

Awards IIBA - 2017

Social Work

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Summary - Social project "My body and I"

The purpose of this project is an achievement of a body awareness group in patients with several mental disorders in long of evolution using adult males and females of ranging ages and several socio-cultural conditions.

This project has been carried out since 2010, contributing with a Reichian device of corporal work which is based on expanding and consolidating the forms of insertion of the Bioenergetics Analysis and contributing to the psychic and corporal improvement of the patients.

-Summary

During the last 6 years, I've been conducting this volunteer work weekly with one-hour long for CAPS patients, (CAPS Stand for Psychosocial Care Center, a federal government program).

Patients are between the ages of 20 and 70. Adult males and females with long lasting psychiatric disorders and various socio-cultural conditions.

The Project stemmed from our intention to spread Bioenergetics Analysis to a broader public and reflect on new possibilities of intervention for mental health treatment. That led us to propose, to one of the CAPS units, the exercise classes in BA. The institutional work helps to extend the limits of private clinics. We wished to shift the therapeutic focus from the centrality on the disease to the quality of life with emphasis on health promotion.

-Declaration about social situation that the project is addressing -

The patients who benefit from the project are people with various economic conditions, but mainly low purchasing power, or homeless, that use (CAPS) as the unique possible form of mental health care and treatment.

The importance of this project

Through the project we were able to contribute with the current proposals of public health that think of therapeutic approaches and that respect the subject in its difference and singularity in substitution to asylums and manicomial policies. I created a way to make the group feasible for these patients by always having a coordinator and two assistants for the needs of the group. The users often, due to lack of body awareness, present difficulties to exercise. We often lend our own bodies as a reference to facilitate understanding of the movement. For example: hold my pelvis to see how it moves from side to side so they can make the move.

The Project aimed by means of bioenergetics exercises, to increase the body awareness of the participants in order to improve self- awareness, self-expression and to promote energy balance. We work to increase breathing capacity and energy flow, seeking to integrate the self through thought, feeling and action. Each meeting tries to provide contact, inclusiveness, differentiation, recognition, affective nutrition and binding. After these years of work with strong adherence of patients, (20-25 people present at each class, remaining assiduous for an average of three years). In 2016, the work was extended to one more unit of CAPS, and two groups of six bioenergetics therapists currently form the team that conducts this work.

After six years of this project I feel that I disclosed the Bioenergetics and I built a method of work with my experience and my repertoire. I was able to approach

the mental illness without fear and encourage colleagues to do the same. I brought many people along with me and multiplied the experience by bringing light to a tough subject, and one that actually haunts everyone. It is not easy to deal with a mental disease, but the learning strengthens us.

I am sure that with this experience I became a better therapist.

--- Methodology

Exercises using the fundamental concepts of Bioenergetics Analysis with the goal of:

- Extend body awareness
- Capture feelings and emotions
- Awareness and relief of tensions
- Capture the meaning of each participant, to be alive, and to feel pleasure.

The exercises started individually and were expanded according to the bond and trust gradually established in the group.

Every beginning and end of each group we asked - how are you feeling? Perceptions are reported and with by these records we follow the evolution of each participant.

- Below we can find some patients testimonials after a session:

"I felt dizzy but I'm fine"

"I got tired but I'm glad"

"" I felt my body different, I'm freer! ""

"" I learned that everything together becomes lighter." "

"I learned that the human being needs to be touched."

"" I learned that I'm in the right place. ""

-TOOLS

Grounding exercises

Breathing

Stretching, self-massage and self-touches

Body language games

Singing and dancing

Expression workouts, expansion and contraction, always with a lot of creativity

The massage was gradually included

-Outcomes

What differs this work from others at the institution is the emphases on the body as the means of influence and perception about the psyche.

They are patients who have sensitive bodies and chronic stresses, often caused by medicines. They feel pain, untouched, with sensations of estrangement or without delimitation of depersonalized inside or outside.

Some results are noticed; change of gestures, postures and facial expression, increased awareness, mobility, communication, and a higher level of interpersonal contact. What was also noticed was the expression of emotions that not just increased, but became more direct and less aggressive. In fact, we could see more demonstration of affect, and subtle initiatives to build ties.

The other positive point included in the activities was to commemorate dates like Easter, Festa Junina Party and Christmas. It helped to create a notion of cycle, rhythm, and also provided to revive affective memories with possibilities for new meanings and new shares.

-Project calendar

The proposal is to create open groups without determined time.

The project started in July 2010 at the CAPS Itaim and remains active.

In February 2016, a group started in a second CAPS, expanding the project.

This project also contributes to the improvement of the students in training and put all students in front of mental disease. Which instigate themselves to increase their knowledge at coordinating of groups and mental diseases. Currently the volunteers are students of IABSP under the coordination of Lucia Magano.

Biography

Lowen Alexander: Bioenergetic Exercise

Gama e Rego: Reichianos books

Hoffmann Richard: Bioenergetic

Pankow Gisela: O homem e sua psicose

Lucia Magano -IABSP