

Abstract

Background: In certain aspects, self-harm and addiction share similarities. They both mostly occur among juveniles, moreover, there is an increased prevalence of alcohol and substances abuse among the self-harming clients.

Aim: The objective of this thesis is to find the similarities and differences between self-harm and addiction. The research questions clarifying the objectives are: In what aspects do self-harm and addiction match? In what aspects do they differ? How does the self-harming and addicted clientele conjoin?

Methods: This thesis is theoretical, the data is acquitted from professional articles and studies and was analyzed using comparison and induction.

Results: The results show that self-harm has similar course to the course of addiction and this pattern tends to repeat. In both cases, there is an occurrence of strong emotions preceding the activity followed by a strong relieve right after the performance of the act which is later followed by a desire to repeat the behaviour. A higher rate of alcohol and other substances abuse has shown among self-harming client, while depression, borderline personality disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder often ranks among the concurrent disorders for both of those behaviours. Pharmacotherapy does not usually apply in treating self-harm behaviour as much as in treating addictions.

Conclusion: Therefore, those findings urge for a further research in this area and refer to the possible application of certain information and strategies applied to addiction therapy also to self-harm.

Key words: self-harm, self-injury behavior, addiction, addictive behavior