

Using coping skills group therapy to help cope with people awaiting kidney or liver transplant: a critical evaluation of a this psychosocial intervention.

ACADEMIC POSTER BY;

Marisa Pinto



01. Introduction

Psychosocial interventions have been widely used to help individuals manage the psychological and social challenges associated with waiting times for medical testing. Numerous studies have consistently shown that prolonged waiting periods can significantly increase anxiety and contribute to various other psychological and social issues. For instance, Gagliardi et al. (2021) reported that patients awaiting medical testing during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced heightened levels of depression and anxiety. Therefore, this poster will critically evaluate a study by Craig et al. (2017), which explores the effectiveness of coping skills therapy as a psychosocial intervention for patients awaiting liver or kidney transplants.

02. Purpose

The poster will look at a peer reviewed paper and aims to critically evaluate the use of coping skills groups in supporting people waiting for a transplant.

*The Transactional model of stress and coping:* (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 )

This theory is used to understand stress and how each individual perceives and experiences it.

It is argued that stress is when an individual perceives their surroundings/ situations harming and threatening and fell they do not have the ability to deal with it.

This theory argues that their are two types of appraisals primary and secondary. Primary refers to when an individual initially encounters a stressful stimuli and is made to judge its levels of harm/ threat. Secondary appraisals refers to when an individual has made a judgment of the stressful stimuli but then must assess if they feel they have the resources to cope with this stress.

There are different coping strategies. First is the problem focused coping is referred to directly dealing with a stressor. The emotion focused coping strategy is referred to as coping with the emotions from the stressor.

03. Methodology

- 41 participants were recruited for this study.
- Participants took part in 16 hours worth of the Coping skills group therapy.
- Participants were asked to complete the Brief COPE questionnaire where they self report coping skills.
- The Brief Cope questionnaire consisted of 14 subscales relating to coping and these were divided into three sub scales. 1: problem-focused, 2: emotion-focused and 3: dysfunctional coping.
- Coping skills, anxiety and depression were measured pre-post the coping skills group therapy.
- Depression and anxiety were measured using the Hamilton rating scales, one for depression and one for anxiety.

04. Results/Findings

- Participants reported better coping skills after participating in the coping skills group therapy (CSG)
- There was significant change in acceptance rates. pre testing means: 6.40 and follow-up mean was 7.10 which remained the same when they were post tested.
- A decrease in denial, also reported after the follow up. pre testing mean of: 3.04 and post testing mean of: 2.46
- Felling's of anxiety and depression also significantly decreased even after the follow up test.

WHAT DOES THIS TELL US?:

