

# A Vision for Holistic Wellness



## Developing an Adolescent Mental Health Program Through the Scope of Occupational Therapy

Created by: Jason Batkiewicz

## Table of Contents

Introducing Occupational Therapy.....2

Mental Health and Occupational Therapy.....3

Adolescents and Mental Health.....4

Proposal and Vision.....5

Occupational Therapy and Stress.....6

Stress Protocol.....7

Occupational Therapy and Anger.....15

Occupational Therapy and Anxiety.....18

Occupational Therapy and Depression.....21

Occupational Therapy and Self-Harm.....24

Occupational Therapy and Gratitude.....27

Occupational Therapy and Relaxation.....30

Transitions and Stigma.....33

Collaboration with Other Professionals.....34

References.....35

## **Introducing Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy can be defined as a holistic approach through functional activities that gives an individual independence in all aspects of their lives. The aspects that occupational therapists look at for functional independence are called the eight occupations and they involve: activities of daily living (ADLs), instrumental activities of daily living (iADLS), work, social participation, education, play, leisure, and rest and sleep. By using evidence based practice, occupational therapists determine the best plan of care for an individual. This framework allows the occupational therapist to guide their clinical expertise towards results both quantitatively and qualitatively. Adding the focus of the eight occupations above with evidence based practice, occupational therapists utilize client centered practice when working with individuals. Client centered practice can be summarized as a means to focus the therapy around the individual. What this looks like in occupational therapy is to shape the therapy session around the roles of the individual as they interact between the occupations mentioned above and their environment. Specific goals or ambitions that the individual wants to accomplish are incorporated into therapy sessions through the intervention process between the partnership of the occupational therapist and the client. With this relationship driving the therapy sessions, occupational therapists focus on ten different outcome measures which are the end results of the occupational therapy process. The outcomes are as follows: performance, improvement, enhancement, prevention, health and wellness, quality of life, participation role competence, well-being, and occupational justice (Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process (3rd Edition), 2014).

## Occupational Therapy and Mental Health

Where does occupational therapy fit inside the domain of mental health? As stated in the introduction, occupational therapy follows a client-centered model. This model allows occupational therapy practitioners to support their clients through an individualized intervention and treatment plan along with supporting the recovery model in mental health. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), recovery is defined as “a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential (SAMSHA, 2012). The extensive schooling and training that occupational therapists undergo in order to complete their postgraduate degree qualifies and prepares practitioners for working in this setting. “Educated in the scientific understanding of neurophysiology, psychosocial development, activity and environmental analysis, and group dynamics, occupational therapy practitioners work to empower each individual to fully participate and be successful and satisfied in his or her self-selected occupations (Champagne, 2016). These aspects of the education that practitioners receive allow occupational therapists to incorporate the principles of the recovery model into practice fluently. SAMSHA states ten principles of recovery that occupational therapists adhere to. They are as follows: hope, person-driven, many pathways, holistic, peer support, relational, culture, addresses trauma, strengthens/responsibility, and respect. Together, occupational therapy and the recovery model bring an advantageous and ancillary approach to the realm of mental



## Adolescence and Mental Health



The defining age range of developing through the stage of adolescence is between thirteen and seventeen years of age. During adolescence, the body undergoes many important advancements that are influential to the decisions those make in adulthood. Because of the onset of different types of mental disorders showing signs and symptoms in an adolescent at this age, many of these important growths and developments of the brain can be impeded. “During early- and mid-adolescence, the brain undergoes considerable neural growth and pruning which create changes of connectivity within and between various brain regions” (Bergland, 2013). Different mental health disorders play a critical role in this process of brain development. Recently, a study from John Hopkins showed that disorders with a deficiency of dopamine had a huge impact on adulthood. “Lower levels of neurotransmitters in specific region of the brain involved in higher brain function, such as emotional control and cognition have been related to schizophrenia, depression, and mood disorders later in life” (Sawa, 2013). Drug and alcohol abuse, anger, anxiety, depression, self-injury, stress, and transitioning are all factors that lead to problems in an adolescent’s life. Occupational therapy has specific interventions and activities that can address these issues in a teen’s life in order to help them with meaningful interaction with their roles in everyday life.



