Counselors: A Call to Advocacy
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Abstract
This poster outlines the research process and findings of a VACES Grant Funded pilot study applying an anger regulation protocol. The anger regulation protocol was developed by drawing from evidence-based practices found in the empirical literature, including the interventions and assessment scales employed within the context of a psychoeducational group. Information is presented on the original protocol including modifications made to the protocol during the process of the pilot study. Preliminary data is also presented from the psychoeducational group pilot study. Based on participants feedback, recommendations for possible revisions to the protocol are outlined, and recommendations are provided for executing future versions of the anger regulation psychoeducational group.

Introduction
Ford & Tamir, 2012; Gardner & Ameer, 2008; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2004; Perrone, Plis & Kokkinaki, 2007

- Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to process emotional information.
- Two main views
  - Trait EI (based on self-report)
  - Ability EI (based on performance tests)
- Ability-based EI consists of four (4) branches (see Figure 1)
- Conceptualized as a hierarchy (i.e. perceiving emotion at the bottom and ending with managing emotion)
- Emotional reactivity, i.e., anger, stems from attempted emotional cutoff!
- The connection between EI and coping with anger will enrich the understanding of the adaptive function of anger
- The Anger Regulation EI Protocol was informed by incorporating evidence based techniques from an eclectic approach using:
  - Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
  - Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT)
  - Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
  - Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
  - Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFT)
  - Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)

Methods
- The Anger Regulation EI Protocol was originally designed with 4 modules to be covered over 12 weeks. However, the protocol was modified for the study covering the 4 modules over 8 weeks (see Figure 2)
- The population of the study comprised of outpatients and a church community support group members
- The closed group consisted of 9 members; 8 members completed the study, there was an attrition of 1
- The study occurred over a period of 8 weeks, with each session lasting 75 minutes
- Pre- and post-testing were completed using:
  - Novaco Anger Scale and Provocation Inventory (NAS-PI; Novaco, 2003) (see Figures 3 and 4)
  - Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCET; Salovey, Caruso, & Lopes, 2004) (see Figure 6)
- Paired samples t-test was completed (see Figure 5)

Results

- Novel Anger Scale and Provocation Inventory (NAS-PI; Novaco, 2003)
  - Module 1: Sessions 1-3
  - Module 2: Sessions 4-6
  - Module 3: Sessions 7-9
  - Module 4: Sessions 10-12

- Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCET; Salovey, Caruso, & Lopes, 2004)
  - Module 4: Sessions 1-3
  - Module 2: Sessions 4-6
  - Module 3: Sessions 7-9
  - Module 4: Sessions 10-12

- Post-test (week 8)

Four Modules (*Original Format)
1. Module: 1 Sessions 1-3
2. Module: 2 Sessions 4-6
3. Module: 3 Sessions 7-9
4. Module: 4 Sessions 10-12

Four Modules (*Actual Format)
Pre-test (week 1)
1. Module: 1 Sessions 1-2
2. Module: 2 Sessions 3-4
3. Module: 3 Sessions 5-6
4. Module: 4 Sessions 7-8

Post-test (week 7)

MSCET Overview

- The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test is designed to assess emotional based intelligence
- Assessment is designed on an ability based scale
  - Participants perform tasks/solve emotional problems (subjective)
- Subscores include: Emotional Experience and Emotional Reasoning
- MSCEIT explores each of the four branches of emotional intelligence
  - Ability to perceive emotions
  - Ability to utilize emotions
  - Ability to understand emotions
  - Ability to manage emotions

Conclusion and Future Work

- N=8; 1 dropout during week 7 of 8
- Data utility is limited due to small sample size
- Paired t-test found no significant difference in Anger Regulation or Provocation Index Scores
- Paired t-test found significant difference in Total NAS Score
- It appears that participants experienced increased tolerance in their cognitions, arousal and behaviors related to anger based on the Anger Protocol
- Future research should replicate study with larger N and compare the treatment group with a wait-listed control group

- Possible revisions to protocol:
  - Insert a lesson on the concept of boundaries
  - Provide a more in-depth discussion on guilt versus shame
  - Amend lesson 4 to include stronger empathy building
  - Amend the article provided in lesson 5 to include a more reader friendly piece

- Recommendations:
  - Provide time for more discussion amongst group members
  - Insert lesson on the ideas of forgiveness for self and others
  - Provide an addendum for those who wish to include a spiritual aspect
  - Provide audio recordings of mindfulness sessions
  - Amend protocol to increase homework completion rate

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