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HOME ART THERAPY TECHNIQUES AS NURSING CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS IN CONTINGENCY BY COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to present a brief description of home art therapy techniques as Nursing care for older adults in contingency due to COVID-19.


Development: faced with the pronouncement of the health measures for COVID-19, older adults as the highest risk group require strict adherence to the isolation recommendations, for which some art therapy techniques are proposed as Nursing care, among which drawings, mandalas, painting, collages and mask technique stand out; which can favor the mental health of the older adults at their homes, as well as favor cognitive stimulation, mobility and expression of emotions; thus, its benefits involve the physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being of the older adults.


Final considerations: plastic arts as therapeutic strategies can be incorporated by the nurse in home activities for the older adults, favoring cognitive functions, preventing cognitive deterioration, maintaining mobility, and improving emotional state.

DESCRIPTORS: Art Therapy; Nursing Care; Covid-19; Social Isolation; Mental Health.

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TÉCNICAS DE TERAPIA COM ARTE NO DOMICÍLIO COMO CUIDADOS DE ENFERMAGEM A IDOSOS EM CONTINGÊNCIA DEBIDO AO COVID-19

RESUMO:

Objetivo: apresentar uma breve descrição das técnicas de terapia com arte no domicílio como cuidados de enfermagem para idosos em contingência devido ao COVID-19.

Desenvolvimento: diante do pronunciamento de medidas de saúde para o COVID-19, como grupo de maior risco, os idosos requerem estrita adesão às recomendações de isolamento, para as quais são propostas algumas técnicas de terapia com arte como cuidados de enfermagem, entre as quais se destacam desenhos, mandalas, pintura, colagens e técnica de máscaras; que podem favorecer a saúde mental do idoso no domicílio, além de favorecer a estimulação cognitiva, a mobilidade e a expressão de emoções; assim, seus benefícios envolvem o bem-estar físico, social, emocional e espiritual do idoso.

Considerações finais: As artes plásticas como estratégias terapêuticas podem ser incorporadas pelo enfermeiro nas atividades domiciliares para os idosos, favorecendo funções cognitivas, prevenindo deteriorações cognitivas, mantendo a mobilidade e melhorando o estado emocional.

DESCRIPTORES: Terapia com Arte; Cuidados de Enfermagem; Covid-19; Isolamento Social; Saúde Mental.

TÉCNICAS DE ARTETERAPIA EN CASA COMO CUIDADO DE ENFERMERÍA PARA ADULTOS MAYORES EN CONTINGENCIA POR COVID-19

RESUMEN:

Objetivo: presentar una breve descripción de técnicas de arteterapia en casa como cuidado de enfermería para adultos mayores en contingencia por COVID-19.

Desarrollo: ante el pronunciamiento de las medidas sanitarias por COVID-19, los adultos mayores como grupo de mayor riesgo requieren apearse estrictamente a las recomendaciones de aislamiento, por lo cual se proponen algunas técnicas de arteterapia como cuidado de enfermería entre las que destacan el dibujo, mandalas, pintura, collages y técnica de máscaras; las cuales pueden favorecer la salud mental de los mayores en casa, además favorecen la estimulación cognitiva, movilidad y expresión de emociones; así, sus beneficios involucran el bienestar físico, social, emocional y espiritual del adulto mayor.

Consideraciones finales: las artes plásticas como estrategias terapéuticas pueden ser incorporadas por la enfermera en actividades en el hogar para los adultos mayores, favoreciendo las funciones cognitivas, previniendo el deterioro cognitivo, manteniendo la movilidad y mejorando el estado emocional.

DESCRIPTORES: Terapia con arte; Cuidado de Enfermería; Covid-19; Aislamiento social; Salud Mental.

INTRODUCTION

At the end of 2019, a new type of coronavirus emerged which was assigned the name of COVID-2019, bringing with it different symptoms which are manifested in the respiratory and digestive systems and, in turn in a systematic way, thus affecting the health state of the person⁽¹⁻²⁾, and which has spread throughout much of the world, making it necessary for each country to adopt different measures in order to reduce the spread of this new virus. Among the main measures is the imposition of quarantines and social distancing⁽³⁾.

Until May 15th of the current year, there were 4,338,658 cases recorded worldwide and 297,119 deaths of infected people have occurred, which keeps the disease in a pandemic situation⁽⁴⁾.

Currently, Mexico has 202,951 confirmed cases, 116,862 people recovered and 25,060 deaths due to the spread of the virus. Despite this, Mexico occupies the 12th position worldwide with respect to the number of confirmed cases⁽⁵⁾.

