Humor Therapy to Alleviate Depression

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Humor Therapy to Alleviate Depression
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PICO statement: For adults on an Inpatient mental health unit, participation in Humor Therapy groups will experience alleviated depression at a greater rate than those who participate in psychotherapy alone.

Gap in Research
- There is limited information pertaining to the purpose of Humor Therapy.
- The gap in research is that there is not enough evidence to support why Humor Therapy is so beneficial to individuals with a mental health diagnosis.

Methods
- To begin the research, the gap in service was determined which led to finding fifteen articles to support the problem.
- After the articles were reviewed and understood, the researchers found an expert on Humor Therapy that has had over five years of experience regarding this topic and interviewed the expert.
- The researchers assembled the synthesizing Knowledge Translation Manuscript.

Summary of Research & Findings
- Information from both the literature and interview show that Humor Therapy can be beneficial and improve quality of life among different populations with a mental health diagnosis.
- According to the expert for future implementations of Humor Therapy groups, the CTRS must know their client’s personality, fears, strengths, limitations, etc.
- Before implementing Humor Therapy groups, the CTRS must be aware of the client’s background, triggers that may affect participation, and any past trauma that could also deter clients from engaging.
- Assessing clients both before and after interventions is important in order to determine desired outcomes.
- Intervention methods include: funny jokes, patients pulling something from under the covers, practical jokes, videos, humor props, funny movies, and comic pictures.
- Interviewer stated to never use jokes regarding other individuals, but instead situations.
- The Likert scale is used to determine whether or not the intervention was successful, measures depression, anxiety, or how they feel before and after interventions.
- Some physical ways to assess if the intervention was successful include measuring heart rate and oxygen levels.
- This information hopefully will encourage other practicing CTRS to look into and research Humor Therapy.
- More CTRS should start implementing this therapy so they are able to formulate continued evidence based practice regarding Humor Therapy and the benefits that are linked to this intervention.

What is Humor Therapy?
- According to the literature, “there is no agreement on how humor should be defined” (Deaner & McConatha, 1997).
- “Comprehensive reviews investigating the link between humor and health make distinctions between humor and laughter. Martin, Bennett, & Langacher, provide similar definitions: “Humor can be used to refer to a stimulus, a mental process, or a response”. Laughter, however, is defined as “a psychophysiological response to humor that involves both characteristic physiological reactions and positive psychological shifts” (Chang, Tsai, & Hsieh, 2013).
- There is no one way to implement Humor Therapy.
- In a study by Chang, Tsai, & Hsieh, adolescents who participated in a Laughter Qigong Program showed improvement on mood states, and the individuals experienced a decline in stress and cortisol levels (Chang, Tsai, & Hsieh, 2013).

Knowledge Translation Plan
- The model states that adults on an Inpatient mental health unit with depressive symptoms, will be assessed pre and post by the CTRS using a self-perceived tool.
- Participation in Humor Therapy groups are being shown to alleviate depression at a greater rate and show benefits socially, cognitively, physically, and emotionally.
- Expert states and has found that from participation in Humor Therapy, individuals are more likely to experience many benefits.
- Emotional benefits include decreased anxiety, increased feelings of pleasure, alleviates fear of the unknown and new situations, and abandonment of anger and denial of reality.
- Social benefits include creation of relationships, eliminates barriers, and encourages group connections.
- Cognitively, Humor Therapy provides ability to increase alertness, communication, memory, and learning retention.
- Physical benefits include stimulation of blood flow, increase of endorphins, and may relax muscles of the body.
- There are multiple ways to implement this kind of therapy with some examples such as joking, watching humorous videos, and viewing comic strips.
- After researching Humor Therapy and finding evidence from the interviewee to support the PICD statement, the researchers found that Humor Therapy does alleviate overall symptoms of depression.

Limitations & Recommendations
- Humor Therapy is not a well know subject or topic throughout the RT field or in general.
- Limited evidence and ERP using this type of therapy.
- Low quantity of participants and sample sizes throughout studies.
- Details were miscommunicated between researchers of this study, resulting in interview questions not containing specified population.
- Majority of the literature was dated back more than 5 years.
- One expert limited amount of information regarding Humor Therapy obtained by the researchers.
- The study was not physically conducted by student researchers.
- The researchers recommend that for future studies it would be beneficial to talk with multiple experts regarding their experiences with Humor Therapy.
- Also, recruiting larger sample sizes and continuing Humor Therapy programs for an extended period of time in future studies would provide more knowledge regarding the topic.
- Lastly, clinical populations would produce the most accurate outcomes.

Protocol

Get to know your patients to determine individual triggers that may interfere with therapy. Examples include: past traumatic events, fears, and phobias.

Assessments

Pre and post assessments used to determine a change in mood, and overall social, cognitive, physical, and emotional benefits.

Outcomes

Decrease in anxiety, promotes feelings of pleasure emerge, minimizes fear of unknown and new situations, may allow to release anger without hurting others, and offers an escape or denial of reality, establish relationships, breaks down physical barriers, promotes social bonding and group cohesion, and provides opportunity for social control, reflects social change, and allows to voice social conflict, stimulates alertness, enhances memory, improves communication, increases learning retention, enhances respiration, clears lungs, stimulates muscles including chest, abdomen, arms, legs, and face, relaxes muscle tension, increases blood pressure, increases heart rate followed by a decrease of the same, increases movement of oxygen and nutrients through the body and increases production of endorphins and decreases pain.

References


References