

Life Transitions: Supporting Clients To be Meaningfully Engaged To Enhance Their Wellbeing

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Presentation Objectives

1. Emphasize the benefits of meaningful engagement on health and well-being
2. Describe components of the Occupational Therapy lens
3. Discuss strategies to help older adults to engage throughout life transitions
 - Self-management for wellness
 - Behavioural Activation
 - Environmental considerations



A Reflective Exercise

Think about something you do regularly, that you look forward to doing.



Life Transitions

- About Change
 - Function and ability
 - Family and social network
 - Roles
 - Identity
 - Daily structure
 - Housing / community



Retirement

Psychological effects of transition to retirement include: identity disruption, decision paralysis, diminished self-trust, post-retirement void, search for meaningful engagement in society, development of a new structure, death anxiety, nurturing of social relationships and self-actualization (Osborne, 2012).



Older Years

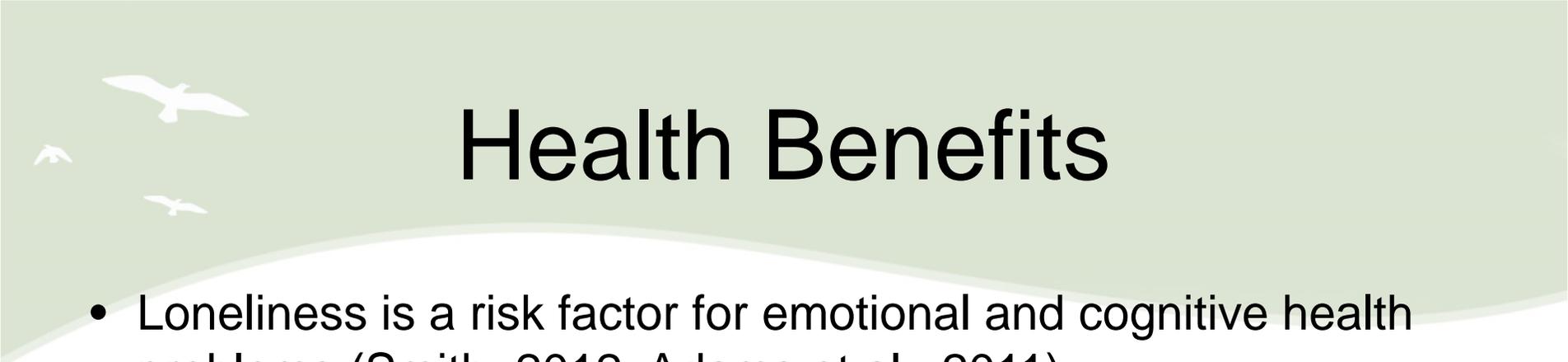
- Functional changes and loss greatly impact psychological and emotional health and well-being.
- Meaningful activity for nursing home residents with dementia included those that addresses psychological and social needs.
- The quality of the experience was more important to meaning than type of activity.

(Harmer & Martin, 2008)



