

Resilience, Happiness and Functionality in a group of institutionalized elderly people: Psychomotricity as an answer

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Aging is a natural, inevitable, progressive and global phenomenon^[1-3], characterized by a physiological functional decline^[1], biopsychosocial changes and daily challenges that affect the individual's adaptation to this new phase of life^[1,2]. Thus, it is important that the elderly adapt to adversities and overcome them^[3] in order to have a happy life^[2], fulfilled by frequent positive affective states^[4]. **OBJECTIVE:** This study aims to evaluate resilience, happiness and functionality in a group of institutionalized elderly people, as well as present Psychomotricity as a proposal of intervention promoting of these factors. **METHODS:** The sample consisted in 61 elderly people (14 males and 47 females), aged between 65 and 99 years ($\bar{x} = 80,80, \pm SD = 7,95$), living in Estabelecimento Bela Vista on Madeira Island. 57,4% of the elderly are widowed, 26,2% are single, 8,2% are married and 8,2% are divorced. 60,7% of the elderly are literate (37,7% have the 4th grade) and 39,3% are illiterate. It was used the Mini-mental State Examination (MMSE), Barthel Index and Geronto-Psychomotor Exam (EGP) for evaluation of cognitive and psychomotor functionality, as well as the Resilience Scale (RS) and Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) for the evaluation of these psycho-emotional constructs. **RESULTS:** The sample exhibits an average resilience ($\bar{x} = 106,26, \pm SD = 10,07$), mean levels of happiness ($\bar{x} = 17,67, \pm SD = 2,29$) and, in functional terms, are "slightly dependent" ($\bar{x} = 62,05, \pm SD = 16,94$). 100% of the elderly had present a psychomotor profile below the reference average for the portuguese population according to their age group. We propose a 6-month bi-weekly program of psychomotor intervention both in a group (60 min/session) and in individual sessions (45 min/session), designed to respond to the psychomotor profile of the sample and to enhance functional skills and psycho-emotional. **CONCLUSIONS:** The program has a preventive and rehabilitative/ therapeutic design to maintain/revert the functional capacity and the feeling of self and other, through the psychomotor stimulation centered

in self-knowledge, in the effectiveness/harmony of the intentional gesture adjusted to the action and in the development of individual coping strategies. It uses corporal mediation and the use of expressive therapy techniques, reeducation gnostic-praxis, cognitive stimulation, behavioral and socio-emotional adequacy and functional training. Positive emotions are worked using playful dynamics, the stimulation of conscious decision-making in the face of challenges and self-feedback based on the perception of competence.

Keywords: *aging, resilience, happiness, functionality and psychomotricity.*

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