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Application of meaning-centered group psychotherapy in patients with lung cancer: A randomized controlled trial

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Objective: To study the intervention effect of meaning-centered group psychotherapy on patients with lung cancer.

Method: A randomized controlled study was conducted. 240 patients who were admitted to the department of thoracic oncology, west China hospital, Sichuan University were randomly divided into two groups (n=160) and control group (n=80) by computer in a 2:1 ratio. The experimental group was given a group psychological intervention focusing on meaning once a week, about 90 minutes each time, 8 times in total. The control group received regular health education. The European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer Quality of Life Questionnaire in Chinese (EORTC QLQ C30), The Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), Self-evaluation of Anxiety Scale (SAS) and Self-rating Depression Scale (SDS) were used to evaluate all the participants at baseline and after the intervention. Comparing the differences of anxiety depression status and meaning of life, physical function and social function, changes of physiological indexes between patients with lung cancer before and after the intervention and compared with general health education group.

Results: 24 subjects in the experimental group and 4 subjects in the control group were excluded. The final effective data were 136 people in the experimental group and 27 people in the control group, a total of 212 people. After the intervention, there were statistically significant differences in anxiety and depression between the significance-centered group psychotherapy group and the general health education group ($P<0.001$). There were statistically significant differences in the total score of sense of life significance, sense of meaning and sense of seeking meaning ($P<0.001$). There was no significant difference in body function, dyspnea, diarrhea, constipation, decreased appetite, economic difficulties, fatigue, nausea and vomiting. There were statistically significant differences in role function, social function, emotional function, sleep disorders, and pain ($P<0.001$), but no statistically significant difference of overall quality of life of lung cancer patients.

Conclusion: Meaning-centered group psychotherapy can improve the anxiety and depression of lung cancer patients, promote lung cancer patients to seek and have a sense of life significance, improve the quality of life of lung cancer patients in psychological and social dimensions and some physiological indicators significantly, but for the majority of physiological indexes (such as: breathing difficulties, diarrhea, constipation, loss of appetite, etc.) the effect is not obvious.

Biography

Mingxia Li had completed his undergraduate degree from Sichuan University, China. He is a graduate of Sichuan University majoring in Nursing.

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