Abstract

Background: The settlement of a therapeutic alliance (TA) is relevant within the therapeutic context of patients suffering from anorexia nervosa. Objective: To describe the aspects identified as facilitators in order to achieve a positive therapeutic alliance from the perspective of anorectic patients and their therapists. Method: It was an exploratory, relational-descriptive and qualitative study and its data analysis was based in the Grounded Theory, including two anorectic patients and their therapists. Results: Both, patients and therapists valued the following parameters, respectively: 1. Emotional environment: unconditional genuine interest and confidence versus non judgment and higher availability; 2. Desirable behaviors and attitudes (in the therapist): flexibility, freedom of speech and availability, (in patients): to change and to have resources; 3. Valued techniques: centered in resources, co-participation in the treatment, to know testimonies of other patients versus focalization in skills, emphatic freedom of speech, to check the treatment constantly and to make the patient responsible of her therapy. A model of TA facilitators emerges that includes patient subsystem, therapist subsystem, relational atmosphere and therapeutic space with their particular characteristics. Conclusions: The generation of a good TA is a remarkable factor in the success of the therapeutic process that implies a conscious relationship and a reciprocal acceptation integrated by the influences of the therapist/patient dyad.

Keywords

Therapeutic alliance, eating disorders, anorexia nervosa, facilitators.