

Mediators of Change

A mediator is some element that can influence a client towards change (Marcus & Forsyth, 2009). Self-efficacy (SE) and social support (SS) are two mediators that pair together synergistically creating an augmented effect (Warner, Ziegelmann, Schuz, Wurm, & Schwarzer, 2011).

SE is a person's belief that they are capable to perform an action/behavior under specific conditions. SE may be generally or specifically stated. Greater SE (especially specific SE) leads to more successful outcomes (Warner et al., 2011). SE is important to exercise compliance because it is that self-determination and "can do" attitude that will help one persevere in an exercise program despite challenges. Someone with low-self esteem, is complacent, or embraces self-defeat is more likely to find excuses/justifications against exercise.

Warner et al. (2011) and Dunlop and Beauchamp (2013) noted the importance of good SS (especially family, friends, etc. as opposed to health provider) on exercise participation, compliance, and adherence. Warner et al. (2011) found that SS plus moderate levels of SE was more influential. Low SS and/or low SE did not enhance physical participation (Warner et al., 2011).

Dunlop and Beauchamp (2013) found that in addition to SS and SE, same-gender (moderator) exercise classes were more effective. Older adult men are one of the least physically active demographics, but they enjoy and are motivated by the same sense of "brotherhood", community, and sense of helping each other as in the Lively Lads (men's exercise group (Dunlop & Beauchamp, 2013).

I would create single-gender group physical activities/classes for older adults that also provided opportunities for casual socializing (e.g. celebrations, meet-and-greets, etc.). I would encourage a buddy-system for accountability outside of classes. I think a newsletter with interesting information directed at the participants would be beneficial. To measure success, I would use questionnaires 4.2, 4.3, and 4.6 by Marcus and Forsyth (2009).

References

Dunlop, W. L., & Beauchamp, M. R. (2013). Birds of a feather stay active together: A case study of an all-male older adult exercise program. *Journal Of Aging & Physical Activity*, 21(2), 222-232.

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