

COGNITIVE INTERVENTIONS IN MILD ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

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Background: Many studies have shown that also cognitive stimulation in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease improves language processing and (other) cognitive functions. It is no longer the question of *whether* cognitive stimulation helps rather *what kind* of cognitive stimulation helps more than others.

Methods: 42 subjects with mild Alzheimer's disease underwent clinical and cognitive evaluation and participated in a six-month study with two experimental groups and a control group. Experimental group 1 participated in 'client-centered' global cognitive stimulation, focused on the self as the highest executive authority. Experimental group 2 participated in a cognitive training program, focusing on the representation of complex context correlations in the working memory. The waiting group received only drug treatment.

Results: Results confirmed previous investigation; in both experimental groups increases the cognitive status (MMSE). In looking at the single functional areas only 'client-centered' stimulation improves

- (1) language processing and
- (2) (other) cognitive functions and increases
- (3) ADL/IADL performance and
- (4) the subjective quality of life.

The cognitive training of working memory improves only ADL/IADL performance (more than cognitive stimulation) and stabilizes the level of performance in the three other functional areas. The waiting group is characterized by large declines in performance in all four functional areas.