

MENTAL HEALTH NURSING AND ZENTANGLE®: EXPLORING NEW THERAPEUTIC HORIZONS

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Good afternoon,

I would like to thank the Zentangle® community, Caype organization, the city of Vitoria and all the attendees for allowing us to share our experiences.

We come from the Hospital Dr. R. Lafora Hospital in Madrid. Monographic hospital dedicated to the care of people with mental health problems since 1969.

In 2015 we sought to respond to the demands of patients in the personality disorders unit, who requested alternatives to traditional relaxation methods, and we found the Zentangle® Method. The philosophy of the method allowed us to investigate the possibility of improving deficient aspects in this type of patients, or NANDA nursing diagnoses, such as: relational problems, lack of impulse control, anxiety or low frustration tolerance among others.

Why the Zentangle® method?

From the very first moment we recognized inside the Zentangle® philosophy, something as well known for Mental Health Nursing as Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. Developed by Marsha Lineham for the treatment of personality disorders, especially borderline disorder, for which it was designed and validated. Theory based on Mindfulness, defined by Jon Kabat-Zinn as "the awareness that arises from deliberately paying attention in the present moment, without judgment, to how experience unfolds moment by moment". It is a skill of attention that allows us to focus the mind on the present. Being attentive to the fullness of experience in the present moment puts us in touch with the reality in which we live and with what is happening in our inner world.

In addition to Kabat-Zinn, Richard Davidson, David Goleman and Danien Siegel, among others, have researched the neurobiological mechanisms of mindfulness.

In the bases of Mindfulness we find great similarity with the Zentangle® philosophy, such as: attention to the present moment without judging and enjoying it, forgiving mistakes, showing gratitude, making peace with one's own imperfection and that of others, admitting vulnerability while trusting others, accepting reality as it is...

Continuing with the relationship Nursing- Zentangle®- Mindfulness, it is worth mentioning that in the Nursing Interventions Classification (NIC), the following are codified as Nursing Interventions: Facilitating meditation, Enhancing self-awareness, Increasing coping, Decreasing anxiety, Art therapy, among others.

Upon identifying these fundamentals we contacted Maria Tovar (CZT) as a primary source to learn about the Zentangle® method, which corroborated the similarity with what we try to empower and transmit to our patients.

We incorporated in the training process of the nursing staff a course with two editions called "Art-Therapeutic Nursing Interventions" in which Maria Tovar and Mercedes Perez were part of the faculty, always available to answer our questions, they are our main CZT. The training aroused great interest among the participants. New editions will be held in the future when the epidemiological situation allows it.

Based on the aforementioned symptomatology of these patients, the work of nursing is to enhance self-esteem, reduce anxiety, promote attention and concentration, ect. which, as I explained before, is codified in the NIC taxonomy or nursing interventions. Being faithful to the scientific-technical content of the nursing degree, we designed a relaxation program in which the Zentangle® acquired great prominence, providing a simple and quick access to mindfulness through concentration on each line.

Interested attendees can contact us via email and we will be more than happy to share our approach.

After the initial contacts and the good acceptance by patients and professionals of the Personality Disorders unit, the first steps were taken in other units, such as the Alcoholology unit, a unit that provides detoxification and detoxification treatment to people with alcohol dependence problems. We are currently designing an emotional care program that includes Zentangle®, aimed at healthcare personnel so damaged after the pandemic.

Because of the importance we attach to the method, the suitability of applying it as a third generation complementary therapy should be demonstrated through research and subsequent publications. We have contributed to this with two publications and a research project, supporting the benefits described at the beginning.

We are currently in full dissemination of our program based on Zentangle®, having shared our experience, always accompanied by Maria Tovar(CZT) and Mercedes Perez(CZT) to safeguard the philosophy of the method, in places like the Autonomous University of Madrid (of which Dr. Matilde Arlandis will speak to you), the Hospital General Universitario Gregorio Marañón and Hospital Universitario La Paz in Madrid and soon in the General Hospital of Talavera de la Reina in Toledo.

Finally, to inform you that, due to the interest aroused among Mental Health Nurses, and the diffusion we have made among our colleagues, the organizing committee of the XL Congress of Mental Health Nursing to be held in March 2023, has requested our collaboration extending it to Maria and Mercedes to conduct a theoretical and practical workshop with mental health nurses from all over Spain.

I am willing to answer any questions you may have, and I thank you for your attention.