Initial Efficacy Testing of an Autobiographical Memory Intervention on Advance Care Planning for Patients With Terminal Cancer

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About 65%–85% of people with cancer, including those in hospice care, will die without an advance directive or even a discussion about preferences for care (Houben, Spruit, Groenen, Wouters, & Janssen, 2014; Kierner, Hladschik-Kermer, Gartner, & Watzke, 2010). The process of obtaining information on life-sustaining treatments, deciding on the treatment, sharing the decision with others, and completing an advance directive for the end-of-life period is called advance care planning. For more than two decades, research has provided a limited understanding of end-of-life and advance care planning, despite the efforts of several nationally funded initiatives. The need to find a successful intervention to facilitate end-of-life discussions and decision making is paramount, particularly with today’s death statistics and as the population ages (National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization [NHPCO], 2017). Eighty-seven percent of all cancers in the United States are diagnosed in individuals aged 50 years or older (American Cancer Society, 2017). No effective evidence-based educational intervention exists to facilitate advance care planning decision making or communication. People seeking care in the U.S. healthcare system must undergo...