

About the Importance of Attention Training in Elderly Patients

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Short Commentary

Often later in life cortical circuits inhibiting basal ganglia cease down in their activity leaving patient exposed internally to wide range of ill-mannered emotions [1]. At this point it is too late to start with rigorous attention training to alleviate their impact on behaviour. Different research groups devised manuals for attention training that could be well implemented into education even at the level of the high schools [1-5]. This way individual could handle better later in life inner mental states difficulties. One of the promising methods of attention training via visual sensory perception stimulation uses 5 color glasses. This technique for attention alertness and stimulation was originally developed by Chogyam Trungpa and then adapted for group sessions by Irini Rockwell [6]. Shortly, patient spends over 20 minutes with each color glasses (blue, yellow, red, green and white) in special posture on the ground staring in to the light. During glasses training visual pathway starting with retinal rods and cones sends information to visual cortex. Attention circuits (although not yet neuroanatomically defined) for better or worse (depending on previously acquired or genetically inherited, or both attention stability capacity) change their target from whatever brain is engaged in to incoming visual stimuli. In case of long term training this is supposedly accompanied by physiological changes in EEG activity [7] and blood flow [8] in the different parts of the brain. This and similar attention training in principle could improve brain health during ageing and significantly reduce costs of specialized neurological/psychiatric treatment and cost of patient's everyday life expenses.

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