

Feasibility of the Restorative Occupational Approaches for Disordered Eating Program: A Work in Progress

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PURPOSE: Eating disorders affect many different areas of health and wellbeing, requiring interventions addressing mental, physical, and social realms. Because of its holistic approach, occupational therapy is uniquely poised to help individuals manage chronic eating disorders. However, this area of practice is still nascent. This work-in-progress project set out to determine the feasibility and preliminary effects of our novel intervention: The Restorative Occupational Approaches for Disordered Eating (ROADE) Program.

DESIGN: Our project was a single-arm, mixed-methods (QUANqual) feasibility study. Participants were age 14 or older, have an eating disorder diagnosis, and are community-dwelling in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Recruitment was of a self-referred convenience sample.

METHOD: Quantitative measures included eating disorder symptoms, anxiety, and overall health. Pair-wise comparisons at intake and discharge were analyzed for quantitative outcomes. Qualitative data was collected after all interventions were complete in individual, audio-recorded interviews. These were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. The ROADE intervention consisted of one-hour individual sessions twice a week for 8 weeks. Intervention modalities included mindfulness meditation, yoga, client education, and chronic disease self-management training for eating disorder symptoms.

RESULTS: Preliminary results of this work-in-progress are still developing. Currently 3 participants have completed the study, one additional was lost to follow up, and 3 additional are ongoing in the study. Pre/post comparison thus far shows modest improvement in anxiety and eating disorder symptoms with fairly static overall health metrics. The intervention appears to be well tolerated with participants reporting qualitative benefit.

CONCLUSION: The project will continue in the interim with statistical findings to be presented at the time of the conference presentation.

References

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