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**Linking motivation and occupational engagement as steps toward recovery from an eating disorder.**

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**Introduction:** When an individual has a relationship with disordered eating, there is a correlation with a disordered lifestyle. Finding the motivation to participate in daily and meaningful occupations is often related to the motivation for recovery from an eating disorder. The Calgary Eating Disorder Program works from a motivationally based treatment philosophy. A cornerstone of the Occupational Therapist's practice within the treatment context is to reflect how patterns of change in a person's life are similar, whether recovery-focused or more occupationally-driven. **Objectives:** To focus on the disordered lifestyle and determine what is currently or was previously meaningful to the client. Understanding what has prevented the client from engaging in these activities highlights possible barriers to making changes related to recovery. To disseminate the inherent challenges associated with making change allows the client to better understand their level of motivation in initiating such a process. **Description:** Using a task analysis framework, the process of change is broken down into separate components: *Thinking* about change, involves awareness; *Talking* about change, involves accountability; *Doing* something to create change, involves risk. By inviting a client to personally identify what motivates or challenges them to take action in their life, a motivational process becomes identified. **Discussion:** Feedback from this component identification consistently highlights the importance of identifying what factors make change such a difficult process. It also reflects contributing factors to successful experiences of making change. This approach normalizes the confusion and frustration associated with the motivation to change and provides a natural extension to more focused goal setting. **Conclusion:** By viewing the process of change from this perspective, an individual is able to determine where, how, and if they are ready to make changes in their life that will promote recovery. No longer does the idea of change seem a formidable task. It can be approached one step at a time.

**Contribution to practice:** Enabling a client to understand that the approach to recovery is similar to that of daily occupational engagement creates a different understanding of the motivation and process to creating change in their life.