



DESIGN AND APPLICATION OF A MUSIC THERAPY PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

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INTRODUCTION

In the last years western societies are aging and, as a consequence, the increase of neurodegenerative disorders has led to more people in a situation of fragility and dependency. Professional care of people with dementia is growing in our country. However, in most cases is carried out by relatives. Previous studies warn of the negative effects on the quality of life of family caregivers since they are exposed to a stress situation that can trigger anxiety and depression.

The aim of this study is to design and develop a music therapy program based on song composition, which attempt to reduce anxiety and depression symptoms and improve the quality of life of caregivers.

Song composition is a therapeutic intervention within the music therapy field defined as 'The process of creating, composing and/or recording lyrics and music by the client and the therapist within a therapeutic relationship to address the psychological, emotional, cognitive and communicative needs of the client'. (Wigram & Baker, 2005).

This intervention has into account the theory of Dr Héctor Fiorini about the Creating Psyche and tertiary processes, which considers that the clinic is a creative space where the patient and the therapist work to find _____. The basic premise is that creativity enables human processes and not only concerning the artistic world.

METHOD

Location and beneficiaries

This program is carried out at National Reference Centre for Alzheimer's and Dementia Care's (CREA) of Imsero, in collaboration with the University of Salamanca. 23 families participate in the program (spouse, son/daughter, brother/sister).

Contents of the intervention

The therapeutic process of this intervention is divided in four phases:

• Exploration

This first phase is focused on the establishment of the therapeutic link and interrelationship between the relatives, the music and the music therapist through experiences that allow explore new ways of communication.

• Writing lyrics

In the second phase, the emotional aspects of the person are studied in depth through the integration of the arts, such as music, painting, photography or poetry. These different artistic expressions provide a symbolic language to the person that is more immediate than the word. This way, the group begins to create the lyric based on their feelings, thoughts and sensations reflected along the therapeutic process. Once the lyric is finished, we move to the next phase.

• Music composition

The group agrees on the melody, style or musical genre, the instruments and the structure of the song that best adapts to the content of the lyric previously written. Most of the group members have not had musical experiences before. Consequently, the role of the music therapist is to facilitate the process, assuring that the group creates a composition felt as their own and that expresses their own needs. After creating the song, time is given for any modifications.

• Recording and closure

In the recording is determined who is going to sing and if he/she is going to need musical support from the music therapist. Although the objective of the intervention is not a product esthetically 'perfect', it is important that the group is familiarized and satisfied with the result.

The therapeutic process finishes with the recording. A CD, which contains the song, the lyrics and pictures of the most significant moments of the group, is delivered to the participants. This way, the participants have the opportunity to listen to the song any time, relive the experience or share it with relatives and friends.

An intervention program has been design to be conducted in 12 sessions of 60 minutes during 12 weeks from April to June 2017.



Table 1

Phases of intervention, objectives and techniques.

Phases	Objectives	Music therapy techniques
1. 'Exploration' (sessions 1-4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a space of confidence. • Encourage the exploration of emotions and their expression. • Discover new ways of communication through creativity and musical language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical improvisation. • Therapeutic singing. • Receptive methods.
2. 'Writing lyrics' (sessions 5-7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the key feelings that need to be expressed. • Reflect moods, thoughts and emotions through poems. • Explore the relationship with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical improvisation. • Therapeutic singing. • Receptive methods. • Art integration. • Songwriting.
3. 'Music composition' (sessions 8-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote decision making. • Encourage creativity and emotion expression. • Connect with each other sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Songwriting • Therapeutic signing.
4. 'Recording and closure' (session 11-12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce self-esteem and identity. • Strengthen the sense of belonging to the group and group cohesion. • Consolidate the emotions shared along the therapeutic process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Songwriting. • Therapeutic signing.



Groups are formed by a maximum of 10 participants, who are distributed in different groups depending on their preference of schedule, sociodemographic data and data extracted from instruments of measurement. Each session lasts 60 minutes. Each session is video recorded and the more relevant remarks are registered for a further analysis of the intervention.

Evaluation design

The evaluation consists on a pre- post-monitoring design. The instruments used for the anxiety, self-esteem, depression and quality of life evaluation are the following:

- State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE)
- Beck Depression Inventory-Second Edition (BDI-II)
- The Short Form-36 Health Survey (SF-36)

CONCLUSIONS

This intervention program in music therapy aims to improve the quality of life of caregivers of people with dementia. Music composition is a therapeutic tool that helps people reflect their past, present and future, contact with unconscious processes, confront difficulties in their intrapersonal experiences, and project their feeling through the music.

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