## **Proposal**

The purpose of this proposal is to highlight the need of the creation of a mental health occupational therapy position at Rolling Hills Hospital in Franklin, Tennessee. The current need of occupational therapy services has been defined in the sections preceding this proposal. In addition, the role of occupational therapy will be further defined through activities listed below relating to the topics of stress, anger, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, self-abuse, and transitioning. The contribution and services of an occupational therapist for this population is more effective if they are a member of the rehabilitation team. This model of service allows the occupational therapist to:

1. Become more involved in the pre-referral, referral and assessment stage.
2. Consult with and assist doctors, nurses, and social workers regarding specific interventions to try in the inpatient and outpatient settings of Rolling Hills.
3. Implement goals identified through therapy services into the client's natural environment, i.e. the school or home setting versus the rehabilitation setting.

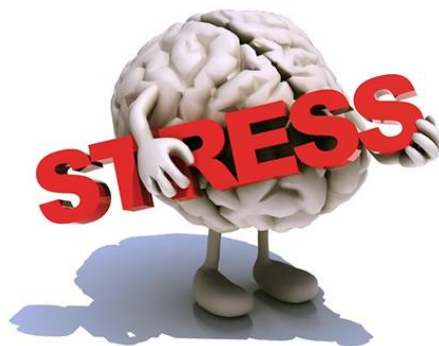
## **Vision**

Occupational therapy is a powerful, widely recognized, science-drive, and evidence-based profession meeting the mental health society's occupational needs.

## Occupational Therapy and Stress

The effects of stress on the brain during adolescence has an important impact on the lives of an adolescent. Because stress can lead into a chronic illness, it's important to look at stress from an occupational therapy standpoint. The effects of stress impact an adolescent's life by increasing the risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other immunological issues (Maldonado, 2014). Besides physiological effects, an occupational therapist will address stress related issues through psychosocial environments. Social participation is important in this aspect of development and is high priority to address from an occupational therapy standpoint.

The next section contains a group protocol outlining stress management for adolescents. The importance of the group is to illustrate how occupational therapy in a group environment will facilitate an outlet for adolescents dealing with stress. The protocol walks through six weeks of the group in which meetings would happen once a week. The interaction between stress management and living occupationally fulfilled lives is defined through the activities in the protocol. The activities feature critical topics such as coping skills, regulation of emotions, healthy eating habits, identification of stressors, personal insight, and the importance of gratitude. The purpose and rationale of the group protocol is defined and stated in more depth in the following section.



## Protocol

**Title/Name of Group:** Keep Calm and De-Stress On

**Purpose:** The meaning of this group is to identify and implement ways to cope with stress. This group is designed for adolescents in a mental health setting. Different factors such as age, current events, and socioeconomic status will be addressed individually within the group setting. The impact of the group will lead to better management and identification of what stress looks like and how it affects each person physically, socially, mentally, and emotionally. The group will be required to perform activities that address the individual's stress through physical activities, meditation, and creative expressions through arts and crafts. Clients will also participate in group discussions about stress management and prevention. Individuals will come out of each session with a tool for stress management that they can utilize immediately into their daily routine.

**Rationale:** The adolescents that stay at this hospital receive a lot of care. A lot of their needs are met such as a safe sleeping environment, daily meals, and activities to structure their visit. We need to extend our focus, time, and dedication to what is happening outside of these walls. As an occupational therapist, I will aide this direction by providing a holistic approach to stress management. There is a significant need to analyze the big picture of how stress impacts an individual outside of the hospital.



The activities of this occupational therapy group will always incorporate an educational component, a discussion component, a movement component, and an activity component in each group session.

These components listed not only comprise the purpose of the session but also is the blueprint of why an occupational therapist is needed to run this group. We as occupational therapists are uniquely set apart from any other staff member employed here at the hospital due to the extensive holistic training we receive in our education. To further define the holistic approach of an occupational therapist, we seek to cover every aspect of an individual's life into our group including dressing, hygiene, managing money, working, schooling, leisure and play activities, and social participation.

This specific group will outline factors that influence stress that falls upon adolescents such as socioeconomic status, stigma of a mental illness, stigma of being a patient in a mental health setting, and health and wellness decline. These factors and how to address them through activities will be based upon current evidence based practices designed by leading researchers. While these factors will be addressed in each group session through activity, an emphasis will also be on several other components. The group members will be able share their journey with each other to release their emotions in a positive and supporting environment. This will lead to the group members working with each other to help and support their peers due to the awareness of different paths and journeys they are all living. I aim to make all members feel welcomed and have a sense of belonging so that that anyone is able to feel hope and share their experiences comfortably.