- It is clear that individuals benefit from being given coping strategies

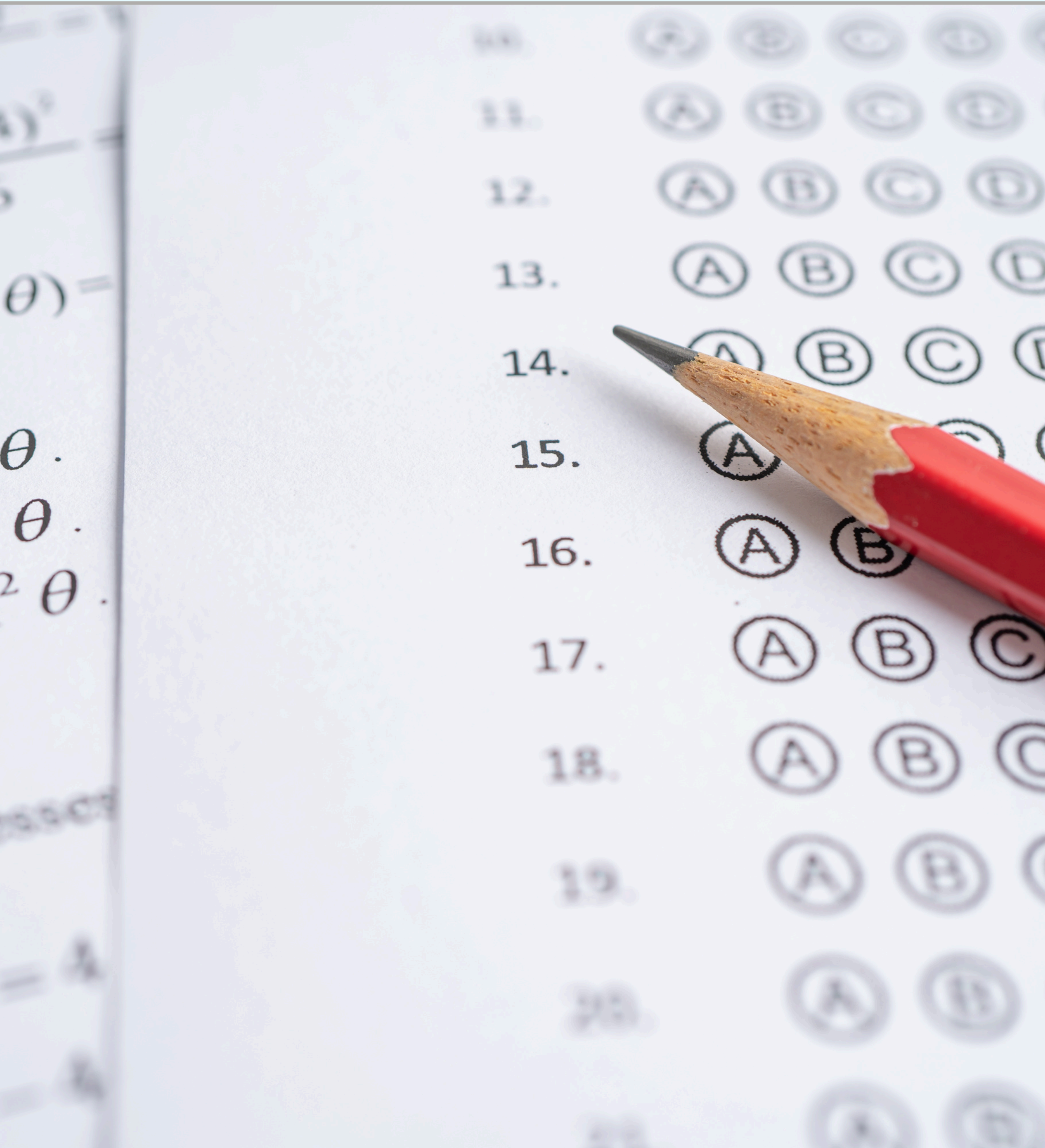
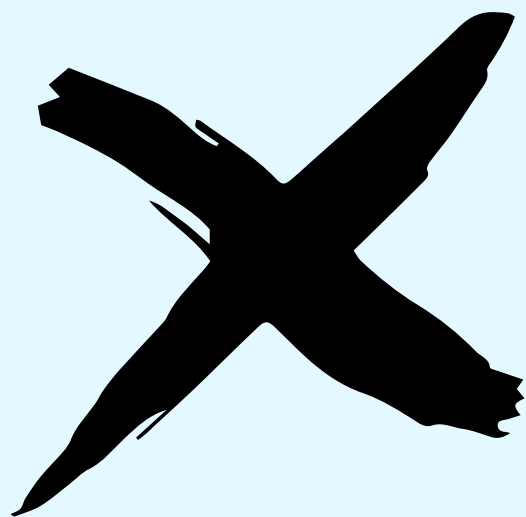
05. Criticisms:

Limitations:

- Provides further support for the literature surrounding this topic.
- The study consisted of a very small sample of 41 participants. This cannot be accurately generalised to the wider population
- Data was collected from self reported measures where participants were asked to report their coping feelings.
- Group interviews- may be harder to control and open to potential interviewer influence
- Less control due to interviews e.g, in the study an individual missed three sessions that could have been crucial.

Strengths:

- Provides further support for the literature surrounding this topic.
- 



06. Conclusion

In conclusion this paper supports the believe that psychosocial interventions are beneficial in helping individuals cope with the stress and anticipation felt from the waiting time for test results/ procedures. In addition, this supports the idea that coping strategies can hep individuals who are dealing with real life stressors. Therefore, this may be a beneficial intervention for all individuals awaiting a organ transplant so they can get the additional support whilst waiting. However, it is also important to acknowledge this was just a pilot study and therefore, a small sample was used. as a result, it may be beneficial to take the study further with a larger sample size.

References:

Craig, J. A., Miner, D., Remtulla, T., Miller, J., & Zanussi, L. W. (2017). Piloting a Coping Skills Group Intervention to Reduce Depression and Anxiety Symptoms in Patients Awaiting Kidney or Liver Transplant. *Health & Social Work*, 42(1), e44–e52. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hsw/hlw064>

Gagliardi, A. R., Yip, C. Y. Y., Irish, J., Wright, F. C., Rubin, B., Ross, H., Green, R., Abbey, S., Mcandrews, M. P., & Stewart, D. E. (2021). The psychological burden of waiting for procedures and patient-centred strategies that could support the mental health of wait-listed patients and caregivers during the COVID-19 pandemic: A scoping review. In *Health Expectations* (Vol. 24, Number 3, pp. 978-). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.13241>

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer publishing company.