

Evidence Based Practice Day
Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, Recreation Therapy Program
April 26, 2013

Jacquelyn Gimbel
Temple University Graduate Student
tue78361@temple.edu

A Review of the Effectiveness of Reminiscence Therapy on the Cognitive Functioning of Older Adults with Dementia

Search Terms: “Reminiscence therapy,” “dementia,” “older adults,” “cognitive effects,” “RCT”

Years: 2002-2013

Databases: EBSCOHost, Medline, PubMed

Articles: 8

Summary of Research Findings:

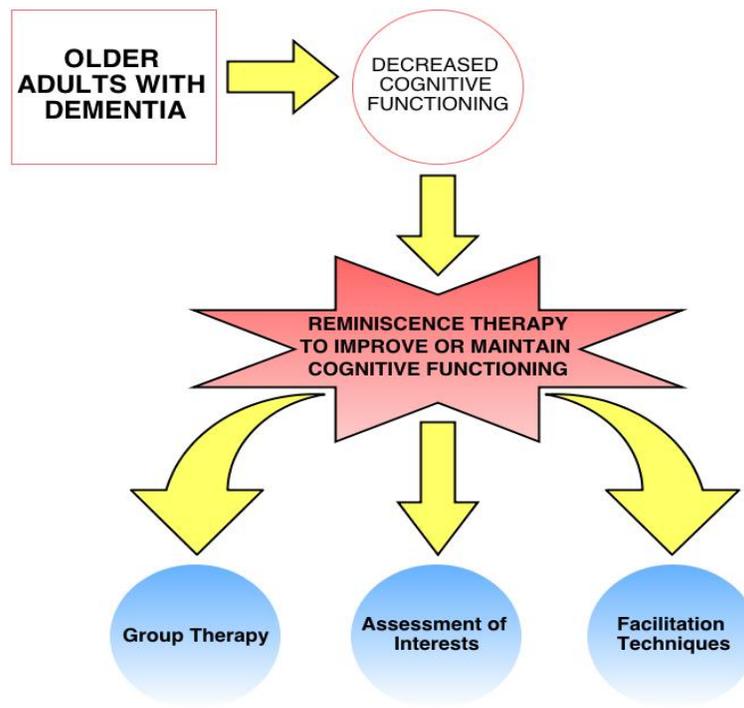
This review included six randomized control trials, one case study and one pilot study. All participants were over 65 years old and diagnosed with mild to moderate dementia, who received reminiscence therapy (RT) in individual or group sessions. The length of the studies ranged from eight weeks to one year. Six studies included participants receiving RT while residing in nursing homes (Gudex, Horsted, Moller Jensen, Kjer & Sorensen, 2010; Haslam, Haslam, Jetten, Bevins, Ravenscroft & Tonks, 2010; Ito, Meguro, Akanuma, Ishii & Mori, 2007; Tadaka & Kanagawa, 2007; Thormgrinsen, Schweitzer & Orrell, 2002; Wang, 2007). Another study was conducted among subjects living at home but attending an adult day care program (Nawate, Kaneko, Hanahoka & Okamura, 2008). Last was a case study conducted with one man recently diagnosed with dementia living with family (Tanaka, Yamada, Kobayashi, Sonohara, Machida, Nakai, Kozaki, Toba, 2007).

All studies measured the effectiveness of RT as a modality to improve cognitive functioning among older adults with dementia. Some studies found that RT improved or maintained cognitive functioning among the subjects in the intervention group (Haslam, *et al.*, 2010; Nawate, *et al.*, 2008; Tadaka & Kanagawa, 2007; Tanaka, *et al.*, 2007; Wang, 2007), while participants in the control group showed some cognitive decline (Haslam, *et al.*, 2010; Wang, 2007). The literature suggests that the utilization of RT in group settings can promote social interaction which in turn, may contribute to maintained or improved cognitive functioning (Haslam, *et al.*, 2010). Two of the studies also found improved quality of life and job satisfaction among caregivers and nursing home staff respectively (Gudex, *et al.*, 2010; Thormgrinsen, Schweitzer & Orrell, 2002).

Knowledge Transition Plan:

RT can be utilized as an intervention to maintain current levels of cognitive functioning and make short-term cognitive improvements. The literature suggests that administration of RT would be more successful in a smaller group when catered towards participants’ interests using specific facilitation techniques. Groups should ideally range from 5-11 people in sessions lasting 30 minutes to one hour (Gudex, *et al.*, 2010; Haslam, *et al.*, 2010; Nawate, *et al.*, 2008; Tadaka

& Kanagawa, 2007; Thormgrinsen, Schweitzer & Orrell, 2002). Prior to organizing small groups, it is important for the facilitator to understand the group demographics and participants' interests. The literature indicated that the use of themes common to participants' interests were helpful to initiate conversation and trigger long-term memories (Haslam, *et al.*, 2010; Nawate, *et al.*, 2008; Tadaka & Kanagawa, 2007; Tanaka, *et al.*, 2007; Wang, 2007). Facilitation techniques are also important. It is suggested that RT may be useful when integrated into other activities, such as cooking (Nawate, *et al.*, 2008). Practitioners could also train caregivers and family members effective communication techniques that would facilitate RT administration for older adults residing at home. When a group is not available, individual reminiscence also has the ability to improve cognition (Tanaka, *et al.*, 2007).



References:

- Gudex, C. H. (2010). Consequences from use of reminiscence- a randomised intervention study in ten Danish nursing homes. *BMC Geriatrics*, 10(33).
- Haslam, C. H. (2010). The social treatment: the benefits of group interventions in residential care centers. *Psychology and Aging*, 25(1), 157-167.
- Ito, T. M. (2007). A ranomized controlled trial of the group reminiscence approach in patients with vascular dementia. *Dementia and Geriatric Cognitive Disorders*, 24, 48-54.
- Nawate, Y. K. (2008). Efficacy of group reminiscence therapy for elderly dementia patients residing at home: a preliminary report. *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics*, 23(3), 57-67.
- Tadaka, E. a. (2007). Effects of reminiscence group in elderly people with Alzheimer disease and vascular dementia in a community setting. *Geriatric Gerontology International*, 7, 167-173.
- Tanaka, K. Y. (2007). Improved cognitive function, mood and brain blood flow in single photon emission computer tomography following individual reminiscence therapy in an elderly patient with Alzheimer's disease. *Geriatric Gerontology Internation*, 7, 305-309.
- Thormgrimsen, L. S. (2002). Evaluating reminiscence for people with dementia: a pilot study. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 29, 93-97.
- Wang, J. (2007). Group reminiscence therapy for cognitive and affective function of demented elderly in Taiwan. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 22(1235), 1240.