**Size of Group:** The size of the group will be nine members total.

**Rationale:** I want this group to be large for the sake of social participation with every adolescent here at Rolling Hills.

**Membership Criteria:** All adolescents at Rolling Hills are encouraged to participate in this group. The typical age range varies from thirteen years old to seventeen.

**Open or Closed Group:** This will be an open group.

**Rationale:** This will be an open group due to the necessity of having many different points of views incorporated so that the members have a wider experience of learning from each other. While specific issues will be brought up, a wide view of how to approach stress will be the defining theme of this group. The low length of stay at this hospital is also a determinate for an open group.

**Expectations of Group Members/Guidelines:**

- 1) Will be respectful to the therapist.
- 2) Therapist has power to remove group member if they deem group member being dysfunctional
- 3) Group members will be respectful to each other
- 4) No group member is to talk over one another
- 5) Group members will be expected to share and lead group activities

- 6) Therapist will encourage members to participate in creating the group expectations once the group begins
- 7) Other guidelines decided and voted on by the group

**Therapist's Role:** The therapist's leadership will be constant throughout the sessions. The role of the therapist will be one of a directive leader. This type of leadership is needed in order to maintain order throughout the group sessions. The therapist will be prepared before each group starts while anticipating any adaptations needed while the group is in session. To aide in preparation, extra activities or components will be formulated and gathered during the preparation of the sessions. At times the therapist will select different group members to lead an activity once the therapist explains the goal of the activity. The therapist will always be present and will intervene when necessary. The role of the therapist will include demonstrating/teaching during the activities, prompting discussion of relevant material from the session to inspire interaction between the group members, providing feedback to the group members, and acting in future planning for upcoming sessions. The need for assistance from other professionals are not needed for this group.

**Goals/Anticipated Outcomes:** Group member will identify ten stressors in their life by session third group session.

Group member will identify three physiological body responses to stress by the tenth session

Group member will demonstrate three physical activities that help them manage their stress by fifteenth session.

**Rationale for goal selection:** These goals are featured for the group due to lasting impact they will have on them. Each group member will have a plan of attack for de-stressing. The goals will help outline a plan that group members can use outside of the hospital when they are on their own. The goals also lead the group members to teach other people in their lives about stress and how to manage it.

**Format/Methods/Procedures:** The group will typically start with an icebreaker to help the client's ease into the session. The therapist will then lead an activity that will teach the clients about the topic of that session. There will be a movement aspect included in each activity and a time for discussion after the activity is over with. Activities may involve board/card games, painting, video games, crafting, journaling, or sports related games. Regular materials needed are a laptop that is connected to a projector for the therapist to teach off of.

## **Planned Group Activities**

### **Session One**

**Topic/Focus of Session:** Coping skills

**Activity:** The occupational therapist (OT), will guide the group through a guided imagery meditation.

**Discussion Questions:** Compare how you felt physically and mentally before the activity and contrast how you feel now that the activity is over. What are some ways you can implement this activity into your daily routine?

### **Session Two**

**Topic/Focus of Session:** Regulation of emotions

**Activity:** Group members will be making stress balls out of water beads. They will then fill a balloon and tie it shut to make the stress ball.

**Discussion Questions:** Describe how you will feel if your parents or classmates outside of Rolling Hills see you using the stress ball. How do you know if squeezing the stress ball is helping you positively?

### **Session Three**

**Topic/Focus of Session:** Healthy eating

**Activity:** Group members will be given an opportunity to shop at a local grocery store. They are to pick out items they have learned about that promote health and wellness and will share them with the class after purchasing them.

**Discussion Questions:** Explain how this food item impacts your level of stress physiologically. After a week of practicing healthy eating, how do you feel compared to when you eat something that is considered junk food.

### **Session Four**

**Topic/Focus of Session:** Identification of stressors

**Activity:** A number of stressors will be written out by the OT. They will be used for the group of clients to play Pictionary. Each group member will be paired as a team.

The pairs will compete against each other by guessing what their teammate is drawing. After the activity is over, the OT will discuss with the group about the stressors they saw during the game.

**Discussion Questions:** What other types of stressors should this game include that you feel future group members would benefit from?

