

Supporting Evidence for Implementation # 2:

The Issue Is... Leisure as an End, Not Just a Means, in Occupational Therapy Intervention

APA Reference:

Chen, S.-W., & Chippendale, T. (2018). The issue is... Leisure as an end, not just a means, in occupational therapy intervention. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 72, (1-5). <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2018.028316>

Level of Evidence:

Level V: Narrative review; Consensus statement

Summary:

While leisure is deemed to be an occupation, according to the OTPF- 3, it is often overlooked when it comes to intervention implementation and identifying goals. Leisure activities are identified as being important in helping to support and shape a person's identity, may acts as a realm that promotes social participation, and provides a person with an opportunity to relax from physical and mental demands experienced through daily routines (Chen & Chippendale, 2018, p. 3). This article discusses the current use of leisure activities "as a means," (which refers to utilizing them to work towards other goals) and how they should be really looked at "as an ends" (which refers to looking at them as an end goal) (Chen & Chippendale, 2018, p. 4).

Unfortunately, there are many obstacles when it comes to creating leisure based goals. The biggest being that Medicare will not cover any costs that are based on leisure participation (Chen & Chippendale, 2018). Other barriers includes the uncertainties of changing healthcare standards, the replication of services with recreational therapists, and the fact that so many practitioners are set on working on seemingly more important occupations (Chen & Chippendale, 2018, p. 4). More education, research, and advocacy is emphasized to help bridge the gap for many and to help them learn how to better implement these activities into sessions.

Occupational therapy's role in promoting leisure activities goes all the way back to the profession's own roots- engagement in meaningful occupations. When clients pursue meaningful occupations, they not only gain a sense of fulfillment, but they also self-confidence, boost self-esteem, and are able to engage in more productive coping skills (Chen & Chippendale, 2018, p.2). When occupational therapists treat clients with either physical or cognitive deficits, independence in ADLs and IADLs are often times looked at as the number one goal and means for intervention. While these activities are just as important, building an occupational profile is pertinent to ensure all occupational therapy sessions are client-centered. By focusing on what is important to the client, many practitioners may find themselves including leisure as a goal (Chen & Chippendale, 2018, p. 3). Studies have also proven that engagement in leisure activities may positively affect several health-related functions, resulting in a better overall quality of life (Chen & Chippendale, 2018, p. 3).

This article help support the overall purpose of our intervention. Some women are no longer able to participate in preferred occupations mainly due to lack of accessibility and/or time. Our intervention pushes for not only leisure participation, but leisure exploration as well. We iterated that it is never too late to discover a new hobby or activity to indulge in and that the benefits of taking time for leisure can play a big role in improving health. Evidence suggests that participation in leisure can lead to positive effects on mental health, decrease stress, and increase their overall satisfaction. This article's push for OT to proudly own and implement leisure as an end goal is something the women's group desperately needs to realize to lead to a more optimal quality of life.