

Reflections of an Occupational Therapy Technician, who developed within and beyond the boundaries of the Occupational Therapy profession

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Introduction: There are different categories within the Occupational Therapy profession such as Occupational Therapists (OTs), Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) and Occupational Therapy Technicians (OTTs). In the mid 80's a need for assistance to help with the OTs work load was identified and the first cohort of students commenced their training at Tygerberg Hospital in the Western Cape. OTAs and OTTs work under the guidance of Occupational Therapists to provide patients with rehabilitative therapy to improve patients' physical, mental, emotional or developmental impairments.

The required educational qualification for OTAs was a senior school certificate. It was an opportunity for the OTAs to care for those that are unwell while having a secured a job. Training was provided by qualified OTs over a period of one year with integrated theory and practical.

After qualifying as an OTA in 1989, I worked in Mental Health within the Cape Town Metropole. I worked very closely with OTs and this allowed me to grow and develop while working independently with regular supervision.

Conclusion: Based on the knowledge, skills and attitude that I have acquired through working within the profession, I managed to further my tertiary education beyond the boundaries of Occupational Therapy. Not only have I gained a wealth of knowledge, I have been provided with skills in raising my children and becoming an occupational balanced being.

This paper will describe some of the reflections of the journey in becoming a competent Occupational Therapy Technician.