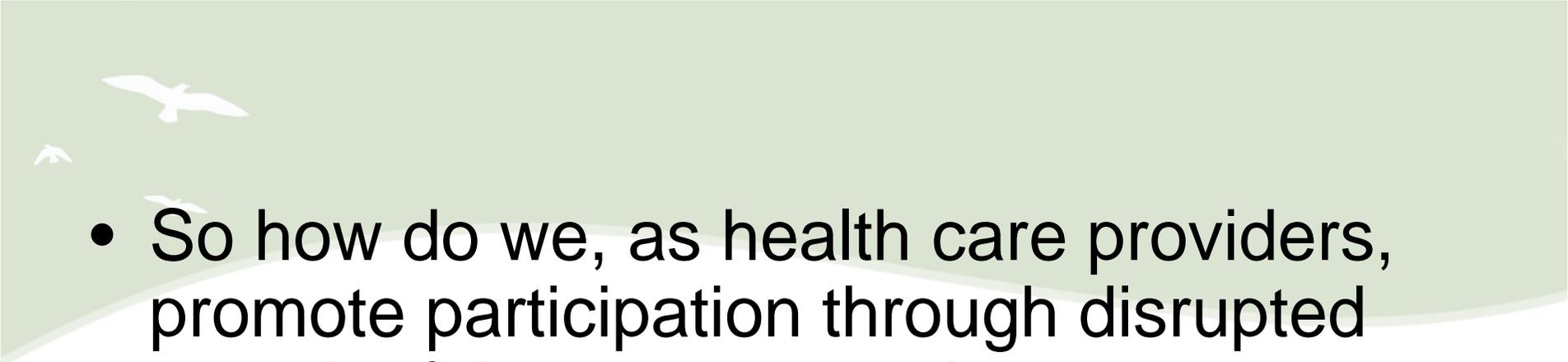
Meaningful Engagement

- Significant
- Purposeful
- Valued
- Subjective
- Individually and culturally dependent
- Quality of the experience
- Dimensional: being, belonging, becoming
- Engaged = emotionally involved

The header features a light green background with a white curved line at the bottom. Three white birds are depicted in flight: one large bird at the top left and two smaller birds below it.

Health Benefits

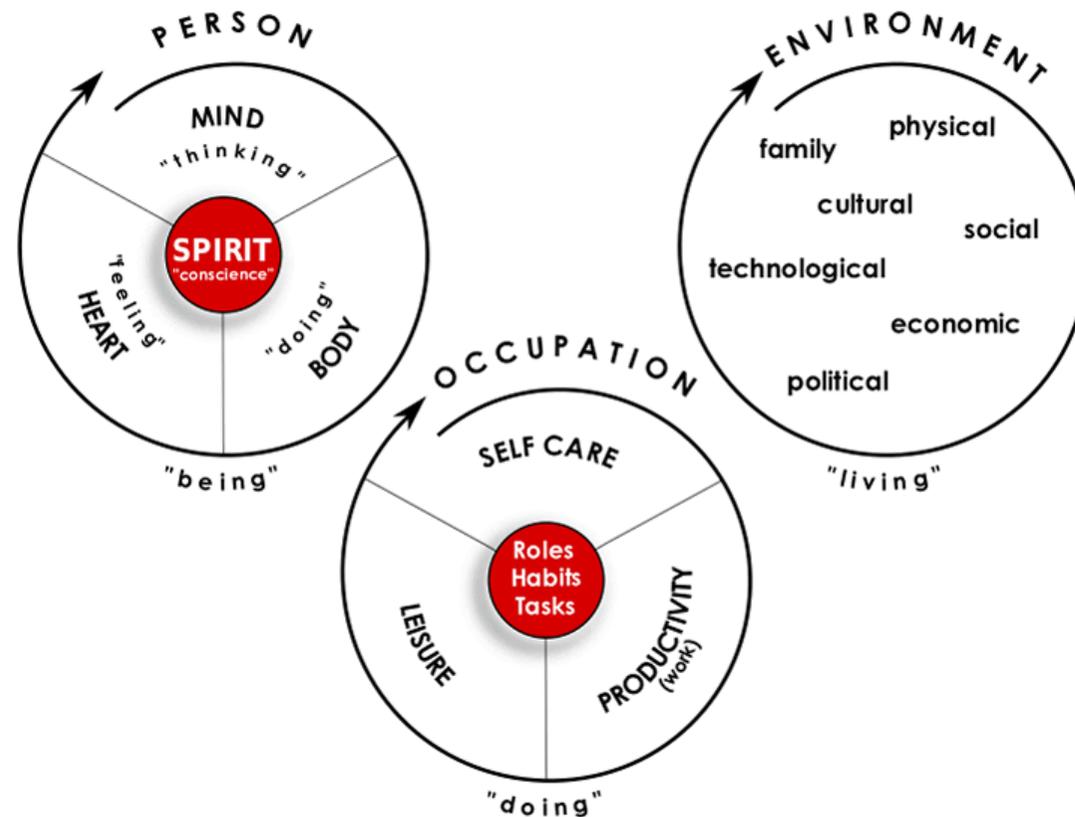
- Loneliness is a risk factor for emotional and cognitive health problems (Smith, 2012; Adams et al., 2011).
- Loneliness is associated with overwhelming losses, inactivity, meaninglessness and social isolation (Kirkevold et al., 2013).
- Emotional and cognitive health is correlated with meaningful social and leisure engagement (Eakman et al., 2010; Hemera et al., 2011; Stav et al., 2012).
- Occupation-based and client-centered intervention promote productive aging (D'Amico, 2013; Hank & Erlinghagen, 2010)
- Productive aging and participation is correlated with quality of life and life satisfaction (Roger et al., 2013)

