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SCHIZOPHRENIA (AND OTHER PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS) COGNITIVE-BEHAVIOUR THERAPY RESEARCH PROGRAMME

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Abstract

The present study evaluated the effectiveness of a treatment that combined techniques from Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to alleviate the psychological distress and symptom severity resultant from psychotic-type disorders. This treatment (EVoLVE Therapy; an acronym for Exposing Virtues of Living Valued Existences) was designed to primarily target the psychological distress associated with psychotic disorders and secondarily to facilitate improvement in psychotic-type symptoms. Participants in this study were selected based on previous diagnoses of schizophrenia, schizoaffective, and other psychiatric disorders with psychotic features. Seven participants, who had each been long-term consumers of mental health services, completed 10 weeks of therapy. Post-graduate students, in training to become professional psychologists, delivered supervised therapy using a structured treatment manual written by the researcher. Pre-treatment, post-treatment and 5-week follow-up data were collected, using a variety of measures to assess the effectiveness of treatment. Results were quite positive overall, with some clients making considerable improvements in a number of domains. All 7 participants showed a decrease in symptom severity after treatment. In addition, 6 out of the 7 participants reported an improved quality of life following treatment. Marked improvement in negative affect was also evident, with a slight improvement in positive affect noted.

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Table of Contents

Page

Title Page.....i

Abstract.....ii

Acknowledgements.....iii

Table of Contents.....iv

List of Tables.....ix

List of Figures.....x

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION..... 1

1.0 Project Overview..... 1

1.1 Defining Schizophrenia..... 3

1.2 Mood Disorders..... 6

1.3 Epidemiology..... 10

1.3.1 Age and gender differences..... 10

1.3.2 Cultural and socio-economic factors..... 10

1.3.3 Comorbid disorders..... 13

1.4 Psychological Distress and Schizophrenia..... 13

1.5 Aetiology..... 14

1.5.1 Stress-diathesis model..... 15

1.5.2 Cognitive theory of schizophrenia..... 17

1.6 Course and Outcome..... 19

1.7 Emotions..... 21

1.7.1 Negative emotions..... 21

1.7.2 Health engendering effects of positive emotions..... 22

1.8 Quality of Life..... 23

1.9 Treatment..... 24

1.9.1 History..... 24

1.9.2 Medication..... 25

1.9.3 Psychological treatments..... 26

1.10 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy..... 28

1.11 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Schizophrenia..... 29

1.11.1 Summary of effectiveness..... 29

1.11.2 Background and major aims..... 31

1.11.3 Combination cognitive-behavioural therapy..... 33

1.12 Manualised Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy for Schizophrenia..... 35

1.13 Brief Therapy..... 37

1.14 Acceptance and Commitment Therapy..... 38

1.15 EVoLVE Therapy..... 43

1.16 Components of EVoLVE Therapy and their Rationale..... 44

1.16.1 Session 1..... 44

1.16.2 Session 2..... 45

1.16.3 Session 3..... 47

1.16.4 Session 4..... 48

1.16.5 Session 5..... 49

1.16.6 Session 6..... 51

1.16.7 Session 7..... 53

1.16.8 Session 8..... 54

1.16.9 Session 9..... 55

1.16.10 Session 10..... 57

1.17 The Present Study..... 57

1.17.1 Goals of the present study..... 58

CHAPTER 2. METHOD..... 60

2.0 Design..... 60

2.1 Setting..... 60

2.2 Participants..... 62

2.2.1 Referral and selection..... 62

2.2.2 Inclusion/Exclusion criteria..... 62

2.3 Assessment..... 64

2.4 Assessor..... 66

2.5 Semi-Structured Interview..... 66

2.6 Self-Report Measures..... 68

2.7 Therapists..... 73

2.8 Treatment Manual..... 74

2.9 Intervention..... 75

2.10 Treatment Materials..... 76

2.11 Treatment Integrity..... 77

2.12 Procedure..... 77

2.13 Ethical Considerations..... 79

2.13.1 Access to participants..... 79

2.13.2 Informed consent..... 80

2.13.3 Confidentiality..... 81

2.13.4 Potential harm to participants..... 82

2.13.5 Uses of the information..... 83

2.13.6 Conflict of interest or roles..... 84

CHAPTER 3. RESULTS..... 85

3.0 An Overview of the Results Section..... 85

3.1 Participant Characteristics..... 86

3.2 Pre- and Post-Treatment, and 5-Week Follow-Up Assessment Results.... 86

3.2.1 Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale Expanded Version 4.0..... 86

