

Allied Health Media

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Succeeding at Life's Occupations Following Brain Injury

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Learning Objectives

1. Identify common barriers and obstacles for participating within the community following brain injury
2. Identify interventions to facilitate meaningful participation in occupations for long term success.
3. Identify alternative options for participation for individuals with emotional, behavioral or psychosocial impairments.
4. Identify resources available within the community to assist the individual with participation

Overview

- Major cause of death and disability in the United States
- Survivors of brain injury are living with lifelong disabilities affecting their ability to:
 - Live independently
 - Return to work
 - Enjoy leisure activities
- Ultimate goal of rehabilitation:
 - Successful and meaningful participation in occupation

Transition Period

- Clients often enter a period of transition between injury and return to participation within the community
- Able to complete some occupations but:
 - May need accommodations
 - Modified work schedules
 - Job/life coaching
 - Instruction or training
 - Safety training to prevent further injury
- OT's play a vital role in facilitating the transition

Benefits of Returning and Succeeding at Occupations

- Participation in meaningful activities:
 - Allows one to be financially independent
 - Enhances recovery
 - Leads to a perceived higher quality of life
 - Decreases the financial costs associated with lifelong care of the individual
 - Improves perceived satisfaction with life
 - Eases the burden of care and stress on potential caregivers
 - Decreases potential for engaging in inappropriate activities

Barriers to Participation

- Clients often experience a variety of barriers to successful participation within community:
 - Reduced independence in activities of daily living due to physical, emotional, or cognitive impairments
 - Need for greater reliance on others (limited availability of others to assist)
 - Difficulty re-engaging in occupational roles (loss of some roles)
 - Reduced social roles
 - Emotional distress, anxiety, depression
 - Difficulty accessing post-acute services
 - Limited financial resources
 - Awareness of limitations
 - Low self-esteem

OT's Role

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Occupation responsibilities ▪ Client's functional limitations and ability to participate ▪ Meeting with supervisors/coaches ● Identify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Areas to be modified or accommodated ▪ Reasonable solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential accommodations and modifications that could be made to an occupation ● Implement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make the appropriate accommodations ● Monitor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For effectiveness and desired outcomes long term |
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STRATEGIES UTILIZED TO FACILITATE RETURN TO OCCUPATION

Strategies

- Therapeutic Use of Self
- Client Centered Goal Setting
- Goal Attainment Scaling
- Group Therapy
- Occupation Based Interventions
- Consistent Routine
- Error-Free learning
- Communication strategies
- Support Systems
- Life Skills Trainer
- Job Coaches

Therapeutic Use of Self

- Key part of a successful therapeutic relationship
- "The artful, selective, or intuitive use of personal attributes to enhance therapy" (Hagedorn, 1995).
- Particularly critical in Community participation or reintegration of clients back into the workforce
- The relationship between the client and the therapist must be valued by both parties.

Client centered goal setting

- Clients determine if they have satisfactory Community participation
- Client goal setting increases ownership of the therapeutic process
- Canadian Occupational Performance Measure is a typical tool



Goal Attainment Scaling

- Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS)
 - Used to motivate participants
 - Fosters awareness of deficits
 - Provides a structured means to gauge progress
 - Can be used alongside instruments like COPM
 - Translate broad client centered goals into specific behavioral actions
 - Receiving feedback during therapy improves self-awareness and COPM ratings become more realistic

Goal Attainment Scaling Cont.

- Individuals with TBI who generate their own goals are more likely to work on their goals and report their goals as important to them
- Does not mean therapist should relinquish total decision making to the client

Goal Attainment Scaling Cont.

- Advantages
 - Time efficient
 - Personalized
 - Self assessment
 - Used across settings
 - Documents perceptions of outcomes
 - Inexpensive
 - Client Centered

Goal Attainment Scaling Cont.

- Process
 - Identify the client's problems or concerns with community participation
 - Analyze the specific behaviors contributing to problem with participation
 - Plan education and intervention
 - Construct the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS)
 - Implement education or intervention
 - Evaluation (GAS)
 - Client, group leaders, and significant other

Group Therapy

- Group therapy provides ideal setting for:
 - Interpersonal learning
 - Social skill development
 - Interpersonal relationships that can exert a powerful influence on the individual
 - Providing social feedback from other group members
 - Building a therapeutic community

Group Therapy Cont.

