Art therapy based on painting therapy on the improvement of autistic children’s social interactions in Iran

Sir,

Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are characterized by social interaction difficulties, communication challenges, and a tendency to engage in repetitive behaviors. However, symptoms and their severity vary widely across these three core areas. Taken together, they may result in relatively mild challenges for someone on the high functioning end of the autism spectrum. For others, symptoms may be more severe, as when repetitive behaviors and lack of spoken language interfere with everyday life.[1] About one in 68 children has been identified with an ASD. Boys are at higher risk for autism, with nearly one in 42 boys receiving an ASD diagnosis, compared to one in 189 girls.[2] Funding for the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring network sites participating in the 2014 surveillance year was awarded for a 4-year cycle covering 2015–2018, during which time data were collected for children aged 8 years during 2014 and 2016.[3] The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of the simultaneous intervention of the child and the mother on the basis of painting techniques on the improvement of autistic children’s social interactions in Iran. The statistical population of this study consisted of children with autism between the ages of 6 and 12 years living in Tehran, Iran, during the 2017–2018 educational year. A total of 40 children qualified for the study were selected using convenient sampling procedure and were assigned to control and experimental groups. The participants of this study were selected based on some criteria. Participants in both groups had no experience in participating in painting therapy interventions. To ensure that participants had intelligence quotient (IQ) between 50 and 70, IQ test was administered.

The Stanford–Binet (SB) Intelligence Scale was used for IQ test. Fifth Edition (SB5) is based in the schooling process to assess intelligence.

The findings showed that the experimental group did have a significant difference in the symptoms of social interactions, whereas the control group showed no significant difference.

1. After 12 sessions of painting therapy, the subjects showed more adaptive behaviors and emotions
2. The subjects tended to share their feelings. The social interactions also did have obvious improvement.

Based on the results of this study, the effectiveness of the simultaneous intervention of the child and the mother by the painting technique was confirmed by increasing the social interactions of children with autism. Meanwhile, many children with autism have an extraordinary ability to think visually “in pictures.” Many can turn that ability to good use in processing memories, recording images and visual information, and expressing ideas through drawing or other artistic media. Painting therapy is a form of expression that requires little or no verbal interaction that can open doors to communication.
Letters to Editor

Painting therapy offers an opportunity for therapists to work one-on-one with individuals on the autism spectrum to build a wide range of skills in a manner which may be more comfortable (and thus more effective) than spoken language.

Financial support and sponsorship
Nil.

Conflicts of interest
There are no conflicts of interest.

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Submitted: 25-May-2018, Revised: 16-Oct-2018, Accepted: 24-Dec-2019, Published: 17-Mar-2020

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A case of delusional parasitosis presented as shared psychotic disorder treated successfully with aripiprazole

Sir,

Delusional parasitosis is a rare psychiatric disorder characterized by the unshakable and false belief of being infested with small organisms, insects, or parasites without any medical evidence.[1] It has been described as acarophobia, parasitophobic neurodermatitis, and Ekbom syndrome and named as “delusional parasitosis” by Wilson and Miller in 1946.[2] Approximately 5%–15% of patients, delusional infestations are shared with other people such as close relatives, partners, and family members and presented as shared psychotic disorder.[3] We report two cases with delusional parasitosis meeting the diagnostic criteria of shared psychosis and successfully treatment of disease with aripiprazole, a well-tolerated atypical antipsychotic.

A 66-year-old Turkish graduated from primary school and married male was referred from the dermatology department with an 8-month history of feeling of insects crawling across his skin and itching on his all body, especially on both the legs. In the detailed dermatological examination of the dermatology clinic, no evidence of parasitic infestation was found, and he was treated for itching, but he was referred to the psychiatry department because of no regression in his complaints. He had taken shower numerous times a day, used too much soap, sprayed the house, and threw away his clothes to get rid of the insects. He told that he put the insects in a box that he saw on his bed and sent them to a laboratory to determine what they were. However, he was informed as there were no insects or parasites. On psychiatric examination, he was anxious and depressive. In his thought content, he had the delusion as his body was invaded by insects. The patient brought a small box along with him. He said that he put the insects which he had found in his bed into this box. Only blanket wool was seen in the box. Mini-mental test score was 27/30. Hamilton Depression Scale score was 11. Hamilton Anxiety Scale score was 11. In his medical history; he has been receiving drug therapy for ischemic heart disease and hypothyroidism. His neurological examination was normal. Routine biochemistry, blood count, and hormone test results were normal except for a height of 5.86 U/mL (0.27–4.2 ul U/mL) in thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) levels. In brain magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), no pathology was revealed except age-matched changes.

The patient’s wife also presented to the dermatology department along with him for itching complaint. They have been living...