

THE CLEARING A SPACE CHECK LIST

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The Clearing a Space Check List was developed for the study Focusing and Cancer: A Psychological Tool as an Adjunct Treatment for Adaptive Recovery, 1991. Results are reported in: Grindler Katonah, D. and Flaxman, J. (2003). Focusing: An Adjunct Treatment for Adaptive Recovery from Cancer. Retrieved February 23, 2009, from http://www.focusing.org/adjunct_treatment.html. This study evaluated the usefulness of Clearing a Space, the first step of Focusing, as a psychological tool in the treatment of cancer patients in terms of its impact on depression, hardy coping mechanisms, body cathexis, body image, and physical activity level for 12 cancer patients between the ages of 30-55, who had cancer within the last five years. A six-month follow-up evaluated the change over time. The author matched subjects for severity of illness, and randomly assigned them to either immediate treatment or a wait group of four weeks. Results showed a significant decrease in depression and a significant improvement in body image for the treatment group when compared to the wait group. A trend towards significance appeared in the hardiness scores and the body cathexis scores. At the six-month follow-up, no significant differences in the scores emerged for the treatment group, suggesting that subjects had sustained the changes achieved with this intervention over time.

The 'Clearing a Space' Check List measures the number of Focusing steps the subject experienced. The Check List was scored after each session. An overall mean score was calculated for the statistical analysis. The Trainers who administered the intervention were trained in scoring the Check List and achieved reliability amongst each other. The Training included listening to taped segments of Focusing sessions, and clarifying through discussion the distinctions listed on the scale between Focusing and not Focusing. In order to obtain reliability the trainers rated eight ten-minute tape-recorded Focusing sessions. The reliability coefficient obtained was .84. For anyone wanting to use this Scale a similar training process should be included for the raters as well as establishing reliability with the original ratings used in this study through rating the reliability tapes.

A recent study conducted by Klagsbrun, J., Rappaport, L. Marcow Speiser, V., Post, P., Byers, J., Stepakoff, S., Karman, S. (2005) Focusing and Expressive Arts Therapy as Complementary Treatment for Women with Breast Cancer. Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, Vol. 1 (1), pp. 107-137 found a significant correlation (.7) between the Experiencing Scale (Klein, M.H., Mathieu, P.L., Gendlin, E.T., & Kiesler, D.J., 1969) and the Clearing a Space Check List that suggests that the CAS Check List is a valid independent measure of 'experiencing level.'

How to Score the Clearing a Space Check List:

First, the descriptions under each Step Category are to aid decision-making in scoring. If any one of the descriptions is true, then you check the category (for example, Clears a Space). They don't all have to be true to get a point. If you still have doubt after looking at each description under a Step Category then do not check it, check DID NOT....

Second, Each Focusing step that you check as accomplished obtains one point. The exception is Felt Shift. If you check Felt Shift that score is 2. Then add up the scores for a TOTAL SCORE. Each session results in a total score.

This scale is copyrighted and can be used with permission from Doralee Grindler Katonah, Psy.D., M.Div. grindkaton@earthlink.net It is hoped that all data and research results connected to the use of this scale will be provided to Dr. Grindler Katonah upon completion of your study.