### **Session Five-**

**Topic/Focus of Session:** Personal insight

**Activity:** The students will each be given a journal. The OT will ask the group members to write in their journal each hour during their day. The purpose is for the group members to write down what they are feeling emotionally during that hour. After receiving the journal, the OT will analyze the journal entries with the group. The group will then talk about why they felt what they wrote down. Examples include being happy because they are playing outside or being angry because the nurse was strict with them.

**Discussion Questions:** Explain a time that you felt miserable that you wrote in your journal about. What made you feel this way and did you feel any negative thoughts or positive thoughts.

### **Session Six**

**Topic/Focus of Session:** Gratitude

**Activity:** The OT will teach the group about being thankful and grateful. The group members will reflect upon a staff member or a person in their life that they feel left a positive impact on them. The group will design a thank you for that individual.

The group will then discuss why that person left a positive impact on them and the positive feelings they received from them.

**Discussion Questions:** How can you provide a positive impact on someone in your life? What does it make you feel inside when you are nice to other people?

**Time Frames:**

**Length of Group:** There will be five sessions per week for this group. The group will be at 10am Monday through Friday for the month of May. Group will take a hiatus at the end of May to reassess needs of adolescents at the hospital. When clients are able to be released from the hospital, they are released from the group.

**Length of Sessions:** Total group session time will be one hour in length.

**Frame of Reference:** Person-Environment-Occupation

**Location of Meeting:** Large conference room on the adolescent wing of the hospital.

**Leader(s):** Jason Batkiewicz



## Occupational Therapy and Anger



“To function in everyday life, a person must be able to perform skills that enable him or her to engage in a variety of adaptive behaviors. If anger regularly interferes with an individual's ability to perform adaptive behaviors, it is the responsibility of the occupational therapist to assist such a person in the management of anger” (Taylor, 1988). Anger can be addressed in occupational therapy in multiple ways. Education of anger is very impactful for the adolescent population. This allows them to be able to identify reasons as to why they feel they are angry so that they can understand the source of where their anger is coming from. Being able to identify anger related causes will help occupational therapists personalize ways to help the clients manage and control their anger. Some possible causes of anger in adolescence includes lack of sleep, low self-esteem, stress, physical or emotional abuse, and not knowing proper ways to express their emotions. With these issues in mind, occupational therapists approach anger management through activities and identifying areas of the eight occupations that anger is affecting. Many of the activities listed later can be used to address anger such as breathing techniques and relaxation strategies.



### **Anger Activity: Toss and Talk**

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to open up conversation about anger related issues. The beach ball is designed to facilitate a question and answer game. The therapist or participant(s) write questions on the ball in order to increase participation and make learning about anger exciting.

Participants: One on one or with a group up to six participants

#### Therapeutic Benefits:

- Improve communication and interaction with either the therapist or classmates (social participation)
- Answering questions related to anger and management (expression of emotion)
- Writing questions on the ball for the therapist or other participants to answer (openness/motivation)
- Work on ability to answer question when it's their turn to catch the ball (delay of gratification)
- Increase ability to catch the ball when being tossed to them (depth perception)

#### Items needed:

- Beach ball (can use large or small)
- Dry erase markers
- Paper towel to erase the markings on the ball

## Steps:

- 1) Therapist writes questions on the beach ball
- 2) Therapist throws the ball to the client
- 3) Therapist decides if the right or left hand determines which question is read aloud by the client
- 4) If playing in a group, have the group members pass the ball to each other
- 5) A variation could be that one person catches the ball and asks the question and then throws the ball to another member to answer
- 6) Instead of having the therapist write the questions, the participants are allowed to mark and write questions on the ball
- 7) Instead of questions, phrases or quotes could be added to the ball
- 8) If a quote or phrase is used in the game, the participant will share what that sentence means to them



## Occupational Therapy and Anxiety

The transition into adolescence brings a new set of apprehension into one's life. During this stage, many people start to feel anxiety over relationships, the future, and abstract thinking which is when one thinks about all the possibilities about an event or situation. An anxiety disorder is occurring when a person's anxiety starts to be excessive and affects their everyday life and occupations. One way occupational therapists help with anxiety is to teach a client the pursed lip breathing technique in order to calm and de-stress the individual. Here are the steps for the breathing technique:

### Pursed lip breathing technique

1. Relax your neck and shoulder muscles. *(figure to right)*
2. Breathe in (inhale) slowly through your nose for two counts, keeping your mouth closed. Don't take a deep breath; a normal breath will do. It may help to count to yourself: inhale, one, two. *(figure to right)*
3. Pucker or "purse" your lips as if you were going to whistle or gently flicker the flame of a candle. *(figure to left)*
4. Breathe out (exhale) slowly and gently through your pursed lips while counting to four. It may help to count to yourself: exhale, one, two, three, four. *(figure to right)*



With regular practice, this technique will seem natural to you.

