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Horticultural Therapy is it significant to mental health?"

Abstract by Anna Libby

"Horticultural Therapy (HT) is claimed to offer extensive benefit to clients and is recognised as having a positive impact on both physical and mental functioning. Individuals with mental health problems are considered to have poor functioning in all aspects of their occupational performance. This impacts their lives by possible social exclusion, poor motivation, difficulty establishing/maintaining relationships and stigma. This may affect their quality of life and consequently limits their potential to participate fully in everyday life. HT may help alleviate these problems.

This Literature Review highlights the research in the field of HT specifically in regard to mental illness. It identifies client's perceptions of well-being and important themes that are the priorities for their quality of life. This is explored by reference to Zhan's "Quality of Life" (QOL) conceptual framework and the "Clubhouse Model" (Beard, Propst, and Malumund, as cited in Schlicksup-Curdt, 1998).

It continues by discussing the use of the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance (CMOP) Law et al (1997) and its link with horticulture. Kaplan's (1973) Attention Restoration Theory (ART) is also discussed.

The Research Proposal will aim to investigate perception of clients' well being after experiencing/participating in a twelve-week horticultural therapy programme."