

Psychosocial interventions for mental health promotion and depression prevention among older adults

Anna Forsman
Researcher

THL National Institute for Health and Welfare, Vaasa, Finland
Nordic School of Public Health NHV, Gothenburg, Sweden

INSTITUTET FÖR HÄLSA OCH VÄLFÄRD



Depression in later life

- Depressive disorders are the most common mental health problems among the growing older population
- Ca 12 % suffer from depressive disorders in Europe (65 +) (Copeland et al., 2004)
 - Ca 13 % in Finland (Kivelä, 2009)
 - Higher prevalence among women than men and among older than younger older adults
- The early detection and prevention of depressive symptoms and depression is an urgent public health issue



The concepts of promotion and prevention

- Mental health promotion
 - Focus on mental health resources
 - Aim to enable and maintain optimal mental health
 - Universal approach, broad participation and involvement



The concepts of promotion and prevention (cont.)

- Mental disorder prevention
 - Focus on risk factors for mental ill-health
 - Aim to reduce incidence, prevalence, and re-occurrence of mental disorders

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary



Important risk factors for mental ill-health among older adults

(Forsman et al., 2012)

- Retirement from work
- Decreased functional ability (and independency)
- Being forced to move out of one's own home, to change environment
- Social isolation and loneliness
- To lose friends, life partner, other family members



Systematic literature review and meta-analyses

Methods och results



Aim

- To collect and evaluate the effect of evidence-based psychosocial interventions for the primary prevention of depressive disorders among older adults



Literature searches

- Searches in 11 electronic databases
- Handsearching of 2 relevant journals



Interventions included in the review and evaluations

- 69 controlled intervention studies were included in the data material
- 44 of these were included in the meta-analyses



Evaluated intervention types

- Physical exercise
- Skill training
- Group support
- Reminiscence
- Social activities
- Multicomponent interventions



Results

- Based on all studies evaluated it could be found that:
- Life satisfaction increased
- Positive mental health improved
- Depressive symptoms decreased



Effective intervention types

Social activities

- Significant decrease of depressive symptoms
- Significant positive effects on positive mental health, life satisfaction and quality of life

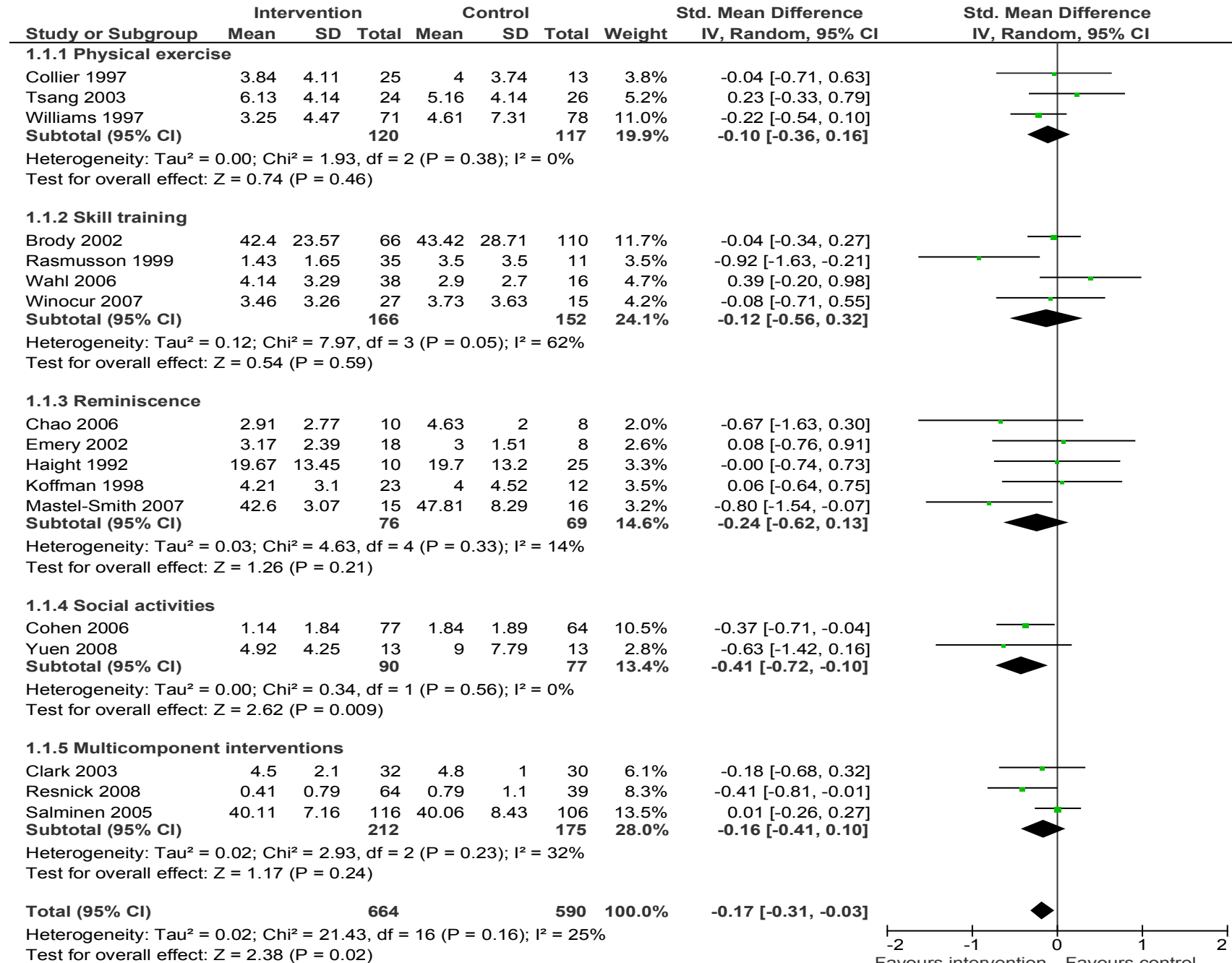
Interventions with a duration over 3 months

