

# The Effectiveness of Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) on Self-Compassion and Defense Mechanisms in Individuals with Depression

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## E d i t o r

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## R e v i e w e r s

**Reviewer 1:** Seyed Ali Darbani<sup>1</sup>  
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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence, "Depression is a common psychological issue that arises from the complex interaction of cognitive behavioral and biological factors" is too broad. It could be improved by specifying the primary factors (cognitive, behavioral, and biological) relevant to the focus of your study on ISTDP.

In the section detailing the stages of ISTDP, it would benefit from more specific examples of how emotional experiences were elicited and processed. For instance, describing how defense mechanisms were challenged during actual sessions can make the methodology clearer.

The sentence, "The results indicated that ISTDP increases self-compassion in individuals with depression" could be made more precise by specifying exact p-values, effect sizes, and confidence intervals for each component of self-compassion tested.

While defense mechanisms are discussed in the findings, it is not clear how "mature, immature, and neurotic" defense mechanisms were categorized and measured. Further clarification on this categorization would be helpful.

The section, "Future studies should include equal representation of men and women," is a bit narrow. Future research should also consider including more diverse groups in terms of socioeconomic status, severity of depression, and comorbid mental health conditions.

Response: Thanks for comment. Checked and revised.

### 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The article should provide a clearer justification for choosing ISTDP over other psychotherapies like CBT. Including a direct comparison of the advantages of ISTDP for treating depression and its unique mechanisms of action would strengthen the rationale.

The use of "convenience sampling" weakens the generalizability of your findings. Discuss how this limitation affects the external validity and consider mentioning any efforts made to mitigate this bias.

The exclusion criteria mentioned ("other types of depression...") could benefit from further elaboration. Specifically, what measures were used to identify postpartum or seasonal depression? Providing clarity would improve reproducibility.

The explanation of why ISTDP improves self-compassion (due to unconscious guilt) could be expanded to include a discussion of alternative mechanisms (such as cognitive restructuring or emotion-focused interventions). Providing a more well-rounded analysis of potential mechanisms would improve theoretical grounding.

The limitations section mentions a gender imbalance but does not address the broader generalizability concerns, such as cultural differences in the perception of depression and treatment responses. Consider discussing whether these results could be generalized beyond the sample population in Tehran.

The discussion could benefit from a more robust comparison with recent studies on the effectiveness of ISTDP, particularly those that have also used follow-up measures to assess the long-term sustainability of the therapy's effects.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.