Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

Investigating the Effect of a Self-working Therapeutic Training Program on Self-Perception, Meaning of Life, and Existential Anxiety Among Visitors of Clinics

Protocol summary

Study aim
Studying the effect of self-educational therapeutic program on self-perception, meaning of life, and existential anxiety of patients referred to Ahvaz clinics

Design
A controlled clinical trial with parallel groups, without blinding, randomized, on 30 patients. The rand function of Excel software will be used for randomization.

Settings and conduct
The statistical population of the present study includes all volunteer clients (male and female, aged between 18 and 50 years) to the Rayan Psychology Clinic in Ahvaz during the period of February 1404 who meet the conditions for entering the study. In the sample selection stage, the available sampling method will be used. After selecting the samples of 30 people, based on the study's entry and exit criteria, the participants will be randomly assigned to two groups: "self-education therapy" (intervention group) and "waiting list" (control group).

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria: Score below average on the self-perception questionnaire, age range between 18 and 50 years. Exclusion criteria: Unwillingness to participate in the study, receiving concurrent psychological or pharmacological treatment.

Intervention groups
The intervention group consists of people who will receive the self-training program. The control group consists of people who will not receive any intervention.

Main outcome variables
Self-perception, meaning of life, existential anxiety

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260105068554N1**
Registration date: **2026-01-10, 1404/10/20**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-01-10, 1404/10/20**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2026-01-10, 1404/10/20

Registrant information

Name
Atefeh Sorkheh

Name of organization / entity

Country
Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone
+98 61 3333 3333

Email address
atefesarkhe@gmail.com

Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2026-01-25, 1404/11/05

Expected recruitment end date
2026-02-09, 1404/11/20

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
Investigating the Effect of a Self-working Therapeutic Training Program on Self-Perception, Meaning of Life, and Existential Anxiety Among Visitors of Clinics

Public title
Investigating the effect of self-discipline on mental health and meaning in life of anxious individuals
Purpose
Treatment
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
Participants aged between 18 and 50 years old scored below average on the self-perception questionnaire.
Exclusion criteria:
Unwillingness to cooperate and participate in the research Receiving concurrent psychological or pharmacological treatment
Age
From **18 years** old to **50 years** old
Gender
Both

Phase
N/A
Groups that have been masked
No information
Sample size
Target sample size: **30**
Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized
Randomization description
The statistical population of the present study includes all volunteer clients (male and female, aged between 18 and 50 years) to the psychology clinic in the period of February 1404 who have problems in the field of anxiety, meaning-seeking or issues related to identity and self-knowledge and are interested in participating in educational-therapeutic courses. In the sample selection stage, the available sampling method is used. After selecting the samples based on the study's entry and exit criteria, the participants will be randomly assigned to two groups: "self-training educational therapy" (intervention group) and "waiting list" (control group). Randomization is performed using the random block method with variable sizes (4 and 6 people) by an independent statistician who is not involved in the implementation process. The random allocation list is generated using the RAND function in Excel software and then placed in opaque, sealed, and numbered envelopes so that the researcher and participants are not aware of the allocation sequence (allocation concealment). Opening the envelope and informing the allocation group will only be done when each participant enters the study.
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
Ethics Committee of Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz Branch
Street address
Opposite Keshavarz Street, Farhang Shahr, Golestan Highway
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
6134937333
Approval date
2025-12-17, 1404/09/26
Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.AHVAZ.REC.1404.563

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
People with anxiety disorder with symptoms of existential anxiety
ICD-10 code
F41.1
ICD-10 code description
Generalized anxiety disorder

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Self-perception
Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention)2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period)3. One-month follow-up after the intervention
Method of measurement
The method of measurement will be through a self-perception questionnaire.

2

Description
The meaning of life
Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention)2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period)3. One-month follow-up after the intervention
Method of measurement
The measurement method will be the Stagger Meaning of Life Questionnaire (MLQ).

3

Description
Existential anxiety
Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention)2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period)3. One-month follow-up after the intervention
Method of measurement
The method of measurement will be through the existential anxiety questionnaire (Persian version of the Yalom Existential Scale).

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: Self-discipline training therapy program; Duration of each session: 90 minutes; Total number of sessions: 8 sessions; Sequence of sessions: Twice a week; Therapeutic tools used: This intervention emphasizes strengthening the individual's internal resources, including self-awareness, self-compassion, and discovery of personal meaning. The main therapeutic tools include: guided group discussion; mindfulness exercises to increase self-awareness; guided imagery exercises to enhance self-compassion; self-reflection and internal review exercises to recognize personal values and goals; anxiety management and relaxation techniques. The content of the various sessions is summarized as follows: Session 1: Conducting a pre-test; Introducing and explaining the concept of "self-discipline" and the goals of the program. Session 2: Examining self-perception; Identifying negative thought patterns and inner critics. Session 3: Teaching the principles and exercises of mindfulness to reduce anxiety. Session 4: Introducing and strengthening self-compassion; self-compassion imagery exercises. Session 5: Discovering the meaning and personal values of life; Aligning actions with values. Session 6: Discussion and confrontation with existential anxiety; meaningful solutions for it. Session 7: Review of skills, teaching relaxation techniques and planning for sustainable self-discipline. Session 8: Summarizing the discussions; conducting a post-test and planning for follow-up.
Category
Treatment - Other

2

Description
Control group: The control group will not receive any intervention during the research, but will receive the intervention after data collection to prevent factors that threaten the internal validity of the research, such as compensatory competition from the control group or demoralization.
Category
Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Rayan Ahvaz Psychotherapy Clinic
Full name of responsible person
Atefeh Sorkheh
Street address
1st Floor, Mahtab Complex, between 4th and 5th East Streets, Kianpars
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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Pezhman Taghipour Birgani
Street address
Opposite Keshavarz Street, Farhang Shahr, Golestan Highway
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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
Islamic Azad University
Proportion provided by this source
100
Public or private sector
Private
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

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person

Atefeh Sorkheh

Position

Master's student

Latest degree

Bachelor

Other areas of specialty/work

Psychology

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Position

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Other areas of specialty/work

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Contact

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Study Protocol

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan

Not applicable

Informed Consent Form

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Analytic Code

Not applicable

Data Dictionary

Not applicable