© Copyright 1995-2005 The Cleveland Clinic Foundation. All rights reserved



Occupational therapists also develop activities and social re-enactments in order for the individual to face stimulus of their anxiety. The term used for this direction of treatment in occupational therapy is called habituation. Next is an activity that demonstrates how occupational therapists can help relieve worry or tension that an individual is feeling.

### **Anxiety Activity: Zen Garden**

Purpose: This activity involves making a miniature Zen garden pictured below. The process of creating and maintaining allow the client to work on anxiety relief by relaxing and meditating. The client(s) can personalize the garden with any items they feel represent themselves or items that they find meaningful.

Participants: One to four participants

Therapeutic benefits:

- Decrease anxiety in which one is currently facing (anxiety/stress relief)
- Focusing on how you feel and how to show your feelings (expression of emotion)
- Using imagination or original ideas to complete the activity (creativity)
- Increasing the ability to move and position objects with one hand and without the help of the other (in-hand manipulation)
- Improve your ability to grab objects at various distances from your body (reach/fine motor movements)
- Concentrating on the design you are making in the sand (meditation/concentration)

Items needed:

- Rocks
- Sand
- Plastic trees
- Plastic/toy rake and shovel
- Tea candles

- Miniature bucket
- Wooden Mosaic
- Table for surface to work on

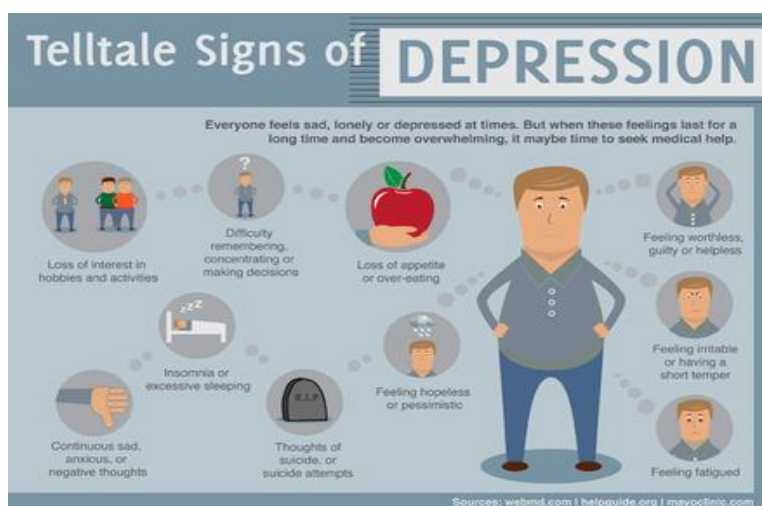
Steps:

1. Take all objects out of the box
2. Empty the sand into the wooden mosaic
3. Using your hands, smooth the sand to where the sand is level or even inside the wooden mosaic
4. Next, decorate the box with any object(s) inside the box that you want to use (be creative)
5. Rake the sand in any direction so that all of the sand in the box has been touched
6. If using a candle, light the candle with a match
7. The client is then able to keep the mosaic in their room or with them in therapy sessions to work on in order to address their anxiety.



## Occupational Therapy and Depression

The symptoms for depression vary from adolescent to adolescent. However, depression in this age range usually shows itself through anger, irritability, being socially withdrawn, and suicidal thoughts. A lot of what occupational therapists do to help includes providing education. This information is important not only for the an individual that occupational therapy is seeing but also for family, caregivers, or friends. Here is an example of patient education that one might give to an adolescent to explain depression:



Education about depression is important but there is more that occupational therapy can offer for this matter. "Occupational therapy practitioners can examine the life roles that are meaningful to clients with depression and help adapt their responsibilities to give them the opportunity to participate and gain a sense of accomplishment (Opp, 2017). Because of the signs of depression stated above, it is important to address critical issues such as lack of identity or self-doubt so that these individuals will feel comfort within themselves.

