

Traditional Correspondence as Reminiscence Therapy for the Elderly

Authors : Paulina Pergoł, Paulina Pergoł, Tomasz Kryczka

Abstract : Aging of societies is a phenomenon that is visible all over the world. The above has social, economic, and medical consequences. Many methods of pro-health stimulation of the elderly, improving cognitive functions and quality of life, are described in the world literature. The most frequently used method of activating the elderly is physical activity, in which, in addition to standard exercise programs, activities such as dance, tai chi, and yoga are often introduced. The introduction of physical activity may be limited due to the disability that often accompanies people aged 65+. Other activating methods mentioned in the literature are therapies with the participation of animals - animal therapy or plant therapy - hortitherapy, as well as music therapy, which is increasingly popular. All of the above-mentioned therapeutic methods require the involvement of a person who would conduct the so-called occupational therapist, which can be a financial barrier for many nursing homes. Researchers all over the world are trying to find solutions that can be applied in any care institution, even in those where financial support for running such centers is small. One of the forms of therapy that is recommended in the group of elderly people and which does not require large financial outlays is the so-called reminiscence therapy based on recalling personal experiences and experiences. Thanks to reminiscence therapy, seniors can return to happy moments in their lives. Research shows that reminiscence therapy increases self-esteem and reduces symptoms of depression. The method of activating older people with the use of correspondence can be an effective and low-cost form of therapy, as shown by the pilot study conducted in 2019 as part of the Queen Silvia Nursing Award competition, consisting in a systematic exchange of correspondence between volunteers and residents of the Nursing Home. This study was conducted with the participation of a small group of participants, therefore, in order to identify and prove the beneficial effect of this form of activation, it should be carried out on a larger group of respondents using standardized scales assessing various psychological parameters.

Keywords : nursing, elderly care, psychiatry, psychology

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