



Journal of Nursing

Revista de Enfermagem

UFPE On Line

ISSN: 1981-8963

NOTE PREVIEW ARTICLE

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE FAMILY CAREGIVER FOR ELDERLY WITH ALZHEIMER: CONTRIBUTIONS OF GESTALT THERAPY A VIVÊNCIA DO CUIDADOR FAMILIAR DE IDOSOS COM ALZHEIMER CCONTRIBUIÇÕES DA GESTALT-TERAPIA

LA EXPERIENCIA DEL CUIDADOR FAMILIAR PARA PERSONAS MAYORES CON ALZHEIMER: CONTRIBUCIONES DE LA TERAPIA GESTALT

Berta Sheila de Souza Ribeiro¹, Edmundo de Drummond Alves Júnior², Selma Petra Chaves Sá³

ABSTRACT

Objectives: describing the perceptions of caregivers on the activity of care for seniors with Alzheimer's; analyzing the impact of these activities in the life of care considering biological and emotional aspects; and discussing the changes in the lives of caregivers and their ability to adapt in the light of Gestalt Therapy. **Method:** an analytical-descriptive research of a qualitative approach, having as scenario Mequinho/UFF, a space for attention to elderly in Niterói/RJ; and the surveyed subjects will be family caregivers of elders with Alzheimer's disease. Data will be collected through phenomenological interviews and production of field diary. The analysis will be performed through intentional analysis of Clark Moustakas. The research project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee, CAEE 31286814.9.000.5243. **Expected results:** enhancing the Service for Psychological Attendance for caregivers for seniors with dementia in Mequinho/UFF. **Descriptors:** Care; Alzheimer's disease; Gestalt therapy; Perception; Family.

RESUMO

Objetivos: descrever a percepção do cuidador familiar sobre a atividade de cuidar de idosos com Alzheimer; analisar o impacto dessas atividades na vida do cuidar considerando aspectos biológicos e emocionais e discutir as modificações na vida do cuidador familiar e sua capacidade de adaptação à luz da Gestalt-Terapia. **Método:** pesquisa de abordagem qualitativa, descritiva-analítica, tendo como cenário o Mequinho/UFF, espaço de atenção aos idosos em Niterói/RJ e os sujeitos pesquisados serão os cuidadores familiares de idosos com Doença de Alzheimer. Os dados serão coletados por meio de entrevista fenomenológica e produção de diário de campo. A análise será realizada por meio da análise intencional de Clark Moustakas. O projeto de pesquisa foi aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa, CAEE 31286814.9.000.5243. **Resultados esperados:** aprimorar o Serviço de Atendimento Psicológico aos cuidadores de idosos com demências, no Mequinho/UFF. **Descritores:** Cuidado; Doença de Alzheimer; Gestalt-terapia; Percepção; Família.

RESUMEN

Objetivos: describir las percepciones de los cuidadores sobre la actividad de cuidar a las personas mayores con la enfermedad de Alzheimer; analizar el impacto de estas actividades en la vida de la atención teniendo en cuenta los aspectos biológicos y emocionales; y discutir los cambios en la vida de los cuidadores y su capacidad para adaptarse a la luz de la Terapia Gestalt. **Método:** método de investigación analítico-descriptivo y enfoque cualitativo, con el escenario en Mequinho/UFF, un sitio de atención a las personas mayores en Niterói/RJ; y los temas de estudio serán los cuidadores familiares de ancianos con enfermedad de Alzheimer. Los datos serán recogidos a través de entrevistas fenomenológicas y producción de diario de campo. El análisis se realizó a través de análisis intencional de Clark Moustakas. El proyecto de investigación fue aprobado por el Comité de Ética en Investigación, CAEE 31286814.9.000.5243. **Resultados esperados:** mejorar el Servicio de Atención Psicológica para los cuidadores de personas mayores con demencia en Mequinho/UFF. **Descriptor:** Cuidado; Enfermedad de Alzheimer; La terapia Gestalt; Percepción; Familia.

