

Abstract

Background: Acupuncture is classified as complementary and alternative medicine. It is a medical discipline that deals with the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of various diseases, including addictive diseases. In foreign clinics, especially in the USA, acupuncture is part of the treatment. According to foreign studies, acupuncture can help reduce cravings, improve coping with unpleasant withdrawal symptoms, reduce stress and anxiety, or improve sleep.

Aim: The aim of the diploma thesis is to describe the subjective experiences of acupuncture sessions and their subjective significance in the recovery process. The research questions are focused on the experiences of acupuncture, how the respondents feel the influence of acupuncture on themselves and how this method can be used according to their experience in the treatment of addiction.

Methods: A qualitative research method, a semi-structured interview, was chosen for data collection. The research group consists of 5 respondents. An interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to analyze the obtained data, which focuses on understanding the lived experience of a person and helps to examine more closely what meaning a certain person attributes to his experience.

Results: The results from interviews with respondents are in the form of themes. Based on the analysis, 6 main themes emerged: relaxation, effect on cravings and withdrawal symptoms, faith in the method, adjuvant treatment, (non)pain, no experience. Within the theme of relaxation, the sub-theme feeling of being stoned, and within the theme faith in the method, the sub-theme trust in the therapist.

Conclusion: This work appears to be the first with this focus in the field of addiction science, and its results show that for patients, acupuncture can be another beneficial method in the treatment of addiction. Patients perceive its use mainly in psychological and emotional relaxation, in influencing craving and withdrawal symptoms, and it also brings them hope and support in treatment. This work thus opens up space for further investigation and validation of acupuncture in the treatment of addiction.

Key words: acupuncture, experience, addiction, addiction treatment