

Abstract

A Pilot Randomised Controlled Trial Assessing the Impact of Sophrology in People Living with Chronic Pain in the UK

by Charlotte Chatfield¹, Caroline Lafarge¹, Audrey Zannese¹

¹The Sophrology Academy, United Kingdom

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Objectives: Due to chronic pain being difficult to treat, pain medication being often ineffective and associated with side-effects, alternative treatments are frequently used. Sophrology is a structured method to improve wellbeing that combines Western and Eastern practices. Benefits include reduced anxiety and depression and improved sleep quality but its effectiveness on pain management is unknown. This study assessed whether an 8-week Sophrology intervention reduced pain levels and improved quality of life in UK adults with chronic pain.

Design: A Randomised Controlled Trial comparing individuals participating in a 8-week Sophrology intervention with a waitlist control was conducted. **Methods:** 100 participants, recruited from chronic pain support groups, were randomised into two groups, and completed a baseline and 8-week follow-up assessment online. Scales assessed levels of pain, disability, sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, life satisfaction, resilience, and pain

medication use. Mixed ANOVA were conducted to assess the intervention's effectiveness.

Results: 17 participants completed the intervention and follow-up questionnaire compared to 26 in the control group. Compared to the control, the intervention group had significant reductions in pain levels, pain medication use, rumination, magnification, disability levels, sleep disturbances, depression, and anxiety, and a significant increase in treatment satisfaction. There was no significant difference in life satisfaction and resilience.

Conclusions: Results show that Sophrology is effective in improving pain levels and quality of life. This has positive implications for patients and practitioners regarding chronic pain management. Replicating this study on a larger scale and using a longitudinal design would be useful to assess Sophrology's long-term benefits.

Keywords: Chronic pain, Sophrology, Mind-Body Therapy