

Use of Themed Occupational Therapy to Treat Assisted Living and Nursing Home Patients as an Alternative to Traditional Rehabilitative Therapy

Mariam Asper

Caleb Alley

Carl Hoegerl, DO, MSc, FACP – Faculty member

College of Osteopathic Medicine

BACKGROUND:

Many patients work with physical and occupational therapists to improve their health. While therapy is beneficial for many patients, adherence to physical and occupational therapy is difficult. A magic trick themed therapy has been studied in patients with other diagnoses such as hemiplegia and cerebral palsy with positive results in bimanual use, but there are no current studies on post-stroke patients (Green, et al.)

We want to use God's gift of human curiosity to give better therapy to post-stroke patients.

METHODS:

This prospective pilot study was conducted at a community on patients with a history of stroke and/or depression. To establish a baseline, patients were screened. Patients were taught magic tricks for one hour per week for four weeks.

RESULTS:

Due to circumstances beyond our control, we did not get the correct patient population. When we started to teach them the maneuvers we realized many had a hard time learning them due to visual impairments.

We persisted, however, and on subsequent visits, they were excited to be there and we were able to work with them again. The enjoyment and curiosity of the magic tricks we taught fueled their desire to practice and become competent. It is likely that over a longer period of time and with more instruction their skills/hand dexterity would have improved.

CONCLUSIONS:

With the understanding that the goal of physical therapy is to improve somatic function through relearning physical motions, it is our conclusion that magic therapy shows efficacy in a treatment plan. Overall this experience taught us about clinical research. It all starts with one idea or one question. We learned that clinical research is unpredictable, but you should not give up when things do not go as expected.

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