

OT FIELDWORK CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF MARY

Adult Learning Principles (Part 2)

I hope you enjoyed Part One of the Adult Learning Principles in the last Fieldwork Educator Newsletter, and have been able to implement the first two principles, "Needs Assessment" and "Safety" into your students' FW experiences. In this edition I will discuss the third and fourth principles as described by Vella (2002) in her book *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults, Revised Edition* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers).

The third Principle is "**Sound Relationships: The Power of Friendship and Respect.**" As OTs, we know that much of a person's motivation is based on relationships. Clients respond better to a therapist they like and respect. That is what this principle is all about. It is based on taking time to be available for the student, affirming his/her desire to learn, demonstrating mutual respect, being open to questions and dialogue, and providing answers in a timely manner. This principle does not suggest that you need to be best of friends or discount the learning environment, but that you discuss roles and expectations, and allow for differences of opinion. If you allow "honest opposition" you both will learn. Some practical ways this can be done is setting aside a few minutes per day to discuss how everything is going for both of you. Ask what is helping their learning, and what is hindering their learning. Ask about gaps in knowledge or in what areas they are unsure. If the student is struggling to complete expectations, provide suggestions or discuss how you can be of the most help, without minimizing the student's responsibility in completing the task.

This leads to the fourth principle, "**Sequence and Reinforcement.**" Vella states, "Do it 1,142 times and you have learned it!" (p.9). I think too often we expect students to have a clear understanding when we have told them something once or twice. Think of how many times you do something before you really feel like you know it well. This is the same for students. If a student seems confused or does not seem to be "getting it," step back and look at the sequence of the task. If the task is too hard, it needs to be changed. You may find that you need to break the task down into smaller steps, and provide reinforcement by repeating the step, fact, or skill several times until it becomes second nature. This can be done via a dialogue between you and the student to determine what tasks are "doable" and to design tasks that get at that just right challenge for the student. Feel free to ask the student how their performance feels at a given moment, then grade it up or down depending on the response. Then also provide reinforcement in the form of acknowledgement or praise for a good effort or a task well done.

Enjoy applying these and the first two principles of adult learners while working with your fieldwork students. I would enjoy hearing any comments you have about using these principles. You can contact me at: olsonc@umary.edu. Look for principles 5 and 6 in the next FW Educators Newsletter.

Carol Olson, PhD, OTR/L



Fieldwork Updates

Thank you to all those fieldwork educators who volunteered to supervise our students for their upcoming Level II fieldworks. Students begin their summer Level II on May 7, 2012. We truly appreciate your support and dedication to educating future therapists. This summer and fall I will be busy preparing for our upcoming re-accreditation visit and therefore will be contacting FW sites to collaborate on completing required paperwork/forms, such as a current **AOTA FW Data Form, site-specific Level II objectives, and week-by-week Level II expectations**. Thank you to all those who have worked on these projects—once they are completed they really do support the integrity of a site's fieldwork program and offer structure and guidance to the student experience. If you have questions about your site's fieldwork paperwork, please contact me via email at canderson@umary.edu or by phone at 701-355-8112.

Cindy Anderson, OTD, OTR/L (AFWC)

Message from the Program Director

As the academic year draws to an end, we continue with the in-depth analysis of our curriculum and program through the self-study process of preparing for re-accreditation. We have received notice the **Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy (ACOTE)** will be on campus for **our site visit November 5-7, 2012**. Part of this process includes meetings with various constituents of our program, including students, guest lecturers, and fieldwork educators. You may receive a phone call during the summer months asking for your attendance at various meetings. We have found the self-study process to be quite helpful in identifying our strengths and areas we can improve within the program. We anticipate the on-site visit to be much the same type of experience. In addition, we recently finished our admission process for the incoming class of students for fall 2012. We had a large group of outstanding candidates and eagerly await their arrival on campus in late August.

