

## **P-1146 - APPROACHING OLDER ADULTS' SELF-ESTEEM AND CONGRUENCE: THE IMPACT OF PERSON-CENTERED THERAPY**

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**Introduction:** In view of the increase in longevity, aging brings stressors that defy older adults' life across the aging continuum.

**Objectives:** This research aims at evaluating how person-centered therapy ('PCT') facilitates the degree of self-esteem and congruence of older adults.

**Methods:** Information was gathered by a research tool composed of two parts: (a) a demographic questionnaire and (b) the Self-Esteem Scale ('SES'). The research sample comprised 40 elderly people between the ages of 65-93, from both genders, who completed eight sessions of PCT.

**Results:** After the therapeutic process, results indicated an increase of the participants' degree of self-esteem. It was verified a positive effect of PCT on older adults' self-esteem, which was achieved by an increase of their congruence level.

**Conclusions:** The results of this study are discussed in the context of existing research on self-esteem and successful aging of older adults, focusing in particular upon the perceived tensions between the determination to experience congruence and the challenges of old age. Interventions with older adults may benefit from clearly understanding self-esteem as an important component for promoting successful aging and reducing health disparities. Recommendations for future research on older adults' PCT impact on self-esteem, as well as suggestions for PCT and clinical practice with older adults are also presented.