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Education

Teaching Foundations of Salutogenesis in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences. Evaluation research via Grounded Theory

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Objective

To classify which aspects of the module *Foundations of Salutogenesis* in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences influenced the students' view of their own professional work most.

Introduction

Integrating *Foundations of Salutogenesis* into the traditional competency field of professionals in complementary medicine, complementary healing arts and progressive teaching was defined as an essential goal of a Master's Program funded by the European Commission (Leonardo da Vinci A/02/BF/PP-124.205). The *inter-uni.net for integrated health sciences* (www.inter-uni.net) developed a teaching and learning module geared to this aim which included 3 month distant learning and 2 on-site workshops whose benefits were evaluated after being offered for several years.

Methods

The question (cf. Objective) was posed to 117 students who had completed the module. Members of helping professions with a "complementary" focus and usually long years of professional experience supplied a handwritten response to the question (one page). The ratio of female to male respondents was 3:2. The responses were analyzed on the basis of Grounded Theory.

Results

44% of the respondents cited the model of *balance between demands and resources* as playing an important role for their own work, while 33% cited the concept of *Sense of Coherence (SOC)*, *i.e., that daily life should be experienced as manageable, comprehensible and meaningful*. 32% named reflections on *communication and dialogue* between the therapist and the client, 28% *general promotion of health*, 23% the *social environment* as a point of reference for their work, 21% *movement*, 20% *empowerment, self-help and self-responsibility*, 15% aspects of *migration, nutrition, healthful action and behavior, coping and stress management* respectively, 17% the comparison between *salutogenesis and pathogenesis*, 12% *relaxation, gender aspects, aspects of living space, setting and environment* each, 14% *prevention*, the model of a *continuum of health and illness* and aspects of *work and unemployment* as well as *education*. 10% cited *participatory processes, resilience, culture / religion, health circles and workplace health promotion*.

Conclusion

Teaching *Foundations of Salutogenesis* in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences appears to be a suitable means for optimizing one's own professional work in the sense of an expansion of perspectives as well as relief through participatory communication between therapists and clients.