Janeene Sibla, OTD, OTR/L

Occupational Therapy

Building Skills

for a Better Life

U Mary Pi Theta Epsilon

As another school year comes to an end, the University of Mary Pi Theta Epsilon chapter closes with another successful year. In February, 9 new inductees were added to the chapter. Most recently, University of Mary Pi Theta student members along with the University of North Dakota Pi Theta student members collaboratively planned the **5th Annual North Dakota Occupational Therapy Student Conference**. The conference was held **March 24, 2012 at the Anne Carlsen Center in Jamestown, ND**. A variety of topics were presented by well-esteemed individuals. Topics included, "Jumping In: Transitioning to the Role of a Clinician" (Emily Kringle), "Forensic Mental Health" (Susan Bond and Sherri Kleinknecht), "Traveling Occupational Therapy" (Courtney Croslin), "Choosing a Benefits Package" (Diane Nechiporenko), and "Augmentative and Alternative Communication" (Stephanie Nelson and Adam, Anne Carlsen Student). In addition, staff from the Anne Carlsen Center provided tours to the conference attendees with specific interest to the large therapy pool with an adjustable pool floor, ramp, and heated temperatures. Also, attendees were provided with the opportunity to see an eye-gaze computer which costs approximately \$15,000! Conference attendees were very impressed with their learning opportunity and one attendee stated, *"I think this conference is a great opportunity to learn about emerging areas of occupational therapy. Some topics we have discussed in class but this conference gives students the chance to learn about topics in a more in depth manner that we don't have time to learn about in school. I also think this conference is a great opportunity to meet other occupational therapy students."*

Finally, after a long tenure as the advisor for the Pi Theta Epsilon Chapter at the University of Mary, Dr. Carol Olson will be relinquishing her duties to Dr. Cindy Anderson and Dr. Jennifer Schroeder who will assume the role of co-advisors for the chapter starting fall 2012. We would like to thank Dr. Olson for all the time, commitment, and leadership she has provided to the U Mary chapter.

Jennifer Schroeder, OTD, OTR/L



Tour of Anne Carlsen Center, Jamestown, ND

OT Fieldwork Connection

U Mary Campus in Rome

The University of Mary now has a campus in Rome, Italy. Students can choose to spend a semester in Rome and take various classes which meet liberal arts requirements. We now have several **OT students** in the program that spent time studying at the **Rome campus**. The students were asked about their experience and how this may impact them as future occupational therapists. **This is what they had to say:**

- ◇ “Going to Rome really helped me broaden my horizons. It helped me step out of my comfort zone by going to new places every day and having to lead people to different sites. Rome has helped me become more aware of different cultures, not just North Dakota's culture. It also helped me grow in myself as an OT, to be confident, think on my feet and to keep in mind of all the different people in the world.” -Heather Schulz
- ◇ “I absolutely loved my experience in Rome. Things I will bring into my OT life will probably include problem solving/critical thinking. I was the navigator through the city. I knew how to read the map and get a group of us from one destination to the other. I took on that leadership role and really enjoyed it. Once I find something I'm good at, I think I really flourish. I also will bring openness to others and their cultures and be flexible. Living in Rome for 5 weeks, I was able to experience a whole different culture.” -Molly Wolf
- ◇ “My experience in Rome has opened my eyes to the cultural diversity that exists in the field of OT. My Rome experience made me realize and be more open to other cultures and the needs of each person no matter the differences. This translates into a better understanding of the needs of all types of patients from all backgrounds and cultural differences. As I study OT, I am now better equipped to apply this knowledge to those who need OT to flourish. Through my experience in Rome I have learned to be a more responsible and caring therapist. Without my trip to Rome, I could have possibly missed opportunities to help someone by overlooking those differences that make them unique.”-Valentina Neufeld
- ◇ “There are so many lessons to take away from my experience overseas, and so many of these lessons can apply to OT. One of the biggest I think is to “allow for a great margin of improvisation.” It's kind of a nicer way to explain Murphy's Law. I experienced many trips where nothing went according to plan. Honestly, those were the best trips. It taught me how to think on my feet, and adjust accordingly. As an OT, I will have sessions where things won't be going in the direction that I had planned. In those situations, I just need to accept that fact, go with the flow, and maybe even adjust the session objective. I also believe that it was extremely beneficial for me to experience a whole new culture. Diving into a completely whole new world was awesome. I had to be understanding and patient and hope that the person I was dealing with would tolerate me. Keeping an open mind and trying new things is really what saved me from becoming frustrated. As an OT that wants to travel, I think this is an extremely important mind frame to have.”- Grant Hillestad



