

Title: The Effectiveness of a Cognitive Narrative Intervention for Complicated Grief in Widowhood

Topic: Complicated Grief

Key Words: randomised trial

cognitive narrative intervention

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Abstract: The implementation of bereavement interventions is frequently requested, and its effectiveness has been controversial. The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a cognitive narrative intervention for complicated grief (CG) for controlling post-traumatic and depressive issues. The study is a randomised controlled trial and uses the Socio Demographic Questionnaire (SDQ), the Inventory of Complicated Grief (ICG), the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Impact of Events Scale - Revised (IES-R). There were three phases in the study: (1) The SDQ and CG evaluations were applied to bereaved elders ($n=82$). The bereaved elders with the 40 highest ICG values (≥ 25) were randomly allocated into two groups: the intervention group ($n=20$) and control group ($n=20$); (2) Participants were evaluated using the BDI and IES-R and the IG gave informed consent to participate in an intervention with four weekly 60 *min* sessions addressing recall, emotional and cognitive subjectivation, metaphorisation and projection. (3) Two months later, the ICG, BDI and IES-R assessments were repeated. Outcome measures showed a statistically significant

reduction of CG, depressive and traumatic symptoms compared to the controls. Very high effect sizes for the ICG, BDI and IES-R reflect the effectiveness of the intervention along the longitudinal profile. These results reinforce the importance of brief interventions that combine a reduced number of sessions with lower costs, which is reflected in an increased adherence to the program along with high effectiveness.

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