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- So how do we, as health care providers, promote participation through disrupted meaningful engagement due to age related changes and other losses?
 - We need to screen for loneliness and help OA maintain connections (Smith, 2012) and address “meaning” in their occupations or daily engagement.
 - *Even if that’s not the reason for first point of contact*

OT PHILOSOPHY

‘occupation is essential to health’

P.E.O. Model





Dave's Role

- ViVE – Visiting Vancouver's Elders
 - Part of the AURAA initiative
 - See clients 80+
 - 8 GPs, 3 RNCMs, 1 OT, 1.5 PTs, 2 RAs
- Mostly Medical, Biomechanical and Psychosocial approaches



Function

ADLs

Eating
Bathing
Toileting
Grooming/Hygiene
Dressing
Oral Hygiene
O2 Management

IADLs

Shopping
Meal Prep
Phone Use
Transportation
Financial Management
Laundry
Housework

Mobility – transfers, wheelchairs

Swallowing/Dysphagia

Wound management

Sleep Hygiene



Adjusting to Change

Home Adaptations

Marketing Functional Benefit

Funding

Bedroom

Bed, lift, commode, BAR,
urinal

Bathroom

Grab bars, RTS, bench,
HSH, TSF

Living Room

FTC poles, furniture risers

Kitchen

Stools, adapted tools

Exterior

Emotional Adaptations

Accepting Functional Change

Accepting Environmental change

Accepting Care

Reframing

Redefining roles

Reestablishing habits

Developing / (Re)establishing
trusting relationships while
vulnerable

Motivating/Energizing

Environment

Home safety
assessment

Ergonomic
s

Equipment
prescription

Activity
analysis

Energy
conservation

[Movie on Youtube](#)

Counseling



Staci's role

VCMHA Older Adult Rehabilitation Program

- A.K.A. Bright Spot
- Is a Recovery oriented MH program.
- Serves older adults who have a mental health diagnosis as well as physical and/or cognitive issues related to aging.
- Aims to enable individuals to develop skills and supports to participate in life as fully and independently as possible.



Program Services

- Occupational therapy assessment and individualized follow up of function for safe community living and social and leisure engagement, cognition (executive function), wellness strategies.
- The “Bright Spot’ . This is a therapeutic environment that enables isolated seniors to socialize, develop leisure interests, and learn strategies to cope with their mental health and age related issues. This program is ongoing and designed as a stepping stone to other community programs.
- Peer Support; provides community support by people who have the lived experience of mental illness.
- Educational and therapeutic group programs, designed to build skills for self management, health, and wellness.

