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Positive and negative emotions in the contact with horse during the three-day hippotherapy course

Anna Maria Choińska, Alina Żurek, Dawid Selwa, Sara Górna, Agata Trafalska and Ewa Zofia Gieysztor
Wrocław Medical University, Poland

Objective: The aim of the study is to try to answer the question of how contact with the horse during practical hippotherapy can affect the positive and negative emotions of physiotherapy students? Confronting with your own emotions before and after riding on horseback, resulting in a study situation, gives the prospective therapists the opportunity to get closer to the emotional state of the patient during hippotherapy.

Methods: The study involved 191 physiotherapy students (146 women and 45 men) of Wrocław Medical University. Average age was 23 years. The research took place during the three-day didactic camp, under the subject special methods - hippotherapy in horse in Kalinówka. The purpose of the course was to teach the fundamental and practical (riding on horse) to the student with the essence of hippotherapy. The study was conducted twice, on the first day (1st study) and on the third (2nd study). The scale of positive and negative experience (SPANES) was used. On the basis of the difference in the results obtained in the positive and negative groups of feelings it was possible to designate the so-called 'balance score'.

Results: Analysis of variance demonstrated the significant difference between the intensity of pleasant and unpleasant feelings in study I and II ($p = 0.015$) in favour of the first group. In addition, a significant difference was observed in women in I and II studies. The scores show the difference in achieved level from moderately happy to happy ($p = 0.0513$). No such difference was observed in men.

Conclusions: Increasing the intensity of positive feelings and decreasing the negative during the course may favour the positive attitude towards hippotherapy by the therapist and the patient.

Biography

Anna Maria Choińska is an Adjunct Professor at the Medical University in Wrocław, Poland, and Lecturer on scientific conferences in Poland and abroad. She is the author of many publications about children's rehabilitation. She has completed courses in the field of diagnostics and therapies for children at risk such as the Munich functional developmental diagnosis (MFDD) for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of life, the course of psycho-motorics as well as sensory integration therapy. She is the Instructor with Hippotherapy specialization.

ewa.gieysztor@umed.wroc.pl

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