Abstract

Exercise motivation in university community members: A behavioural intervention. The purpose of this study was to examine how exercise level, exercise motives, and barriers changed from the baseline phase to the follow-up phase after a behavioural and cognitive intervention aimed at increasing exercise. Seventy-five members of our university community (43 subjects in the control group and 32 in the experimental group), all of whom received cognitive feedback, agreed to complete the baseline phase. Only the experimental group received behavioural feedback and a free-access gym ticket with personal training in order to facilitate their adherence to exercise. The results suggest that a combination of behavioural and psychological techniques is an efficient strategy for increasing exercise level. In addition, the results showed that extrinsic motivation predominates the early stages of change-of-exercise behaviour, and that intrinsic motivation is important for progression towards maintenance. Subjects who decreased their exercise level increased their extrinsic exercise motivation and subjects who increased their exercise level decreased the barriers related to intrinsic motivation. These findings indicate that, in order to facilitate exercise adherence, feedback about motives for undertaking exercise is needed, combined with advice about how to improve physical condition. This combination could help eliminate certain barriers that hinder engaging in an active and healthy lifestyle.