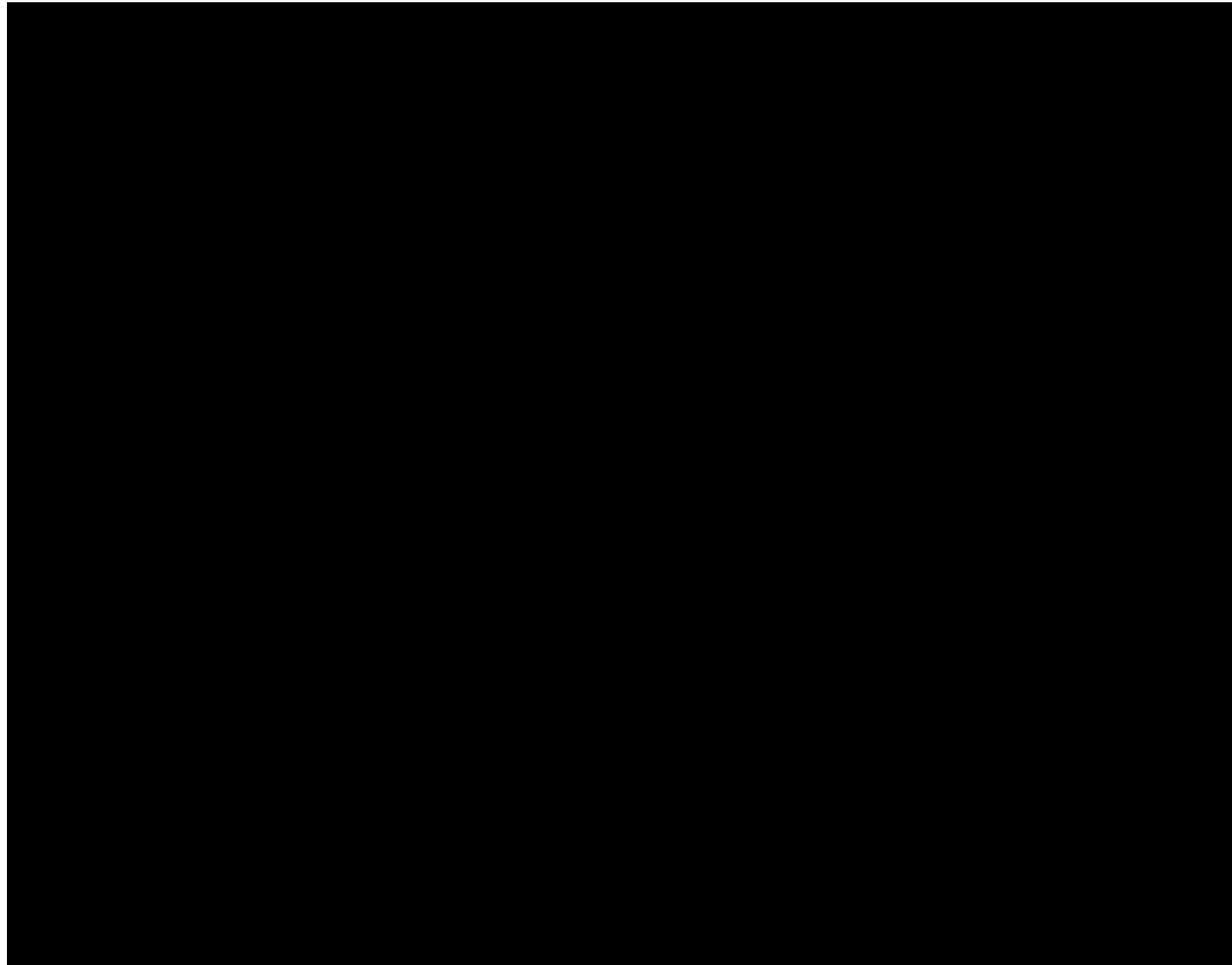
Bright Spot Participants talk about life transitions

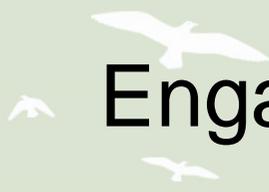
Q1. Describe a significant change you went through as an older adult?

Q2. What helped you to cope with that change?

Q3. What's meaningful for you now? What do you do for yourself that brings meaning to your life?