Psychologist, Student of Master's of Health Care Science, School of Nursing Aurora de Afonso Costa, UFF / UFF. Niterói (RJ), Brazil. Email: besheila2@yahoo.com.br; PhD, Professor, Academic Master of Health Care Science, Physical Education Department, Faculty of Physical Education, Fluminense Federal University / UFF. Niterói (RJ), Brazil. Email: edmundodrummond@uol.com.br; PhD, Professor, Academic Master of Health Care Science, Department of Fundamentals in Nursing, School of Nursing Aurora de Afonso Costa, Fluminense Federal University / UFF. Niterói (RJ), Brazil. Email: spetra@ig.com.br

INTRODUCTION

Gestalt Therapy (GT) is a Psychological Approach which has the philosophical underpinning of Phenomenology, Existentialism and Humanism and three Base Theories, namely: Gestalt Psychology, Field Theory and Theory Organismic. One can understand that with the main theoretical Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl helps in organizing the method used in therapy is through the phenomenological reduction, *epoché*, put the phenomenon in brackets, avoiding interpretations and judgments, which the therapist can approach the essence of the phenomenon in an attempt to stay with what appears, is revealed at the moment of meeting. So, look at the man making a prior diagnosis, with the support of a pre-reflection or default is to exclude the singularity, the particularity that the human condition carries.¹

Have Humanism - existentialist will influence Gestalt therapy when advocates that "man is the measure of all things, the human person has the inner power to make preferred choices throughout his life and is essentially free responsible², this is through lived experience of each man can acquire a knowledge of himself, because it is through his actions that he is revealed. Concepts or beliefs that built or builds on itself shall be verified by the intention of his actions, how is aware of his actions. Sometimes, it can be verified human behavior being the result of automation, without conducting a critical-reflective process about himself and the world he lives. So man departs from the essence of human, loses the ability to exercise his freedom and exercise greater power that was given to this species that is in free will or the ability to make better choices and therefore blame themselves by them.

When is said that the GT is based on Gestalt Psychology, it is possible to identify some key assumptions that influence how the therapist perceives the world and how to organize their lives, as well as how to organize their perceptions are influenced by laws governing the formation of perception and analogy apply to human behavior².

Thinking on Field Theory is searching to understand the middle-man-world interaction, that is, one lives a constant interrelation in a continual movement of exchange. The field is a whole in which the parts are in relationship and react to each other, and no longer be influenced by what happens elsewhere in the field³, surfacing a state of change, in which impermanence provides the framework for

construction of the being which occurs in the present⁴. Against this background, the psychological world interferes greatly in how one identifies the physical realm and this involves two human dimensions time and lived space. You can check the effect of a situation in which the perception is altered by some stimulus and the response that the subject presents is disproportionate to the environmental features, such as a mother lifting a car to save the child.

The Organismic Theory allows the gestalt therapist perceiving the human being as an organism that tends to update, which means that a healthy person seeks for self-consciousness, the integration of thoughts, feelings and actions, through self-regulation. There is a care to meet their needs, enhancing self-awareness, thereby maintaining a healthy state of living in the world, therefore disregarding the potential loads that may develop a state of dissatisfaction that leads to an unhealthy way of living that promoting illness of the subject.

The **object of this research** is the experience of family caregivers of seniors with Alzheimer's disease and the development of strategies to minimize the suffering of caregivers who attend the activities in Mequinho / UFF.

Alzheimer's disease is characterized as a dementia that develops gradually and continually, impairing memory, orientation, judgment and reasoning. Have aphasia (difficulty with speech), apraxia (less capacity to carry out motor activities despite of being intact the motor function), agnosia (inability to recognize or identify objects despite intact sensory function) and disturbance in executive functioning that is, planning, organizing, sequencing and abstraction.⁵

To take care of the elderly, the family caregiver develops daily activities that are directly linked to it and with a high level of dependence, may fail to give attention to their own needs. The development of chronic diseases in the caregiver and the need to use medication, demonstrating his illness is the result of overload that care for the elderly with Alzheimer generates and complications that comes from advancing the framework will be influenced by both the time and stage of disease, and by the support that this family receives.⁶

The interest in this study arose during the psychological care provided in the Nursing Program in Care for the Elderly and their Caregivers (EASIC), at Fluminense Federal University, which has interdisciplinary actions. Thus, over the following attendances for both

seniors with dementia as to their caregivers emerged the following **guiding questions**:

How does the family caregiver of elderly with Alzheimer's disease attending EASIC - Mequinho/ UFF and perceive the activity of caring? How it is affected in their daily lives? How, psychology can contribute to the health care of the caregiver?

