

The Effects of Forest Healing Activities on Rehabilitation of Chronic Mental Health Patients

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Background

Chronic mental health patients suffer from prolonged disease courses, functional deterioration, and negative perceptions from others, rendering them unable to complete self-integration in their life development tasks and affecting their physical and mental health. Thus, this study mainly explores the effects of forest healing activities on the physical and mental rehabilitation of chronic mental health patients.

Methods

A quasi-experiment design was adopted; and patients at two rehabilitation homes affiliated with a psychiatric hospital in Taiwan were enrolled as participants. Forest healing activities included contents were forest activities and structural guidance, as well as 12 weekly group sharing sessions on feelings of health, social relations, and self. Evaluation was use of structured questions before enrolment and at the 13th and 17th weeks. Data analysis use GEE.

Keywords:
Forest healing activities,
Resilience

Results

During the enrolment period from June 2016 to December 2017. Seventy people completed the measurement, 35 in each of the experimental and control groups. The experimental group had significant between the two groups in the interaction of “resilience” among the three time points pre-test, post-test ($B = 14.57, p < .01$) and follow-up test ($B = 22.89, p < .001$).

Conclusions

Forest healing activities have positive influences on health. With guided sharing through group activities, chronic mental health patients can undergo physical and mental rehabilitation. Forest healing activities are conducive to the self-integration of chronic mental health patients, thereby enhancing their self-acceptance, and can be used as a reference for health promotion.

Relevance to HPH

Our hospital is located at the National Forest Park of Mount Guanyin in northern Taiwan, where there are dense forests. Forest healing activities could aid in the treatment and health promotion activities by the hospital.

