
LONG-TERM INTEGRATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY OF ANXIETY DISORDERS IN MITRAL VALVE PROLAPSE PATIENTS: THE FACTORS OF MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

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Introduction

Mitral valve prolapse (MVP) is a common cardiac pathology. There are some cases of a reduction in the intensity of clinical symptoms after the courses of psychotherapy and anxiolytic treatment of MVP patients (Stavrakaki, et al., 1991; Scordo, 2007).

Objectives

To identify personality characteristics, emotional features and stress factors in MVP patients suffering anxiety disorders (AD).

Aims

To investigate the factors of mental health improvement under the long-term systemic integrative psychotherapy in MVP patients with AD.

Methods

During 15 years 14 MVP patients with AD attended integrative psychotherapy on request.

Psychological and clinical examinations of the patients were made before and after psychotherapy courses. Psychological testing embraced the assessment of 'quality of life' indicators by VAS, DISS and the Ryff Scales (PWB) as well as anxiety level (Spilberger Scales), and the level of frustration tolerance (Rosenzweig test).

The psychotherapy program consisted of the elements of CBT, Gestalt therapy, Interpersonal psychotherapy, and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy.

Results

72,2% patients demonstrated valid improvements of QOL self-rating, reduction of anxiety level, and increasing of frustration tolerance after psychotherapy. Moreover, medical diagnostics showed a significant reduction in the depth of MVP.

Positive dynamics was associated with development of personality reflection, his/her emotional experience recognition, with improved skills of self regulation, and growing awareness of actual needs, individual purposes and resources of personality.

Conclusions

The importance of personality reflection and working on traumatic experiences and personality problems to reveal inner resources; as well as extension of one's repertory of coping processes were specified as facilitating factors.