relief from psychiatric symptoms depending upon their severity of the illness irrespective of their diagnosis.

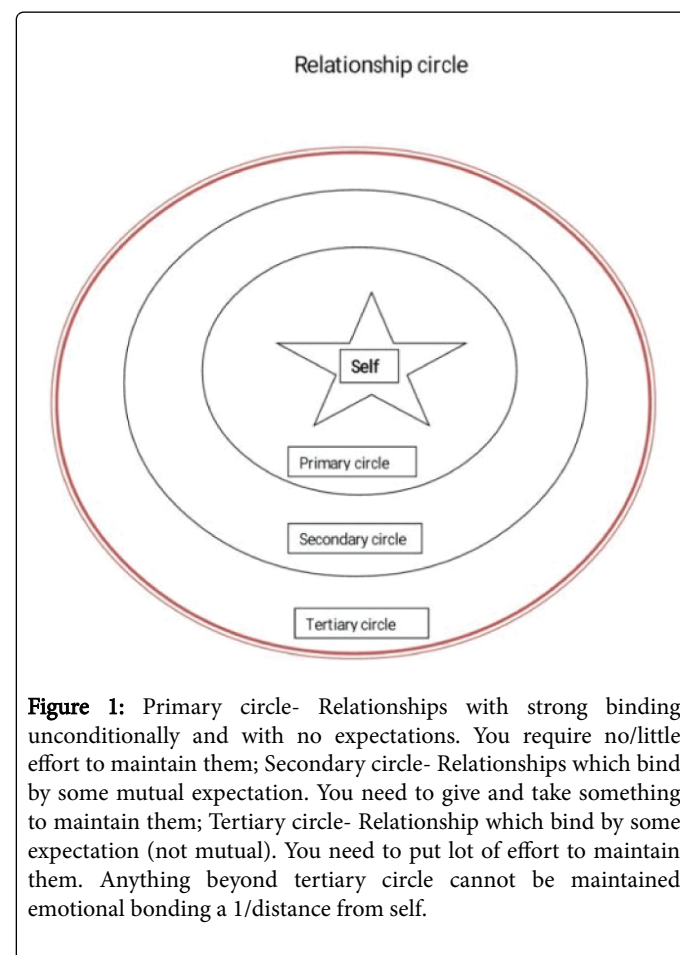
In the initial stages individual recognizes the psychiatric symptoms by self. If the level of the symptoms are of low severity and in addition if their coping skill is adequate, they may be able get relief from the Psychiatric symptoms by self will power.

However in subsequent stages even if individual recognize the symptoms by self and in addition if their coping skills are not adequate enough they may require additional supports from outside to get relief from the psychiatric symptoms.

The additional supports required may be a social support, professional counseling, psychotropic medications, other biological modes of treatment like rTMS wherever applicable & modified electroconvulsive therapy. If all the level of supports in combination are not able to help in relieving the psychiatric symptoms the individual become Treatment Resistant where Psychosurgery – another left out option wherever applicable may be the last options available. I didn't include Psychosurgery in the Table because it is not widely practiced. I believe this kind of categorization (Table 1) will be helpful in understanding the severity of the Psychiatric symptoms. Also it will be helpful to decide the Treatment of the Psychiatric illness in the given individual.

Though here I tried to generalize the Level of severity of Psychiatric symptoms and treatment options in one roof, all Psychiatric symptoms

may not develop or elicitable in this sequential order. Here individual with LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 psychiatric symptoms may not come to the Treatment setting itself. But it doesn't mean that they didn't suffer. They do suffer but they have the ability to maintain adequate functioning without professional support. In some instances (E.g. Schizophrenia, Mania) the first known Psychiatric symptoms can be at Level 3 depending upon the severity (Figure 1).



|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>LEVEL 1</b> | Person recognizes the psychiatric symptoms by self.<br>With self-coping skill symptoms got relieved. |
| <b>LEVEL 2</b> | Person recognizes the psychiatric symptoms by self.<br>Level 1 not successful.                       |

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|                | But on discussion with well-wishers (family members, relatives, friends...) symptoms got relieved.  |
| <b>LEVEL 3</b> | Person may/may not recognize the psychiatric symptoms by self.<br>Level 1 and 2 not successful.<br>On psychotherapy counselling with mental health professional, symptoms got relieved. |
| <b>LEVEL 4</b> | Person may/may not recognize the symptoms by self.<br>Level 1, 2 and 3 not successful.<br>On taking psychotropic from mental health professional, symptoms got relieved.                |
| <b>LEVEL 5</b> | Person may/may not recognize the symptoms by self.<br>Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 not successful.<br>On subjected to modified electro convulsive therapy, symptoms got relieved.                |
| <b>LEVEL 6</b> | Person may/may not recognize the symptoms by self.<br>Level 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 not successful.<br>He became treatment resistant.  |

**Table 1:** Pathway of relief from psychiatric symptoms. Note: Persons at LEVEL 1 and 2 won't come for treatment setting.

## References

1. World Health Organization (2007) Mental health: Strengthening mental health promotion.
2. [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/media/%20investing\\_mnh.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/media/%20investing_mnh.pdf)
3. <https://www.sane.org/mental-health-and-illness/5-the-journey-of-mental-illness>