

Combinaison of actor's play training and assertiveness program to reduce difficulties in self-affirmation: A preliminary study.

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BACKGROUND. Difficulties in assertiveness are often reported by individuals suffering from various psychological problems involving anxiety, depression. Indeed, assertiveness is an important feature contributing to well-being: patients suffering from that kind of difficulties usually feel distress (Cottraux, 2001). Cognitive and behavioral therapeutic procedures have already proven their effectiveness in helping these patients. The aim of our study was to test the efficacy of new therapeutic procedure, inspired by the third wave of behavioral and cognitive psychotherapies.

METHOD. Our study used an actor's play training combined with an assertiveness program which comprised ten sessions: five of which were animated by an actress and five by a psychologist-psychotherapist. Each actor play's session was given alternatively with a psychoeducation's session. Twenty subjects participated in this program. They fulfilled these pre and post-test assessments: social self-efficacy questionnaire, self-affirmation scales, self-esteem scale, communication scale, anxiety and depression scales. Repeated measures' ANOVAs have been used to compare pre and post-test results.

RESULTS. Results showed statistically significant improvements on each dependent variable, except for the Communication Scale. The higher effects appeared for Beck Depression Inventory and Social Self-efficacy Questionnaire which presented an effect size of 0,74 and 0,56, respectively. Scores on STAI-A and B and on Self-affirmation Scale were over the effect size's threshold. However, these improvements don't attain control group's scores reported in the scientific literature.

DISCUSSION. The results highlighted that our program is effective in reducing difficulties in assertiveness. Clinical implications of our results will be discussed.