

The Efficacy of Aerobic Exercises in Reducing Loneliness and Promoting Happiness in Elderly

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Abstract

Introduction: Elderliness is a stage of the life process after midlife, which is associated with psycho-emotional problems, dependency to others, loneliness and decreased physical abilities. Aerobic exercises help elderly in focusing, decreasing anxiety and experiencing positive emotions. Therefore, this study aimed at investigating the effect of aerobic exercises on reducing loneliness and promoting the level of happiness in elderly.

Methods: In this experimental study with pretest-posttest and control group, 30 elderly (age > 60) were selected through simple random sampling among elderly in the region 8 of Tehran and equally assigned into the two groups of experimental and control (n = 15, each group). Data were collected using the questionnaires of Rossel and Fergosen loneliness and Oxford happiness. Aerobic exercises treated on participants in the experimental group in 10 group sessions and after that, loneliness and happiness were measured in posttest and the data were analyzed using MANCOVA.

Results: Results showed that aerobic exercises can significantly reduce loneliness and promote the level of happiness of elderly ($P < 0.01$).

Conclusions: The results provide some evidence to suggest that aerobic exercises can be an appropriate motor-therapy technique for reducing loneliness and promoting happiness in elderly. Therefore, in order to reduce loneliness and promote happiness in the elderly, it may be useful for the elderly to be encouraged to do daily aerobic exercises.

Keywords: Aerobic Exercise, Loneliness, Happiness, Elderly