

THE INFLUENCE OF INTEGRATIVE GESTALT THERAPY ON THE ACQUISITION OF DAILY LIFE SKILLS AND HABITS

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The efficiency of Integrative Gestalt Therapy on the decrease of undesired types of behaviour measured by the AAMD scale (Part two) in children with intellectual disabilities has been demonstrated in the authors' earlier works. The object of this work is to state the effects of the same therapeutic method on the intellectual aspects of social competence in the children with difficulties, as measured by the AAMD scale (Part one). Integrative Gestalt Therapy emphasises the wholeness of a person's body, intellect and soul in the social and ecological environment to which the person is undividedly linked. It is a multidimensional and multimodal method, a method that causes changes on different levels, changes of physical, social-interactive and cognitive structure. Integrative Gestalt Therapy has been applied as a group therapy during a period of one year on 13 children with intellectual disabilities, aged between 7-11 years. The participants have been chosen primarily for their record in psychological problems and undesired behaviour. As the samples in question were dependent on the analysis of change of a sample of participants described by a set of quantitative variables in the initial and final state, a component model was applied. Results show statistically significant progress in the intellectual aspects of social intelligence.

key words: Integrative Gestalt Therapy, undesired types of behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Daily life skills and habits will in this work be examined according to the Greenspan model of general competence (Greenspan & Granfield, 1992). In this model, competence has two main categories: social competence and instrumental competence, both of which have intellectual and non-intellectual components. Persons with mental retardation show considerable deficits in the intellectual field, more specifically in the fields of practical and social intelligence (intellectual aspects of social competence), as well as conceptual intelligence and information processing (intellectual aspects of instrumental competence).

As successful socialisation and adaptation can partially amend for a conceptual intelligence and information processing disability, numerous researchers have concentrated on the problem of social behaviour, often within the framework of

social competence (Hogg & Mittler, 1983; Grossman, 1983; Gresham & Reschly, 1987; Guralnik, 1989; Guralnik, 1990). Writing about social competence, the authors stress its different components: the adequacy of social behaviour regarding the norms of the social community, which manifests itself in adaptive behaviour and social skills; the existence or non-existence of relations with peers; the registration of some specific asocial behaviours; behaviour estimates by adults and peers; as

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