

Occupation-based practice to facilitate recovery from psychological trauma: a scoping review

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No financial disclosures



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Background

Psychological trauma underpins a range of mental health problems

Extreme and sustained stress overwhelming the ability to cope

Occupation-based research can inform occupational therapy



METHODOLOGY: SCOPING REVIEW

Research Question:

What is known from published peer reviewed literature about occupation-based practice to facilitate recovery from psychological trauma, and what is the understanding of the underlying mechanisms of change?

Adults 18 years+ with psychological trauma

Occupation based therapeutic intervention

All geographical locations and cultural contexts



COVIDENCE REVIEW PROCESS



Characteristics

Countries

US n = 56

Australia n = 8

Canada n = 6

Study Designs

RCT n = 22

Pilot studies n = 12

Phenomenological
n = 10

Case studies n = 7

Population

Female n = 3,197

Male n = 1,488

Non Binary n = 2

Trauma

Military n = 26

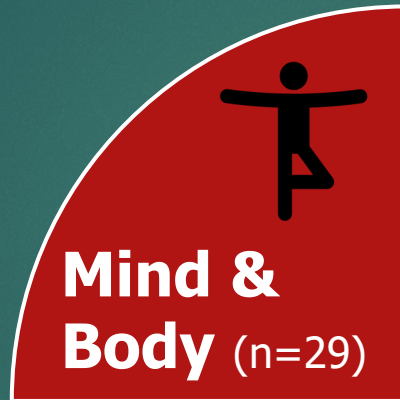
Sexual abuse n = 17

PTSD n = 16



Key Occupation-based Interventions

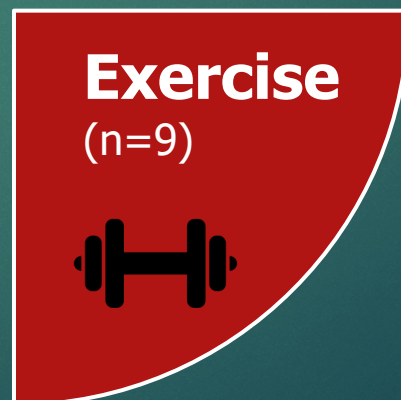
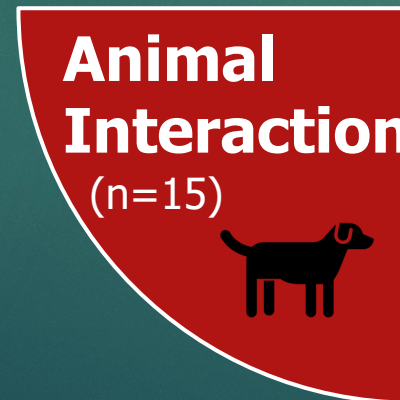
Yoga
Meditation
Mindfulness



Craft
Singing
Dancing
Painting

Occupation Groups

Dogs
Seals
Horses
Farm animals



Gym
Hiking
Sailing
Surfing



Mechanisms underpinning the Occupation-based Interventions

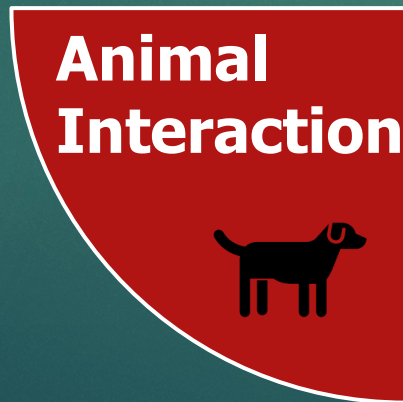
PNS
Blood flow
Interoception



Non-verbal
expression
Sensory

Occupation Groups

Attachment
Behavioural
supports



Neurotransmitters
Extinction learning



Outcomes from Occupation-based Interventions

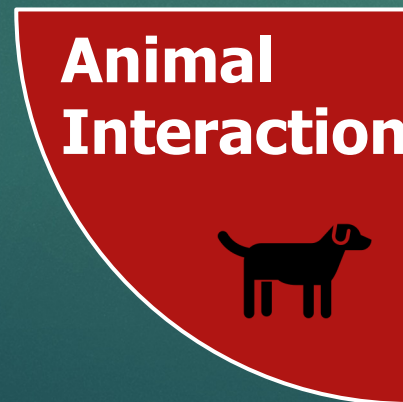
↓ anxiety & PTSD
↑ emotion regulation
↑ sleep



↓ symptoms
↑ self esteem
↑ skill building
↑ belonging & identity

Occupation Groups

↓ panic attacks
↓ hypervigilance
↑ safety
↑ sleep
↑ connection



↑ exposure therapy
↓ PTSD
↓ stigma
↑ well being

Analysis

Positive change

Active participation through doing

Connection

Healing beyond the use of spoken words



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Recommendations

Provide occupation-based interventions

Develop co-creation opportunities

Utilize and conduct occupation-based research



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