There has been a great deal of attention recently on perfectionistic behavior. Psychodynamic/Interpersonal Group Psychotherapy for Perfectionistic Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

There has been a great deal of attention recently on perfectionism, both in terms of its clinical significance and as a target for treatment. Perfectionistic behavior is characterized by an excessive drive for perfection, which can lead to psychological distress and interpersonal problems. The current work provides evidence that a psychodynamically oriented group treatment that focuses specifically on perfectionistic behavior does have a significant effect on reducing perfectionistic behavior and on the attendant distress associated with perfectionism.

METHODS

Participants

A total of 71 participants participated. Of these, 53 were in the initial treatment condition and 18 in the waitlist control condition. Sixty participants fully completed the treatment and all post-treatment assessment (43 from the treatment condition and 17 from the control condition) and a total of 44 participants completed the 4-month follow-up assessment.

Procedure

All participants completed measures of perfectionism traits, perfectionistic self-presentation, automatic perfectionist thoughts and measures of depression, anxiety, and interpersonal problems at pre-treatment, post-treatment, and at a 4-month follow-up.

RESULTS

Because of the logit modeling for change, the results indicate a precipitous reduction in scores from pre- to post-treatment, and these scores showed a continued reduction but at a less accelerated rate from post- treatment to four months post-treatment (Figure 1).

DISCUSSION

The current work provides evidence that a psychodynamically oriented group treatment that focuses specifically on perfectionistic behavior does have a significant effect on reducing perfectionistic behavior and on the attendant distress associated with perfectionism. The findings were supported by both post-treatment and follow up, suggesting that this form of treatment may be particularly effective in reducing perfectionism as well as symptoms of psychological distress.

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