New Faculty Reflection



As I am finishing up my first year as an educator, I cannot believe how fast the time has gone by. I have thoroughly enjoyed helping our future practitioners realize how great OT is by sharing my clinical experiences in the profession. In preparing my lectures this year, I have reviewed specific **frames of reference** (SI, NDT, Motor Skills Acquisition, etc.) that guide pediatric OT practice and applied them to my past clients. This process was validating for me as a past clinician and current educator and I would encourage all of you to revisit those frames of reference that you utilize in your OT practice so you can see how helpful they actually are at guiding practice. It is incredibly rewarding knowing my past experiences could help a future OT help countless other individuals. Needless to say, I know I have made the right choice by moving into academia. I wish you all a happy, safe and warm summer!

Jason Lawson, MS, OTR/L

Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere. ~Chinese Proverb

Seven outstanding occupational therapy students were recognized on March 27, 2012 during the annual awards banquet at the University of Mary for excellence in academia, leadership, service, and professionalism. Jessica Walworth was honored as the **Resident Assistant of the Year**. Heather Schulz received an **Outstanding SPURS** (volunteer) award. The **Outstanding Campus Minister** was awarded to Alyssa Johnson. The national award of **Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges** was presented to Gary Cooper, Grant Hillestad, Ashley Peck, and Shadra Robison. The esteemed **University of Mary Presidential Student Leadership Award** was earned by Grant Hillestad.

Terrance Anderson, OTD, OTR/L





Interdisciplinary PBL

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a case based method of teaching that facilitates active learning in students. Students encounter a problem up front in an unfolding case facilitating “a need to know more” which in turn stimulates independent study and student centered learning. Students develop and then research learning issues in the case and return to the group to discuss how best to solve the problems within the case. In PBL, the leader acts as a facilitator rather than a teacher, and encourages students to link new and pre-existing knowledge about the topic. PBL is not new to the University of Mary, and the occupational therapy students regularly participate in PBL. The University of Mary **School Of Health Sciences** took PBL to a new level for our students this year and incorporated an **interdisciplinary PBL case** that included students from **occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, exercise science, respiratory therapy, and athletic training**. This was a great opportunity for all students to learn more about the roles of each discipline in health care. Students from each discipline were grouped together in 25 different groups to work on a health care case. Group facilitators included faculty from each discipline. Feedback from students and faculty was very positive! This was a new experience for many students and faculty alike, and we plan to continue to offer this great learning opportunity to our students!

Wanda Berg, PhD, OTR/L



2011 Kathy Perrin Outstanding FW Educator Award

Congratulations to **Kathy Page**, recipient of the 2011 *Kathy Perrin Outstanding Fieldwork Educator* award. This award recognizes outstanding leadership, mentorship, and teaching abilities in providing fieldwork education to OT students. Kathy was nominated for her knowledge and excellence in providing occupational therapy services to veterans, her commitment to educating occupational therapy students, and her exemplary skills in guiding students toward entry-level competence. The student who nominated Kathy stated, “Having an educator that cared as much as Miss Page taught me more than I ever expected to learn and also made me love OT more than I had.” Kathy is an occupational therapist at the Malcolm Randall VA Medical Center in Gainesville, FL.

Cindy Anderson, OTD, OTR/L