## **Positivity Story Activity**

Purpose: The individual is to design a book about their life up until the present day. The theme of the book is about the accomplishments they have completed and goals that they yearn to complete. Recalling past achievements will allow the individual(s) to feel a sense of self pride. Pages developed about future goals will enable the therapist to work on bringing meaning and purpose back to the individual. The individual(s) will then be able to share the story to their peers or additional staff members.

Therapeutic Benefits:

- Reflecting upon strengths and capabilities (self-awareness/self-esteem)
- Visualizing and planning objectives or goals (motivation/interests)
- Increase comfort of sharing your story to others (socialization)
- Designing and decorating the book (creativity)
- Increasing knowledge of what is important/useful to oneself (values)
- Decrease feelings of anxiety and or self-doubt (relief)
- Focusing on one's satisfaction or happiness with oneself (self-acceptance)

Participants: One on one or a group of four people

Items Needed:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Ribbon
- Markers or crayons, or colored pens and pencils
- Pictures from magazines
- Glue stick

- Hole punch
- Magazines

#### Steps:

- Determine the chapters of you book. Therapist can provide paper for the individual to write on to problem solve
- Design the pages with coloring/drawing or gluing pictures from a magazine onto the paper
- Punch holes on the left side of the paper in order to be able to tie it together with ribbon
- Tie together the pages of the book with the ribbon provided
- Share the story with peers or staff members in order to increase self-expression and self-worth
- A computer can be used in place of a magazine in order to find additional photos that the individual wants to include in the story





## Occupational Therapy and Self-Harm

The National Alliance on Mental Illness defines self-harm as hurting yourself on purpose either by cutting or burning your skin. Although self-harm is not considered a mental disorder, it is a serious behavior that occupational therapists face when working with young people in mental health. “Self-harm occurs most often during the teenage and young adult years, though it can also happen later in life. Those at the most risk are people who have experienced trauma, neglect, or abuse. Several illnesses are associated with it, including borderline personality disorder, depression, eating disorders, anxiety or posttraumatic distress disorder” (NAMI, 2017). There are several ways to work with young adults with self-harm tendencies from an occupational therapy standpoint. Much like interventions with anger, stress, and anxiety, the aim is to help the individual feel that they are in control of their life again. Addressing skills such as coping, personal awareness, and self-image are just a few areas that are important.



## **Flip Your Troubles Activity**

Purpose: Empowerment is often an attribute that is missing with individuals who struggle with self-harm. For this activity, the central theme is to allow an individual to visualize being in control of any mistakes, failures, and obstacles that trouble them. A worksheet will be created with a line down the middle of the page. On the left is a space for the individual to write about their mistakes, failures, or obstacles. The right side of the page will be space for them to be able to flip the situation or circumstance. This will enable the individual to realize that they do not have to accept their past or present issues as they are able to overcome them.

Therapeutic Benefits:

- Increase ability to believe in oneself through understanding strengths and competencies (self-esteem)
- Finding a reason to react positively to a situation (motivation)
- Increase the ability to deal effectively with something difficult (coping skills)
- The ability to withstand troubles and difficult situations (frustration tolerance)

Participants: One on one

Items Needed:

- paper
- writing utensil

**Steps:**

- Draw a line through the middle of a page of paper
- On the left side label a title called “Mistakes, Failures, and Obstacles.”
- On the right side label a title called “How I Will Flip It”
- Have the individual identify three instances of a problem area and flip it
- Start each sentence on the right side with the phrase “I will”
- Work with the individual to develop a plan to carry out their aims of flipping their issues that they are facing.

| Mistakes, Failures, and Obstacles | How I Will Flip It |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1-                                | 1-I will           |
| 2-                                | 2-I will           |
| 3-                                | 3-I will           |
|                                   |                    |
|                                   |                    |
|                                   |                    |
|                                   |                    |

## Occupational Therapy and Gratitude



A great way to overcome some of the issues adolescents face such as anger, depression, anxiety, and stress is to be grateful. Practicing activities that highlight gratitude offer numerous benefits for the mental health of an individual. A research study

(In Praise of Gratitude) done by Harvard on the subject of positive thinking and gratitude featured many points on how being grateful is healthy for us. These points include having a stronger immune system, lower blood pressure, higher levels of positive emotions, experiencing more joy and or happiness, acting with more compassion and generosity, and feeling less lonely and isolated. These benefits will enable an occupational therapist to bring meaning back to an individual that they are working with in a mental health setting. Thinking positively can allow the individual to feel supported in the roles that they find themselves in during their stay at Rolling Hills and when they are discharged.

