

The Power of Occupational Engagement: Norm's Story

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Introduction: In 2007, the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists published new practice guidelines, in which they broaden the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance (CMOP) to include the construct occupational engagement. Occupational engagement goes beyond performance and encompasses all that we do to involve ourselves and to participate in occupation (Polatajko et al., 2007). The addition of this construct to the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) offers occupational therapists a more comprehensive conceptualization of clients' occupational outcomes, extending possibilities for social inclusion and occupational participation. **Objectives:** The objective of this presentation is to describe how the CMOP-E can be used to guide clinical practice, with a specific focus on the significance of occupational engagement. **Description:** Norm's story, in the context of an inpatient rehabilitation program, will be used to illustrate how occupational therapists can enable engagement as discussed within the CMOP-E, by going beyond performance in their assessment and client-centred goal setting. Enabling the performance of meal preparation through a focus on remediating performance components and environmental adaptation was considered. However, this traditional approach did not allow Norm to participate in the occupation of meal preparation in a way that fulfilled his valued roles as the family gatherer, provider, and host. Reframing the approach to focus on occupational engagement allowed the client to resume his roles without requiring change in his ability to perform. **Discussion:** Over the course of this client's program, Norm's gains in occupational engagement had an impact on health and well-being beyond the gains that may have been made by addressing occupational performance in isolation. Critical factors influencing this approach's success included 1) client's empowerment to assume an active role in goal identification, 2) understanding of the meaning attributed to the goal, 3) interprofessional collaboration, and 4) family involvement. **Conclusion:** The CMOP-E guided this rehabilitation team to conceptualize how clients identify their occupational repertoire and how empowering engagement in occupations leads to meaningful outcomes. **Contribution to Practice:** Enabling clients to resume meaningful roles through occupational engagement within the hospital and generalizing these gains to the community requires deliberate planning and action, using a theoretical model.