Among the groups that are considered at risk are adults over 60 years of age, taking into account that the risk increases with the onset of different pathologies related to aging such as chronic degenerative diseases⁽⁶⁾. For the older adults, having to adopt these social distancing measures generates stress, with the possibility to trigger mental problems that affect their mental health⁽⁷⁾. For this reason, it is necessary to promote actions and strategies that favor healthy recreation even and with the measures taken, to preserve and promote the mental health of the older adults.

There are different strategies that allow maintaining good mental health, among these is art therapy, being an activity that contributes to the connection between body and mind where the person who carries it out perceives a feeling of well-being, bringing with it the emergence of positive emotions, allowing to effectively face the consequences generated by preventive isolation against the contagion of COVID-19⁽⁸⁾.

Art therapy focuses its importance on the creative process that the person carries out, rather than on its aesthetic result; with this, art therapy can be understood as any intervention that involves the use of different techniques, whether plastic or visual that allow self-expression⁽⁹⁾. Therefore, it can be a care strategy for the nurse in caring for older adults; in addition to taking care of the cognitive state of the older adult, it favors their creativity, enhances self-esteem and helps in promoting the emotional well-being of the older adult. It can even integrate the family in carrying out these activities and favor relationships, support and affective ties.

Therefore, the objective of this article is to present a brief description of home art therapy techniques as Nursing care for older adults in contingency due to COVID-19.

DEVELOPMENT

The concept of art is complex and diverse in disciplines; however, it could be emphasized that it is the means through which human beings express themselves and achieve their transformation⁽¹⁰⁾; self-expression through the arts allows human beings to live various emotions, achieving in turn a body-mind connection that results in a state of well-being for the subject who develops these activities.

Art therapy uses the creativity of art to provide physical, mental and emotional well-being in people⁽¹⁰⁾; artistic means are used in order to explore the self and provide relief⁽¹¹⁾. Within the arts for therapeutic purposes are the plastic arts that encompass various

techniques that allow for the use of various colors and materials.

The plastic arts in art therapy allow the older adult to develop all kinds of emotions, being a method for the expression of the person being considered a means for stress release⁽⁹⁾. It allows involving the connection of the being in its non-verbal language, facilitates sensitivity, and can be used in various populations, with the possibility of being incorporated as an element of mental health care by Nursing.

On the other hand, art therapy is beneficial for the older adult because it is a strategy in which exercises designed to maintain the mobility of the person are unconsciously included, which is why it favors the state of health in fine motor skills, thus avoiding the reduction in the physical capacities of the older adult⁽¹²⁾.

Art therapy in the plastic arts integrates drawing, painting and collages, among others, which allow the older adults to experience a reduction in symptoms related to stress, anxiety and depression, so that they will have better control of their emotions and greater capacity for reflection⁽¹³⁾.

Likewise, plastic arts allow the person who performs them to achieve the liberation of their emotions, conscience and creativity, in addition to perceiving greater self-control of the feelings they present; in this way a reduction of apathy, symptoms of depression and stress is attained, in addition to providing physical benefits such as good posture and performance of fine motor exercises as well as an increase in self-esteem⁽¹⁴⁾.

Therefore, it has been proven that it has a therapeutic effect; for the nurse, it is necessary that the care includes various interventions that, in addition to physical well-being, seek emotional, social and spiritual well-being. Art is even considered a connection with spirituality, since it favors the encounter with oneself⁽¹⁰⁾. The humanization of care in difficult times would consider art therapy as a means where the nurse can promote health with a solid knowledge base, so art therapy in the plastic arts can be easy to incorporate as care^(11,13).

Below are some art techniques that can be designed and applied at home with the older adults; the materials are not complex, and the activities can be developed at the level or capacity of each older person.

Drawing technique

It is part of the plastic arts and, in it, the person can draw the lines with an instrument on a surface known as support. Usually, the drawing technique is performed on sheets of paper with instruments (materials) such as pencils, colors, crayons and charcoals, among others⁽¹⁵⁾. This technique allows the older adults to express and live their feelings through visual expression, favors motor skills and visual-motor and spatial coordination, as well as attention and concentration⁽¹⁶⁾, so home materials and a sheet of paper can be used, ask them to draw what they see in their minds or to represent a situation.

Mandalas technique

The word mandala comes from the Sanskrit language and can be translated as "sacred circle", integrating circular designs that can contain intricate patterns or symbols⁽¹⁷⁻¹⁸⁾. The mandalas begin in a central point, from where they form symmetrical figures with direction towards the different cardinal points. Performing this technique acts therapeutically reducing stress and, at the same time, allows the person to experience a feeling of well-being⁽¹⁸⁾. It even favors hope, resilience, and provides emotional relief⁽¹⁹⁾. People can create mandalas on a sheet of white or colored paper, use colored pencils, or integrate other elements such as music therapy: mandalas raise the spirit and the conscience.

