Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

19 Sep 2026

Effectiveness of Attentional Control Training on Attentional Bias Towards Death-Related Stimuli, the Level of Death anxiety, and the Level of Sensitivity to Mortality Salience

Protocol summary

Study aim

Determining the effectiveness of attentional control training on the level of death anxiety, attentional bias towards death-related stimuli, and the level of sensitivity to mortality salience

Design

Clinical trial with control group and parallel groups, simply randomized

Settings and conduct

First we assign the participants who have all been selected from Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences's students randomly to 3 groups (2 intervention groups and 1 control group). At pre-intervention stage, participants' death anxiety will be assessed using 1) death anxiety questionnaire 2) modified stroop test and 3) mortality salience. Then the participants in intervention groups will receive attentional control training. At post-intervention and 3-months follow-up, death anxiety will be assessed again, using the methods described above. The results at 3 stages will be compared to reveal the effects of intervention and their sustainability.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion Criteria: Having sufficient ability to use a computer Exclusion Critertia: Having difficult to cure or incurable physical illnesses; Having a traumatic experience in the past year; Encountering the death of an acquaintance in the past year; Having close people (or the responsibility to care for people) dealing with imminent death

Intervention groups

Intervention group 1: Receives attentional control training for death-related stimuli Intervention group 2: Receives attentional control training for negative stimuli unrelated to death Control group: Receives no intervention

Main outcome variables

Attention bias towards death-related stimuli; Level of death anxiety; Level of sensitivity to mortality salience

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20190406043181N1**
Registration date: **2020-01-03, 1398/10/13**
Registration timing: **retrospective**

Last update: **2020-01-03, 1398/10/13**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2020-01-03, 1398/10/13

Registrant information

Name

Saeed Nasiry

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 86 3328 8724

Email address

snasiry@sbmu.ac.ir

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2019-09-23, 1398/07/01

Expected recruitment end date

2019-10-06, 1398/07/14

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

Effectiveness of Attentional Control Training on Attentional Bias Towards Death-Related Stimuli, the Level of Death anxiety, and the Level of Sensitivity to Mortality Salience

Public title

Effect of Attentional Control Training on Death Anxiety

Purpose

Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:

Having sufficient ability to use a computer

Exclusion criteria:

Having difficult to cure or incurable physical illnesses Having a traumatic experience in the past year Encountering the death of an acquaintance in the past year Having close people (or the responsibility to care for people) dealing with imminent death

Age

From **18 years** old to **30 years** old

Gender

Both

Phase

N/A

Groups that have been masked

No information

Sample size

Target sample size: **45**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

Randomized

Randomization description

Simple randomization in individual unit, using table of random numbers

Blinding (investigator's opinion)

Not blinded

Blinding description

Placebo

Not used

Assignment

Parallel

Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee

Iran National Committee for Ethics in Biomedical Research

Street address

Floor 13, Block A, Ministry of Health & Medical Education Headquarters, Between Zarafashan & South Falamak, Qods Town

City

Tehran

Province

Tehran

Postal code

5486213654

Approval date

2019-08-27, 1398/06/05

Ethics committee reference number

IR.SBMU.MSP.REC.1398.539

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied

Death Anxiety

ICD-10 code

ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description

Attentional bias towards death-related stimuli

Timepoint

Pre-intervention, post-intervention, 3-months follow-up

Method of measurement

Modified stroop test

2

Description

Level of death anxiety

Timepoint

Pre-intervention, post-intervention, 3-months follow-up

Method of measurement

Multidimensional fear of death scale

3

Description

Level of sensitivity to mortality salience

Timepoint

Pre-intervention, post-intervention, 3-months follow-up

Method of measurement

Moral disengagement scale after causing mortality salience through writing two sentences about one's death

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description

Intervention group: Receive the computerized attentional

control training program for death-related stimuli in 4 sessions across 2 weeks. In each session of this program, the participants face a mixture of death-related images or words and neutral images or words, and practice to change their attention from death-related stimuli to neutral ones, and also from the content of each stimulus to the color of its background or border.

Category

Treatment - Other

2

Description

Intervention group: Receive the computerized attentional control training program for negative stimuli unrelated to death, in 4 session across 2 weeks. In each session of this program, the participants face a mixture of negative images or words unrelated to death, and neutral images or words, and practice to change their attention from negative stimuli to neutral ones, and also from the content of each stimulus to the color of its background or border.

Category

Treatment - Other

3

Description

Control group: Receive no intervention

Category

N/A

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Shahid Beheshti Medical University

Full name of responsible person

Saeed Nasiry

Street address

Tehran, Evin, Arabi St.

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8456623514

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+98 21 4862 1543

Email

snresearch@sbmu.ac.ir

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Saeed Nasiry

Street address

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Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?

Yes

Title of funding source

Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences

Proportion provided by this source

100

Public or private sector

Public

Domestic or foreign origin

Domestic

Category of foreign source of funding

empty

Country of origin

Type of organization providing the funding

Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Saeed Nasiry

Position

Student

Latest degree

Master

Other areas of specialty/work

Psychology

Street address

No. 2, Moghaddam De., South Ramin Ave., East Ferdows Blvd.

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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person
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Position
Student

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Person responsible for updating data

Contact

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
No - There is not a plan to make this available

Justification/reason for indecision/not sharing IPD
No further information

Study Protocol
No - There is not a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan
Not applicable

Informed Consent Form
No - There is not a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report
No - There is not a plan to make this available

Analytic Code
Not applicable

Data Dictionary
Not applicable