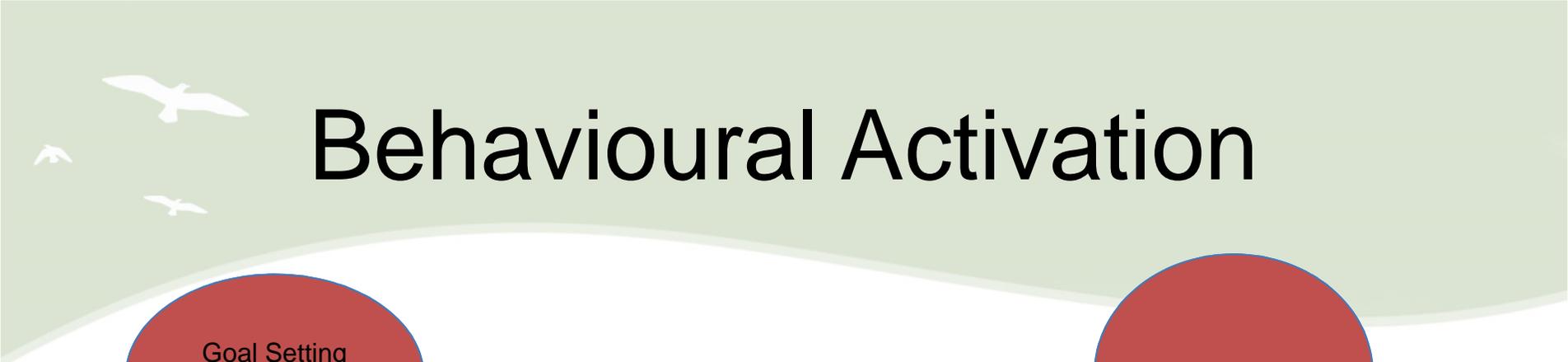
<http://youtu.be/cYYH3fxUdYI>



A decorative graphic in the top left corner of the slide, featuring three stylized white birds in flight against a light green background. The birds are positioned at different heights and angles, suggesting movement.

Engaging Client's To Live Meaningful Lives

- Explore daily occupations, interests, skills, habits, support networks, values and goals
- Connection with others
- Behavioural activation
- Self-management
- Community integration



Behavioural Activation

Goal Setting
and
grading
activity

Form of CBT

Rehabilitation
readiness

Bright Spot

Leisure
exploration

Changeways

Activity
Scheduling



Self-Management

Self-management relates to the tasks that an individual must undertake to live well with one or more chronic conditions. These tasks include gaining confidence to deal with medical management, role management, and emotional management.

–Adams, Greiner, and Corrigan (2004):

Self-Management

Cognitive
rehabilitation/
compensatio
n

Psycho-
educatio
n

CBT

Changewas

Goal setting
and action
planning

Community
Linking

Relaxation
training

Recovery
Journey

Wellness
Tool Kit

Healthy
behaviour
s

Mindfulnes
s

Smart
Brains

Peer
Support

Self
Advocac
y

Support &
Wellness



Reflective Exercise

Recall the thing you look forward to doing.

Now think about:

- Why you do it?
- How are you able to do it?
- What do you value about it?
- If you couldn't do it the same way, how can you do it differently?
- What else could you do that has the same value?
- Who could support you in this transition?



In Summary

- Helping our older adult clients / residents / patients to be meaningfully engaged through life transitions will promote health and well-being.
- To be meaningful, their activities need to be perceived as valued, purposeful and significant to them.
- Helping them become active in their lives, build skills / strategies for self- management and address their environments is integral to achieving this goal!



Thank you

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- Staci Kalmek staci.kalmek@vch.ca

References

- Adams, Greiner, and Corrigan (2004) or BC SM
- Adams et al., 2011
- Kirkevold et al., 2013
- Eakman et al., 2010
- Herrera et al., 2011
- Stav et al., 2012
- D'Amico, 2013
- Hank & Erlinghagen, 2010
- Harmer & Martin, 2008
- Osborne, 2012
- Roger et al. 2013
- Smith, 2012