3.2.2 Brief Symptom Inventory..... 95

3.2.3 Revised Schizophrenia Quality of Life Questionnaire..... 103

3.3 Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) Scores..... 105

3.4 Individual PANAS Profiles Across Time..... 109

CHAPTER 4. DISCUSSION..... 114

4.0 Summary of the Findings..... 114

4.1 Limitations of the Present Study..... 122

4.2 Recommendations for Future Research..... 125

4.3 Conclusion..... 128

References..... 130

APPENDICES 151

Appendix A – DSM-IV Criteria for Schizophrenia 152

Appendix B – Memorandum of Understanding 153

Appendix C – Information sheet for participants 155

Appendix D – Assessor's Confirmation of Participant's Ability to Provide Informed Consent Form 158

Appendix E – Research Consent Form 159

Appendix F – My Contract Form 160

Appendix G – Sociodemographic Questionnaire 161

Appendix H – Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) 162

Appendix I – Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) 171

Appendix J – Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) 173

Appendix K – Revised Schizophrenia Quality of Life Questionnaire (SQLS-R4) 174

Appendix L – Client EVoLVE sessions 178

Appendix M – EVoLVE Therapy Evaluation Form 180

Appendix N – EVoLVE Therapy Treatment Manual 184

List of Tables

		Page
Table 1.	Summary of the Measures Used	73
Table 2.	Summary of Participant Characteristics	87
Table 3.	Total Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Scores for Pre-Treatment, Post-Treatment, and 5-Week Follow-Up	88
Table 4.	Revised Schizophrenia Quality of Life Questionnaire (SQLS-R4) Group Mean Scores and Standard Deviations at Pre-Treatment, 1-Week Post-Treatment and 5-Week Follow-Up	103
Table 5.	Scores on the Revised Schizophrenia Quality of Life Questionnaire (SQLS-R4)	104
Table 6.	PANAS Group Mean Scores and Standard Deviations Across Time for the Positive Scale	106
Table 7.	PANAS Group Mean Scores and Standard Deviations Across Time for the Negative Scale	107

List of Figures

		Page
Figure 1.	Cognitive behaviour therapy for schizophrenia model (D. Turkington and D. Kingdon Presentation at the meeting on Psychological Approaches to the Management of Psychosis, Withington Hospital, University of Manchester, 1994). Reprinted from McGovern and Turkington (2001) p.163	35
Figure 2.	Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Total score at pre- and post-intervention and 5-week follow-up for each participant	89
Figure 3.	Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Paranoid Disturbance Factor score for each participant at pre- and post-intervention and at 5-week follow-up	90
Figure 4.	Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Thought Disturbance Factor score for each participant at pre- and post-intervention and at 5-week follow-up	91
Figure 5.	Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Withdrawal/Motor Retardation Factor score for each participant at pre- and post-intervention and at 5-week follow-up	92
Figure 6.	Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Anxiety/Depression Factor score for each participant at pre- and post-intervention and at 5-week follow-up	93
Figure 7.	Mean group scores on the four Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) Factors at pre- and post-treatment and 5-week follow-up	94
Figure 8.	Mean group Total Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS) score at pre- and post-treatment and 5-week follow-up	95
Figure 9.	Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) group mean scores on all Primary Symptom Dimensions and Global Indices at pre- and post-treatment and 5-week follow-up	96
Figure 10.	Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 1 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up	97

Figure 11. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 2 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up..... 98

Figure 12. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 3 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up..... 99

Figure 13. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 4 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up..... 100

Figure 14. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 5 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up..... 101

Figure 15. BSI Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 6 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up..... 101

Figure 16. Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Primary Symptom Dimension scores and Global Indices scores for participant 7 at pre- and post-treatment and at 5-week follow-up..... 102

Figure 17. Revised Schizophrenia Quality of Life Questionnaire (SQLS-R4) scores for each participant at pre-treatment (baseline), post-treatment (F1), and follow-up (F2)..... 105

Figure 18. Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) group mean scores pre-treatment, during baseline and treatment, and 5-week follow-up..... 108

Figure 19. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 1..... 110

Figure 20. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 2..... 110

Figure 21. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 3..... 111

Figure 22. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 4..... 111

Figure 23. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 5..... 112

Figure 24. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 6..... 112

Figure 25. Scores on the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) across assessment and treatment sessions for participant 7..... 113