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Active listening and therapeutic touch in primary care

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Background: in our daily consulting we meet patients that feel sad, are frustrated and who are suffering from different psychosomatic symptoms, not only because of their illness. To help them we use Active Listening and Therapeutic Touch, these techniques are taught in different Universities around the world.

Aim: To explain our experience in Primary Care using Active Listening (AL) and Therapeutic Touch (TT) as a complementary treatment and to accompany the therapeutic process of some patients.

Method: Descriptive observational study of the patients that have received AL and/or TT. We reviewed clinical records during a three year period.

Results: Subjects: 90 patients, 3 men and 87 women. Patients' age: 22 to 78 years old. Average: 51, 5. 67 patients received both AL and TT. 18 patients only received AL. 6 patients gave up after the first visit of AL and / or TT. The average number of visits is 4 in total. These visits were weekly or fortnightly. Some patients continued with more visits, depending on their needs. Using AL we progress in communication helping patients that are engaged in a conflict to be able to open up. Then they are more likely to explain what they are feeling and why. Giving TT, the energy field is balanced. The outcome is that patients feel relaxed, pain and anxiety is reduced, their insomnia improves and helps them to take a therapeutic distance from their daily problems.

Conclusions: Both AL and TT are complementary techniques that help us and our patients to obtain better results, allowing them to reduce the amount of pills they take. Patients' self-esteem and self-confidence increases, which helps them to get over new adverse situations. After reviewing this experience we think that these techniques should be used more often in our consulting.