

Improving memory performance in mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and older adults with subjective decline: An intervention aimed at reducing the excess disability associated with negative stereotypes of ageing

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It is increasingly evident that the memory performance of older Australians can be negatively affected by culturally-shared stereotypes and negative self-perceptions of cognitive ageing. Drawing on age-stereotype research and literature from positive psychology, the purpose of this study was to develop and evaluate a three-day group intervention administered to both older adults with subjective memory decline and older adults with MCI. A randomised, controlled, repeated measures design was employed to examine whether the objective and subjective memory performance of older adults would improve after participating in the intervention, designed to challenge negative stereotypes of cognitive ageing and to encourage more positive perceptions of the ageing self. It is anticipated that the results will be able to identify a set of techniques that can demonstrate improvements in the memory functioning of two different groups of older adults who may be more vulnerable to the effects of ageist stereotypes.

The efficacy of couple therapies on psychopathology and relationship distress: A meta-analytical study

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The psychological problems in the close relationships are a predisposing risk factor and/or a maintaining factor for many psychological disorders including mood disorders (Whisman et.al., 2004; McLeod, 1994), alcohol abuse (Halford & Osgarloy, 1993) and psychoses (Tienari et.al., 1987). This strong association drives the professionals in the mental health area to conduct studies on the efficiency of the couple therapies. Various couple therapies produce moderate and statistically significant effects (Jacobson & Addis, 1993; Gurman & Jacobsen, 2002; Shadish & Baldwin, 2003). All the therapies that have been reasonably well tested have been empirically proven to be effective. However it is important to identify which one is most effective for specific close relationship problems because the durability of change is also important in eliminating psychological symptoms and prevention studies on psychological disorders. The purpose of the present study was to determine the overall effectiveness of psychotherapeutic methods in alleviating couple distress, anxiety, depression and the other psychological problems and to calculate effect sizes of them. The studies were selected using three criteria; (1) a clear description of the couple intervention model (e.g. behavioural, cognitive behavioural, emotionally focussed, integrative, insight-oriented, systemic), (2) the application of intervention methods designed to alleviate individual and couple's psychological problems, and (3) a methodological design and an adequate reporting of statistical data. The results were discussed in terms of the potential impact of couple therapies' on preventive mental health studies.

Emotions and cognitively biased thinking in patient colorectal cancer screening decisions: A pilot study

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A large literature on health promotion and prevention has sought to explain cancer-screening decisions with major social-cognitive health behaviour models, or an amalgamation of their components. Emotions are gaining eminence in more recent literature, while well-known heuristics (such as availability, representativeness, and anchor and adjustment) in cognition remain under-investigated. This study is a preliminary attempt to understand the optimal predictors in colorectal cancer screening decisions from a range of cognitive, emotion, and social factors, with the aim of establishing important relationships and scale properties for investigation in future community samples. A survey was conducted in a medium sized sample of convenience, with participants completing a range of items about their screening and health history, medical embarrassment, disgust, fear, and screening biases, as well as more frequently examined variables in this literature: risk perception, test efficacy, knowledge, and self-efficacy. Social norms and support were also measured as potential social predictors. Outcome variables included screening intention and decisional conflict. Using correlation, factor analyses and regression, the results suggested that key factors in screening decision while accounting for age and screening and health