

Thesis Title Effects of Self-Help Group on Self-Esteem
and Self-Care Agency in Head and Neck
Cancer Patients Receiving Radiotherapy

Name Jaruwan Rasmeeloung-on

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Thesis Supervisor Committee
Darunee Junhavat, B.Sc., M.Ed.
Yuwadee Luecha, B.Sc., M.Ed.
Pittayapoom Pattaranuthaporn, M.D.,
Cert. of Proficiency (Radiotherapy
and Nuclear Medicine)

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ABSTRACT

Self-help group is one type of the social support system which sound interesting and had been studied extensively by a great number of professionals group in the past 10 years. There were many self-help groups being organized in most of life crises and serious illness, and they found that being a member of such groups could help the patients to be more adaptive to the illness and the treatments they received. This experimental research was designed to test the effects of self-help group on self-esteem and self-care agency in the head and neck cancer patients receiving radiotherapy. The purposed samples consisted of 40 head and neck cancer patients receiving radiotherapy during August,1991 to July,1992 from Vachira hospital. The first 20 subjects were assigned to be the

control group who received conventional care and the latter 20 subjects were served as a experimental group who involved in self-help group in addition to receiving conventional therapy. The data was collected 2 days before the end of treatment. The self-esteem was measured by Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale. Whereas, the self-care agency was measured by the Self-care Agency Scale developed by Nittaya Takviriyane. Patient's perception of self-help group were interviewed using opened ended questionnaire developed by investigator.

The results showed that, before treatment ended, the mean score on self-esteem and self-care agency for the experimental group were not significantly different from the control group. The investigator postulated that this results were affected by 1)the side effects occuring in therapeutic period which disturbing the patient's development of self-esteem and self-care agency and participation in self-help group, 2)the small size of sample and 3)the measurement tools which had low reliability.

However, the patients from the experimental group reported some benefits from joining the self-help group so this could mean that further study for this kind of group is well worth.