LIFE STORY WORK WITH OLDER ADULTS

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Workshop Objectives

1) Participants will be able to define life story work and the different formats of life story work.

2) Participants will identify modes (Renee Taylor) necessary to implement life story work.

3) Participants will recognize the applications of life story work to occupational therapy practice.

4) Participants will be introduced to a life story group model implemented by fieldwork students at the Alzheimer's Resource Center during a Fieldwork II experience.
“Life review typically involves individual sessions, in which the person is guided chronologically through life experiences, encouraged to evaluate them, and may produce a life story book”

Intentional Relationship Model (Taylor, 2008)

- Therapist
  - Modes
    - Advocacy
    - Instruction
    - Empathy
    - Problem Solving
    - Collaboration
    - Encouraging

- Client
- Occupation
- Interpersonal Events
Eden Alternative Domains of Well-being

- Identity
- Growth
- Autonomy
- Security
- Connectedness
- Meaning
- Joy

(Eden Alternative, 2012)
Theories

- Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Model
- Erikson’s Psychosocial Developmental Stages
  - Ego Integrity versus Despair
- Gerotranscendence
- Person-Centered Care
Formats of Life Story Work

- Story Corps
- Life Story Books
- Memory Boxes
- Scrapbooks
- Digital Stories
“An Intro to StoryCorps from our Founder Dave Isay”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGCD1XR0WPk
“Danny and Annie” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNfvuJr9164

Mission: to preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world

(StoryCorps, n.d.)
Age UK Oldham Life Story Project

- Volunteers visit older adults in the community or in a nursing home and ask them to reminisce about important people, places, and events throughout their life.

- Creating a life story book makes a client feel valued when somebody takes the time to listen to them and ask about their likes, dislikes, accomplishments, and dreams.

(Age UK Oldham, 2015)
Memory Boxes

- Can be made out of a shoe box or plastic bin (can be decorated if desired)
- Ideas of what to include:
  - Family photos
  - Artwork
  - Keychains
  - Postcards
  - Vacation souvenirs
  - A baby toy
  - A recipe
  - Sheet music/CDs
  - Baseball/Baseball cards
  - Dried flowers
Include past and present photos so a person with Alzheimer’s can reminisce about happy memories, and also get a sense of their current situation (Mizen, 2004).

Research supports the idea that seeing a photo of yourself smiling can elicit another smile and make you feel happier (Koretsky, 2001).
Digital Storytelling

- 3-5 minute videos composed of voice recordings, photos, and music
- 4 day digital storytelling workshop
  - Day 1: Introduction, develop stories, write script
  - Day 2: Share script with group, voice recording of script, select pictures for video
  - Day 3: Listen to voiceover, select music for video, edit the video
  - Day 4: Premiere of all digital stories
- Benefits: increased confidence and connection, improved speech and sense of purpose
The Alzheimer’s Association Maine Chapter has teamed up with the Quinnipiac students to inform and train them in a program that they have developed – Legacy Storytellers Program.

Mark Pechenik – director of community engagement and outreach of the Alzheimer’s Association Maine Chapter is leading the program and facilitated the volunteer scribe training program.

The program has shown to be successful in the Maine Chapter and it is hoped its success could be replicated here in Connecticut.

Their program within the Maine Chapter created relationships with the college students at the University of Maine which is where most of their volunteer scribes are from.
Legacy Storytellers Questions

- **Childhood**
  - As a child what did you want to be when you grew up and why?
  - What is your earliest memory?

- **Adolescence:**
  - If you could go back in time and talk to yourself as a teen, what would you tell yourself?
  - How did you make money as a teenager?

- **Young Adulthood:**
  - Did you have children during this time? What was first-time parenthood like for you? How did parenthood change you as a person?

- **Adulthood:**
  - What have you learned in your marriage or long-term relationship?
  - What do you regard as your best career/professional successes? Why were these important to you?

- **Life Wisdom:**
  - Is there anything that your parents taught you that has proven true throughout your life?
  - If you could offer 5 pieces of wisdom in your life to a younger person, what would they be?
All group members were able to share their life stories with the rest of the ARCC day center community.

Each member would go up individually to present to the group and answer questions based off of his or her presentation.

The life story presentations were able to create a sense of connectedness within the group, and a sense of pride in each individual.
Emotional Memory and Life Story Work

- Emotional memory lasts longer than tangible memory in people with Alzheimer’s Disease and dementia (Guzman-Velez, Feinstein & Tranel, 2014).

- Throughout our time running Life Story groups at ARCC, it was clear that our group processes were eliciting positive emotions from our clients that would be sustained into other parts of their day.

- The emotional memory that was facilitated was evident to us when we directly observed our clients and it was also noticed by other staff at ARCC.


References


References


References


https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/95/19/c7/9519c7747f0a45dbc621b6340af9c738.jpg