## **Postcard Activity**

Purpose: This activity allows one to draw upon the feeling of gratitude both internally and externally. The individual will be creating postcards by using pictures that can be drawn or cut out from a magazine. The individual may choose to print out pictures from the internet in case they cannot find what they like in a magazine. The postcards will then be sent to whomever the individual chooses.

Therapeutic Benefits:

- If designing postcards with a group, increasing interaction with the group members (social interaction)
- Increasing communication to someone via postcard which is not directly expressed (meaning)
- Displaying thankfulness and appreciation (gratitude)
- Improving your skills for coming up with new ideas on the postcards (creativity)
- Expressing thoughtful and positive messages through the postcards (expression of emotions)

Participants: One to four people

Items Needed:

- Magazines
- Pens/Markers/Colored Pencils
- Scissors
- Blank Thank You Cards
- Glue or Modge Podge

- Computer and Printer
- Brushes
- Paint

#### Steps:

- Think of a way to say thank you to someone.
- Find a picture in a magazine or online. You can include letters or phrases.
- Cut these items out to place on the thank you card
- Instead of using pictures from magazines or from a computer, draw or paint a phrase or image
- Glue the pieces to the post card
- Modge Podge can be used instead of regular glue for the post card
- Send the postcard to a staff member, friend, family member, or anyone you desire



## Occupational Therapy and Relaxation

Many of the topics discussed related to lessening stress and anxiety for adolescents. A major way that occupational therapists can help adolescents with these issues is by freeing them from the tension that they feel whether it comes from the internal or external environment. Relaxation techniques can be used in situations that adolescents feel that they have lost emotional control over. For instance, relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or meditating can allow an adolescent to adapt in the presence of an undesired stimulus. That stimulus might be something that causes them physical or emotional pain or anxiety and stress.



Occupational therapists also utilize relaxation techniques to calm one's environment. This is useful for addressing rest and sleep which are one of the eight occupations that are critical to maintaining a holistic wellness for individual. "Sleep insufficiency, defined as not obtaining restorative sleep, is a public health crisis in the United States with resulting negative economic consequences due to lower productivity, increased absenteeism, decreased job performance, increased health care utilization, and potential injury" (Pricard, 2012). Here is an activity for deficiencies in relaxation.

### **Relaxation Activity- Tai Chi**

Purpose: This activity combines movement with relaxation. An important step is to focus on the deep breathing of breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.

The activity can be done before bedtime to calm your system or before a task causing anxiety or stress.

Therapeutic Benefits:

- Remaining calm when faced with pressure (emotional stability)
- Developing an understanding of oneself (insight)
- Advancing your skills of using different parts of the body together smoothly and efficiently (coordination)
- Improve your ability to focus on your mental effort (concentration)

Participants: One on one or up to four people

Items Needed:

- An open area that allows one to move freely without restrictions

Steps:

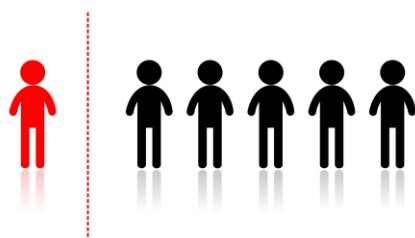
- Stand in an open floor space either indoors or outdoors
- Maintain your body position by having your feet shoulder width apart
- Practice breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth slowly and deeply
- Focus your mind on your body by noticing if you move forward or backwards or from side to side
- Correct your movement your body is making by bringing your body back to a center position



- Bring your hands up to your chest and imagine to rest them on a table with your palms facing downward
- While imagining to rest your hands on a table, put all your attention onto your hands focusing your energy through your hands and body as this position is considered a starting position
- Breathe in and turn your palms to the left and step to your left side bringing your arms to the left while imagining pushing water. Breathe out
- Breathe in and turn your hands over to the right and push the water to the right side of the body. Breathe out
- Continue to push the water to your right and left sides 3 or 4 times while shifting the weight of your legs in the direction you are moving
- Bring your hands to rest on top of your imagined table again in order to be standing in a starting position
- From this position, any movement of Tai Chi can be completed.
- To close your position, open your palms and raise your arms up past your shoulders and breath in.
- Then place your hands together in a prayer formation and exhale your breath while lowering your hands to your chest
- Open your hands up as if you were to be holding a lotus flower on the palms of your hands. Breathe in the strength of the flower while the flower is opened with your hands. Close the flower by making two fists and release the flower into the world.

