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Grasping the dynamics of suicidal behavior: Combining time-geographic life charting and COPE ratings

Charlotta Sunnqvist

Malmö University, Sweden

A variety of factors have been identified as being risk factors for suicidal behavior. One of them is the way a person deals with stressful situations. It is not the stressor alone that leads to a serious outcome, but rather the way in which the person perceives and responds to it. The aim of this study was to explore whether a time-geographic life charting, combined with a survey of a person's coping capacities over time, elucidates the pathway to suicidal behavior, and therefore could be useful in suicide prevention. Twenty-three patients were recruited shortly after a suicide attempt. The time geographic life charting was drawn together with the patient and COPE inventory ratings were used separately and in combination. According to COPE ratings, the participants could be divided into three groups using different coping strategies: (1) adaptive, (2) maladaptive, and (3) both adaptive and maladaptive coping. Within these subgroups, three different pathways to suicidal behavior were described and illustrated. We conclude that time-geographic life charting used in combination with the pattern of coping strategies may be helpful when assessing risk of suicidal behavior. It seems that the combination catch all relevant factors and strengthens the comprehensive picture of the patient's life situation.

Biography

Charlotta Sunnqvist has been working as nurse for 20 years and completed her PhD 2009 from Lund University and pursuing her Post-doctoral studies from Malmö University. She is the senior lecturer of Malmö University and works with Nurse Specialist Program in Psychiatric care at advance level. She has published more than approximately 15 publications and one book chapter in Oxford Textbook of Suicidology and Suicide Prevention.

charlotta.sunnqvist@mah.se

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