

Mentalization-based Group Therapy Adherence and Quality Scale (MBT-G-AQS): A comparison with patients' point of view about the quality of a MBTGroup

Miki Bonizzoni (University of Pavia, Lodi, Italy) E. Squillari, E. Caverzasi

Objective

Mentalization-Based Treatment (MBT) is a specific treatment for Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) that combines both individual and group psychotherapy.

Mentalization-based Group Therapy Adherence and Quality Scale (MBT-G-AQS) is a reliable and useful instrument - focused on therapists' interventions – to measure the level of mentalization in the group (Folmo, Karterud et al., 2017). The first aim of our study is to compare the scores of MBT-G-AQS (rated by an observer clinician) to the judgments expressed by the patients regarding their perception of the therapy's adequacy and quality. A second aim is to search a difference in the scoring at two times of the therapy: first six months vs last six months of a group-treatment's year.

Methods

We collected ten sessions for each period and we rated all items for quality on a 1-7 likert scale (level 4 is "good enough"). Then we divided the 19 items of the scale in nine main domains, that we transposed in a nine-questions interview for the patients. We submitted the nine-item questionnaire to patients at two times: after six months (T1) and at the end of the twelve months treatment (T2).

Results

The results show that the therapy's adequacy and quality is on average evaluated higher by patients than by the clinician. The results also illustrate that while the observer clinician recorded a constant adherence to the MBT-G model and therapy quality, patients perceived a statistically significant improvement in some areas from T1 to T2, i.e. a deeper and more emphatic exploration of patients' experiences and mental states by clinicians and a better management of psychic equivalence and "high temperature" situations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we could suppose that there are further features in an MBT-G therapy, not measured by MBT-GAQS, that develop over time and contribute to the patient's experience of affective holding and empathy.