Painting technique

It is a technique where the older adult will make the expression of an object on a material by means of pigments or inks; the main materials to carry out this technique are watercolors, paint, oil or pastel⁽¹⁵⁾, which is linked to the drawing. Allowing for the development of emotions, perception, emotions, thought, language and even memory, it also favors emotional fluency⁽¹⁹⁾, expression and motor skills, and can be combined with drawing.

Collages technique

In this technique, the older adult will stick different materials to some surface or supports, obtaining a unique image⁽²⁰⁾, combining different graphic elements. At home, paper clippings can be used, as well as of images, photographs, newspapers, magazines, and everyday objects among other materials that allow for an aggregation of textures obtaining a unique experience when performing this technique. Among its therapeutic effects are symbolic expression, integration, structuring and spatial organization⁽²¹⁾; at the same time, other motor functions have an implication such as executive functions, praxis, and attention; thus favoring cognitive state. At home, clippings from magazines can be used, ask them to make a collage of a message for the family, which represents an experience in their life; photographs can be used and, with them, create a family album where the clipped photos are placed.

Masks technique

There are recycling materials, cardboard, colored paper, sheets in any home. With the masks technique, the older adult is invited to think about expressing an emotion through the creation of a mask, which favors the expression of feelings and emotions; on the other hand, the manipulation of the paste that normally consists of paper mache allows for the development of fine motor skills⁽²²⁾; in turn, it allows for the work of perception, since there will be sensations through the texture and thermal sensation⁽²¹⁾. At home, they can be made simple with oval-shaped cardboard to cover the face, using colors integrating the drawing, drawing shapes or, with colored paper, cutting out and using glue to give textures.

In Nursing, the use of art therapy can be a facilitator for therapeutic communication, encourages sharing experiences, and favors reflection through art⁽¹⁹⁾, which can favor the older adult to enjoy a creative experience; the person also develops the ability to express feelings, even resulting as a facilitator in the therapeutic process. In this difficult time of isolation, nurses can promote these techniques as part of mental health care.

The handling of various materials with a great variety of textures, sizes, malleability and hardness allow the individual a unique sensory experience, as well as the development of fine motor skills, improving and preserving mobility, thus resulting beneficial for the health state of the person⁽¹⁶⁾; the nurse can provide the family with various elements to guide them in how they can use the materials in this time of contingency since, as can be seen, the benefits are at a cognitive, emotional and social level.

In the event that the person presents any pathology that makes it difficult to carry out these techniques, the older adult can receive the support of a person who facilitates the performance of these activities, always respecting the creativity and the concept that the person seeks to express through these techniques.

It is necessary to highlight that participation in these techniques must be voluntary, because forcing a process of expression of feelings or emotions causes their essence to be lost, resulting in a failed technique; in addition, this can subject the older adult who is developing the activity to stress, which is contrary to the objective sought.

For the older adults to be able to develop these techniques safely at their homes, it is necessary to reduce the risks they may face in carrying out these activities, such as the handling of sharp objects and substances that can cause any problem or complication in their health state.

For small surfaces⁽²³⁾, it is recommended to clean the area and materials to be used with a solution with a 70% ethanol concentration; in the same way, hand washing is essential, commercial products for hand hygiene can also be used, which have 70% isopropanol or 70% to 85% ethanol, for at least 30 seconds⁽²⁴⁾, in addition to following the recommendations for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if having a suspected or confirmed case at home⁽²³⁾.

The incorporation of these techniques is presented with a holistic care posture; it is not even ruled out that they may favor other populations that also live this isolation and that can benefit from this art-based Nursing care.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Developing different art therapy techniques related to the plastic arts allow generating an emotional well-being where the person who carries out these activities achieves an increase in self-esteem, as well as experiencing a satisfaction that is accompanied by the recognition of their environment due to the activities performed; this allows for the inclusion of the person.

The benefits involve a whole, since they benefit cognition in all its functions, favoring the delay of cognitive deterioration; in turn, communication, family integration, creativity and the feeling of active aging are developed.

Finally, art therapy allows for the recovery and preservation of mental health, giving the person who performs it a feeling of social and emotional well-being; Nursing being a holistic discipline, it cannot exempt mental health care and can resort to art for expression and communication of the feelings present in the person establishing a connection between body and mind.

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