

## “How does psychomotor therapy change the body awareness of patients with an eating disorder?”

### Qualitative study

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#### Goal

The main purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the influence of psychomotor therapy on the body experience of six individual patients with an eating disorder. During the interviews, we asked patients how they experienced their body, both neurophysiological as psychological, before and after psychomotor therapeutic interventions. It is therefore important to examine which elements of psychomotor therapy are experienced as helpful and useful in the recovery process of eating disorders.



I'm fine

*I'm not fine. Please help me!*

I'M JUST TIRED

*I can't take this anymore!*

I ALREADY ATE

*I starve myself*

Go away

*Show me you care enough to stay*

I'm just cold

*I don't want you to see my scars*

I'm better, I promise

*I've never been this bad*

I'm okay

*I just want to die!*

#### Method

The study utilized a qualitative method with **in-depth interviews** as the source of information. The interview consisted of open questions, in which the respondent provides a detailed description in own words. This for obtain information from aspects such as perception and experience. **'Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis' (IPA)** was used to analyze the person's psychological experiences studied through the person's own perspective. IPA is an approach to psychological qualitative research that creates themes, which seemed important in the analysis. Each theme is illustrated with the exact quotes from the interview transcripts. Because it is important to make clear what is the interpretation and the basis on which it has been built. It's all about the experiences of individuals working from the basic assumption that the individual who experiences something is the expert about their experiences.

#### Results

From the interviews, it appeared that the informants with eating disorders dispose of a distorted body image and disturbed way of thinking. They are characterized by feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, the desire to remain small and lack developed physical features, the urge to control and the impulse of perfectionism. The informants regard their bodies as negative objects. Because of this negative objectification, persons suffering from an eating disorder often tend to feel alienated from their own body. Psychomotor therapy (PMT) is perceived as an effective form of therapy as patients encounter **improvements in self awareness**, both physically and mentally. A closer contact with one's own body, a more positive body experience, **insight in a disturbed body image and distorted way of thinking and improved self esteem** arise as a result of PMT.

Promotoren / Copromotoren: Dr. J. Calsius

LOVE  
YOUR  
BODY  
AND  
BE HEALTHY!