

Mental Health of the Elderly: Evaluating a Newly Developed Structured Life-Review Manual Using a Within-Subjects Pre-Post Design

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Abstract : Introduction: A promising method to improve mental health of elderly people are structured life-reviews. We report the evaluation of our newly developed manual for structured life-reviews. The manual was created with the emphasis on straightforward application so that it can be used by professionals and lay people alike. Method: A within-subjects pre-post design is used to evaluate the manual using a geriatric depression scale and a self-integrity measure. Participants are elderly people living by themselves and in nursing homes. Findings: It is shown that elderly people perceive the structured life-review as a very positive experience. More importantly, it is shown that a negative trend of self-integrity and geriatric depression is significantly reduced by the intervention. Conclusion: The data suggest that the manual contributes positively to self-perception and mental health. We conclude that this newly developed device is very valuable to augment elderly care.

Keywords : structured life-review, self-integrity, geriatric depression, prevention research

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