- Significant increase of quality of life, life satisfaction and positive mental health
- Significant decrease of depressive symptoms

Universal approach interventions overall more effective



Effect of psychosocial interventions on depressive symptoms



Examples of social activities and why they are effective

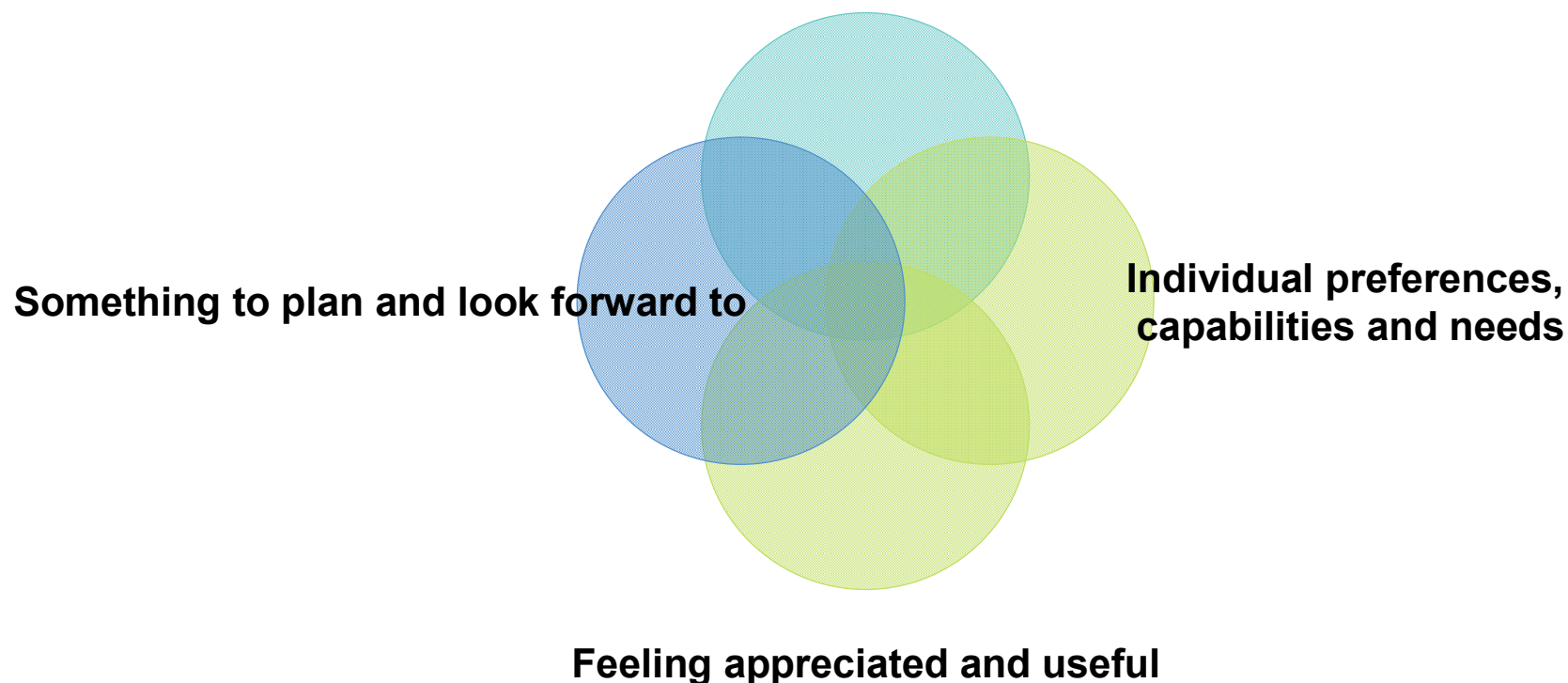
- **Mentorship**
 - Older adults are given new social roles through mentorship activities (Yuen, 2008)
 - Provides feelings of being needed and appreciated
 - Linking the younger and older generations
- **Creative activities**
 - Chorale singing, gardening, craft activities
 - Sense of belonging to a social group, common interests to discuss
- **'Family style mealtimes'** (Nijs et al., 2006)
 - To eat together with other nursing home residents at a nicely set table
 - Enhance social interaction and independency/dignity



What makes the social activities effective in promoting mental health?

(Forsman et al. 2012)

Social contacts and support



Journal of Aging and Health (2011)

Psychosocial Interventions for the Prevention of Depression in Older Adults: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

**Anna K. Forsman, MSocSc^{1,2},
Isabell Schierenbeck, PhD³, and
Kristian Wahlbeck, MD⁴**

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Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (2009)

Psychosocial interventions for prevention of depression in older people (Protocol)

Forsman A, Jane-Llopis E, Schierenbeck I, Wahlbeck K



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Health Promotion International (2011) The DataPrev Project e-supplement

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**ANNA K. FORSMAN^{1,2,3*}, JOHANNA NORDMYR^{3,4} and
KRISTIAN WAHLBECK^{1,5}**

¹University of Helsinki, Institute of Clinical Medicine, Helsinki, Finland ²Nordic School of Public Health, Gothenburg, Sweden ³THL National Institute for Health and Welfare, Mental Health Promotion Unit, Vaasa, Finland, Sarjakatu 2 C, 65320 Vaasa, Finland ⁴Vaasa Hospital District, Vaasa, Finland ⁵THL National Institute for Health and Welfare, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Helsinki, Finland

*Corresponding author. E-mail: anna.forsman@thl.fi