## Transitions and Stigma

An important influence on an adolescent's life is the perception of themselves in their social environment. Individuals dealing with mental illness or related issues that would cause their visit to Rolling Hills often have a stigma placed upon them by their peers. This can create situations in which they find themselves in social isolation and in events in which they feel discriminated against. In combination to stigma occupational therapy can address safety in the community and low socioeconomic status. Because adolescence is a critical stage of life that deals with many changes, occupational therapists play a critical role with in preparation of such advancements. By addressing stigma, occupational therapists can ensure a smooth transition back to school or work. Components of the activities in which occupational therapy would focus on include education and self-esteem. Ensuring that the individual that is leaving Rolling Hills is prepared to stand up for oneself and advocates for oneself will allow for a smooth transition back home or to other environments such as school and work. Planning is another component that occupational therapy would utilize in order to ease the transition back into the community. Teaching strategies for success, using adaptive equipment, and developing positive habits and skills are a few aspects of planning that would be applied through planning.



## **Collaboration with Expressive Arts**

Occupational therapists are uniquely trained to collaborate with other practices such as physical therapy, music therapy, and art-therapy. Below are just a few examples of what types of activities that therapies at Rolling Hills such as music therapy and art therapy can do together to promote a holistic wellness for an individual or group.

### **Music Therapy-Maracas**

**Activity and Benefits:** Music therapy and occupational therapy can team together to build musical instruments. These instruments can be used so that the individual can participate in playing a song or writing a song. The main theme of the activity would be to ensure social participation while the group is prompted to shake their maracas during the song. The song could be used to help with relaxation or anxiety relief.

### **Art Therapy-Self Portrait**

Drawing and decorating a portrait of oneself is one of many examples that art therapy and occupational therapy can partner in. The creativity of building a portrait of oneself allows one to express self confidence in themselves. It is also an activity that can allow someone to use emotional expression by showing how they feel that day. The act of completing the portrait is can be used to instill self confidence in an individual.



## References

- Bergland, C. (2013, December 19). Why Is the Teen Brain So Vulnerable? Retrieved March 24, 2017, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-athletes-way/201312/why-is-the-teen-brain-so-vulnerable>
- Champagne, T. (2016). Occupational Therapy's Role in Mental Health Recovery. Retrieved March 24, 2017, from <http://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Professionals/MH.aspx>
- Eve Taylor; Anger Intervention. *Am J Occup Ther* 1988;42(3):147-155. doi: 10.5014/ajot.42.3.147.
- Maldonado, M. (2014). How Stress Affects Mental Health. *Psych Central*. Retrieved on March 25, 2017, from <https://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2014/02/25/how-stress-affects-mental-health/>
- Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process (3rd Edition). *Am J Occup Ther* 2014;68(Supplement\_1):S1-S48. doi: 10.5014/ajot.2014.682006.
- Opp, A. (2017). Occupational Therapy and Depression: Reconstructing Lives. Retrieved March 30, 2017, from <http://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Professionals/MH/Articles/Depression.aspx>
- Pricard, M. (2012). Occupational Therapy's Role in Sleep. Retrieved April 03, 2017, from <http://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Professionals/HW/Sleep.aspx>

## References

Publications, H. H. (2011, November 01). In Praise of Gratitude. Retrieved March 31, 2017,

from [http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter\\_article/in-praise-of-gratitude](http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/in-praise-of-gratitude)

Sawa, A. (2013, January 17). Mouse Research Links Adolescent Stress and Severe Adult

Mental Illness - 01/17/2013. Retrieved March 24, 2017, from

[http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/mouse\\_research\\_links\\_adolescent\\_stress\\_and\\_severe\\_adult\\_mental\\_illness](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/mouse_research_links_adolescent_stress_and_severe_adult_mental_illness)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2012). *SAMHSA's working*

*definition of recovery*. Retrieved from

<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//PEP12-RECDEF/PEP12-RECDEF.pdf>