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Self stigma and social self-efficacy

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Learning Goal:

Self stigma has a numbers of negative consequences including the reduction of social self -efficacy related to obstacle to recovery and social exclusion.

Abstract Text:

Negative consequences of public stigma are well known and broadly investigated, but last decade focus of the researchers was shifted to the personal reactions of individuals who had to cope with the social stigma and discrimination. Perception of stigmatization of people with severe mental illnesses can induce a process of stigma internalization in persons diagnosed with schizophrenia. It has been shown that a considerable part of patients accept negative social beliefs and begin to think of themselves as less-worthy, dangerous or incapable to lead an independent life. Since internalization of stigmatizing beliefs implies a negative change in the individual's self-image, we were interested in the way this internalization is reflected on social self-efficacy of persons diagnosed with schizophrenia.

The procedure consisted in application of measures in individual examination of 80 patients :Perceived discrimination and devaluation scale, Internalized Stigma of Mental Illness Scale and The Scale of Perceived Social Self- Efficacy. The participants also answered sociodemographic questions and questions related to mental illness and psychiatric treatment. Multiple regression analysis showed contributions of personal stigma variables (perceived discrimination and internalized stigma), as well as contributions of socio-demographic and psychiatric variables which were determined and compared. Internalized stigma revealed as the only significant predictor of social self-efficacy, wherein was explained for about a third of variance in social self-efficacy. Detecting factors which predict functional and other negative outcomes of the illness can enhance the development of targeted therapy interventions. Our results imply that individuals who accept and internalize negative beliefs have increased risk of social deterioration and consequently social exclusion. There is a need for intervention that should prevent the development of negative self concepts and/or replace negative self- perceiving believes with more empowerment ones.

**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**