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Meaning-centered group psychotherapy for patients with lung cancer: a randomized controlled trial

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Objectives: Diagnosis of cancer and its treatments are stressful. Meaning in life, psychological distress and Quality of Life (QoL) may be affected by cancer. We conducted this trial to explore whether meaning centered group psychotherapy (MCGP) could increase these factors.

Methods: Patients with lung cancer (N=212) were randomly assigned to either MCGP or a control group by computer, and the proportion of the test group and the control group was 2:1. Patients were assessed before and after completing eight times intervention. Outcome assessment included measures of meaning in life, anxiety, depression, and quality of life (QoL).

Results: MCGP resulted in greater improvements in meaning in life (especially in seeking the sense of meaning in life) ($p < 0.05$), reduction in anxiety and depression ($p < 0.01$). There was no significant difference in QoL ($p = 0.186$), but the role function, social function, emotional function, sleep and pain were ameliorated in the test group.

Conclusions: MCGP appears to be a beneficial intervention for lung cancer patients' psychological distress and meaning in life.

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