- Basic assumptions for a functional group model:
 - Goal of group is not the product of the group
 - Groups nurture interpersonal and intrapersonal development through activity choice, climate, and goals
 - Groups make use of both the human and nonhuman environment and object relations
 - Functional group leaders are aware of individual's needs for self-motivation, desire for mastery, and guide the activity

Group Therapy and Goal Attainment

- Group leaders and clients gather so that the clients can set attainable goals
- Typically 5-10 objectives
- Progress towards goals reviewed each week
- Opportunity for clients to receive feedback
 - Increases self-efficacy
 - Active role in determining their own course
 - Feedback is predominantly positive which helps their confidence and belief in ability to overcome injury

Occupation based interventions

- Decreased abstract thought and generalization
- Difficulty with preparatory activities and establishing meaning
- Increased motivation and effort
- Increased effects on insight
- Practiced in context to determine actual participation in the environment

Consistent Routine

- Must be client-centered
- Develop list of tasks, chores, duties with the client that must be done on a regular interval
- Allows for an understanding of what is expected and what choices they have
- Allows for independence and some control over environment
- Expectations should be clear and concise

Error Free Learning

- Technique that involves encoding new information without error
- Amount of cues and assistance fade over time
- Individuals with severe memory deficits may benefit from error free learning
- Individuals with awareness deficits may benefit from successes and failures

Aphasia Communication Techniques

- ◎ Two main components
 - **Acknowledging competence**
 - Help client know/feel that you are going to work with them and help them communicate
 - **Revealing competence**
 - Make sure the client is receiving the information and able to give information
- Aphasia Institute, 2004-Communicating with Patients/Clients Who Know More Than They Can Say

Communication Techniques

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to use yes/no questions • Avoid putting words into their mouth • Communicate in a quiet room/eliminate distractions • Limit number of people in the conversation • Stand or sit in front of the patient | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be conscious of your non-verbal behaviors • Speak slowly in a normal voice • Short simple sentences • Use visual aids as needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gestures • Writing • Pictures/Objects • Drawings |
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Support Systems

- Education of family and friends
 - How to facilitate independence
 - Activities to avoid
- Local and National Support Groups
- Volunteering Opportunities
- Religious/spiritual resources

Life Skills Trainer

- Role of the Life Skills Trainer or “Life Coach”
 - Psychotherapeutic relationship
 - Therapeutic bond between the life coach and the client
 - Can be a friend, family member, co-worker, professional, caregiver, etc.
- Occupational therapy practitioners role is to work with other professional staff to train and educate the life skills trainer to mentor the client on appropriate behaviors needed for participation within the community – similar to caregiver training

Life Skills Trainer Cont.

- Benefits of utilizing a Life Skills Trainer (LST)
 - Maximize the client’s level of personal accountability
 - Provide immediate and consistent feedback regarding the social appropriateness of the client’s behavior in a natural environment
 - Provide ongoing training in the use of compensatory cognitive strategies

Life Skills Trainer Cont.

- Interventions utilized by LST
 - Verbal cueing
 - Training in compensatory skills
 - Structuring of daily activities
 - Redirection
 - Assistance with problem solving
 - Encouragement of targeted behaviors
 - Cuing for safety awareness

Life Skills Trainer Cont.

- Building Relationship
 - LST and client must form therapeutic bond
 - Listening to client
 - Engaging in mutually enjoyable experiences
 - Engaging in client's preferred activities
 - Once relationship is formed
 - Application of traditional behavioral techniques
 - Shaping, extinction, fading, differential reinforcement
 - Utilized to increase frequency of wanted behaviors and decrease frequency of unwanted behaviors

Job Coaches

- Person that provides specialized on site training to employees with disabilities
- Job Duties:
 - Develop list of interests and skills
 - Job analysis
 - 1:1 training on-site
 - Job retention services
- Job coaches can help achieve workplace success

Resources

- Job Accommodation Network
- Brain Injury Association of America
 - The Academy of Certified Brain Injury Specialists

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

- Leading source on guidance and workplace accommodations and disability related issues
- Work towards solutions that benefits employers and employees
- Reasonable accommodations
 - Any change in the work environment
 - Enables an individual with a disability to participate in the application process, job duties and the benefits associated with employment

JAN Cont.

- Process for Making Successful Accommodations:
 - Notify employers
 - Facilitate requests
 - Analyze jobs
 - Identify functional limitations
 - Determine potential accommodations
 - Determine reasonable solutions
 - Make the accommodations
 - Monitor effectiveness

Things to Consider

- Occupations/expectations change
- Roles change as one ages
- Impairments may improve or get worse
- The need for growth and advancement of responsibility
- The need for continued support (professionals, friends/family/etc.)
- Finding meaningful participation opportunities

Case Study Examples

- Return to Work

Case Study Examples

- Return to Parenting Role

Case Study Examples

- Return to Social Activities with Children

Case Study Examples

- Return to Leisure Activities/Hobbies

Case Study Examples

- Return to Shopping

Questions / Discussion

- Thank you
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