OBJECTIVES

- To describe the perception of family caregivers about the activity of caring for seniors with Alzheimer's;
- To analyze the impact of these activities in the life of care considering biological and emotional aspects;
- To discuss the changes in the lives of caregivers and their ability to adapt in the light of Gestalt Therapy.

METHOD

The methodological draw of the study is of qualitative approach, of descriptive-analytical type. The method chosen was the phenomenological; which is to describe the phenomenon as it appears, using the phenomenological reduction (*epoché*) that means putting the values, believes in brackets, suspension of ideas and judgments². Attention is focused on how information is counted, the expressions, the silences, which avoids talking. The subjects are people who perform targeted care for the elderly with Alzheimer's disease who are family members that attend the activities of the Extension Project in Nursing Care for the Elderly and their Caregivers (EASIC) Health, held in Mequinho/UFF.

Data collection is performed through the phenomenological interview and has as instruments: the interview and the field diary. Interviews with 30 program participants, with has as minimum duration of 1 hour, will be held, leaving free time according to the subject's willingness to talk. These interviews will be recorded and transcribed soon after its completion. The field diary consists of notes made during the interview, considering the relationship of the subject to the researcher and the environment as well as their expressions during the report.

Data analysis is based on the analysis of intentional Clark Moutaskas who approached the study of the elements of the situations experienced by individuals and their interrelations to a theory that could help researchers to understand the nature and the meaning of an experience in a particular context⁷. The categories are created based on

the thoughts, feelings and fantasies by the subject taking into account the temporality, spatiality, corporeality, the motivation, the relationship with the world and own the relationship with the other.

The research project followed the guidelines of the Academic Program Master of Science in Health Care Fluminense Federal University/UFF, based on Resolution 466/2012 according to guidance that provides of the National Research Council/CONEP and was approved by the Research Ethics Committee, CAEE 31286814.9.000.5243.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected **contributions** to this study involve the Program (EASIC/UFF) strengthening practices that are already made and improving service to users offering space for the family caregiver, by lifting their needs, targeted activities: courses and lectures those clarify and offer support; for the elderly is believed to put through knowledge, information acquired by the caregiver will improve the efficiency of it, so the quality of care will also be affected as well as the relationship established between family-elderly caregiver and may have decreased emotional overload; for teaching and research aims to enhancing the discussions in the field of family dynamics since one cannot think of the elderly alone; research also intended to improve the relationship in more advanced stages of cognitive impairment by psychotherapy.

REFERENCES

1. Rehfeld A. Fenomenologia e Gestalt-terapia. In: Gestalt-terapia: fundamentos epistemológicos e influências filosóficas. Frazão LM, Fukumitsu KO, organizadoras. São Paulo: Summus; 2013.
2. Ribeiro JP. O ciclo do contato: temas básicos na abordagem gestáltica. 4th ed. São Paulo: Summus; 2007.
3. Yontef G.M. Processo, diálogo e awareness: ensaios em Gestalt- Terapia. 3rd ed. São Paulo: Summus; 1998.
4. Ribeiro JP. Conceito de mundo e de pessoa em Gestalt-terapia: revisitando o caminho. São Paulo: Summus; 2011.
5. Caixeta L, organizador. Doença de Alzheimer. Porto Alegre: Artmed; 2012.
6. Selma MD, Lenardt MHA. A sobrecarga do cuidador familiar de idoso com Alzheimer . Rev Texto & e Contexto [Internet]. 2011 [cited 2013 Oct 6];10(02):388-98. Available from:

<http://revistaseletronicas.pucrs.br/revistapsi/co/ojs/index.php/fass/article/view/9901>

7. Fukumitsu KO, organizador. O método fenomenológico em pesquisa gestática. Gestalt-terapia: fundamentos epistemológicos e influências filosóficas. São Paulo: Summus; 2013.

Submission: 2014/06/06

Accepted: 2014/06/26

Publishing: 2014/08/01

Corresponding Address

Berta Sheila de Souza Ribeiro
Rua São Sebastião 78 / bloco B / Ap. 1213 /
Centro
CEP 24210110 — Niterói (RJ), Brazil