

Cancer Patients Descriptions of Flow Experiences

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Abstract

It is well known that patients with head and neck cancer report many disease- and health-related problems before, during and a long time after completed treatment. A salutogenic focus concentrating on individuals' strength and health resources has shown to be of significance for experiences of well-being and happiness. This approach of positive psychology moves beyond the disease and support individuals' growth. When thinking optimistic, the weight places on the individual's growth and the value of this may create a sense of balance of the problem focused care and research. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1975) claims that where there is a request for enrichment of life, the flow theory is one way. The aim of this study was to describe activities creating experiences of flow for persons suffering of head and neck cancer. With a descriptive design based on a deductive qualitative content analysis reflected on the nine elements of the Csikszentmihalyi flow theory. The participants struggle with everyday problems and fight for finding activities that created flow experiences. They were eager to enjoy trivial things in life. During this process they used unknown skills that increased satisfaction. Mastery, participation, involvement and enjoyment were self-rewarding and created self-care. Good relationships with family, friends and doing things together was central. Individual goals, motivation and skills and feedback from the activities contributing pleasure and happiness. This calls for person-centered care with salutogenic-oriented approaches.



Biography:

Margereth Björklund is working as a Senior Lecturer at Jönköping University and has completed her PHD in 2010 in The Nordic School of Public Health Gothenburg, Sweden. Her research is about health, health, promotion and empowerment in everyday life with head and neck cancer. Since no knowledge about positive psychology and flow theory in an HNC context exists her current research focuses on this. She works as a Senior Lecturer since 1999 and has been working as a nurse between 1970-2000 in head and neck cancer context. She has published more than 8 papers in reputed journals and has written chapters in books and two books.

Speaker Publications:

1. Björklund, M. (2012). A health promotion perspective of living with head and neck cancer. In: Mark Agulnik (Ed.), Head and neck cancer (pp. 393 -428).
2. Dimenäs, J., Björklund, M., Häggkvist, K., Larsson, I., Malm, A., Rundgren, M., Welin Mod, A. (2012). Retorikens beprövande erfarenhet ur yrkesverksamma lärar- och sjuksköterskehandledares perspektiv Utbildning och Lärande / Education and Learning, 6(1), 98-116. In Swedish.
3. Björklund, M. (2011). Health promotion and everyday living with head and neck cancer: a qualitative study. Saarbrücken: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing
4. Björklund, M., Sarvimäki, A., Berg, A. (2010). Living with head and neck cancer: a profile of captivity Journal of Nursing and Healthcare of Chronic Illness, 2(1), 22-31
5. Björklund, M. (2010). Living with head and neck cancer: a health promotion perspective - a qualitative study (Doctoral thesis, Gothenburg: Nordic School of Public Health).
6. Björklund, M., Sarvimäki, A., Berg, A. (2009). Health promoting contacts as encountered by individuals with head and neck cancer Journal of Nursing and Healthcare of Chronic Illness, 1(3), 261-268.