

Fall 12-6-2023

## Applying Occupation-Centered Coaching for Caregivers of Children with Disabilities

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### Recommended Citation

Gregory, A. S., Smith, M. A., & Godman, M. E. (2023, December 6). Applying Occupation-Centered Coaching for Caregivers of Children with Disabilities. Poster presented at the Virtual OTD Capstone Symposium, University of St Augustine for Health Sciences. Retrieved from <https://soar.usa.edu/otdcapstonesfall2023/7>

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# Applying Occupation-Centered Coaching for Caregivers of Children with Disabilities

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## BACKGROUND

- In the United States, 1 in 6 children are diagnosed with at least one developmental disability (CDC, 2022)
- Raising a child with a disability is time-consuming and affects a caregiver's physical and psychosocial health (Bourke-Taylor et al., 2022)
- Caregivers experience stress, mental health conditions, sleep disruption, and fatigue, leading to decreased quality of life and family community participation (Bourke-Taylor et al., 2022)
- Coaching is an adult learning method that:
  - 1) encourages a learner's capacity for reflection on his or her activities in order to assess the efficacy of a practice, and
  - 2) creates a plan for its improvement and application in current and future circumstances (Rush & Shelden, 2005)

## PROBLEM

Caregivers of children with disabilities (CWD) experience stress, mental health conditions, sleep disruption, and fatigue leading to decreased occupational engagement and family community participation.

## PURPOSE

This project applied Occupation-Centered Coaching (OCC) with a family-centered approach to promote caregiver empowerment, advocacy for mental health services, and family community participation.

Acknowledgement: Special thanks to Angela Blackwell, PhD, OTR, Ronda Johnson, and Ruby Sanchez

## METHODS

### Participants

- Five caregivers of CWD

### Project Design

- Case Study

### Data-Gathering Phase

The capstone student:

- Conducted a literature review determining the role of OT for caregivers of CWD and coaching
- Conducted a needs assessment with stakeholders at Team Luke Hope for Minds
- Attended caregiver support groups and parent check-ins to understand the barriers caregivers face

### Development Phase

- Attended practice coaching sessions with mentor to enhance skills
- Reviewed practice sessions for feedback and reflection

### Intervention Phase

- Implemented Wheel of Life Assessment with caregivers
- Facilitated one-on-one virtual OCC sessions with caregivers of CWD

### Evaluation/Revision Phase

- Analyzed Field Notes
- Compared results with the Coaching Practices Rating Scale

### Dissemination Phase

- Presented OCC to caregivers at Team Luke Hope for Minds' 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference
- Presented to site supervisors at Team Luke Hope for Minds
- Facilitated pediatric lab on coaching for USAHS OT students

## RESULTS

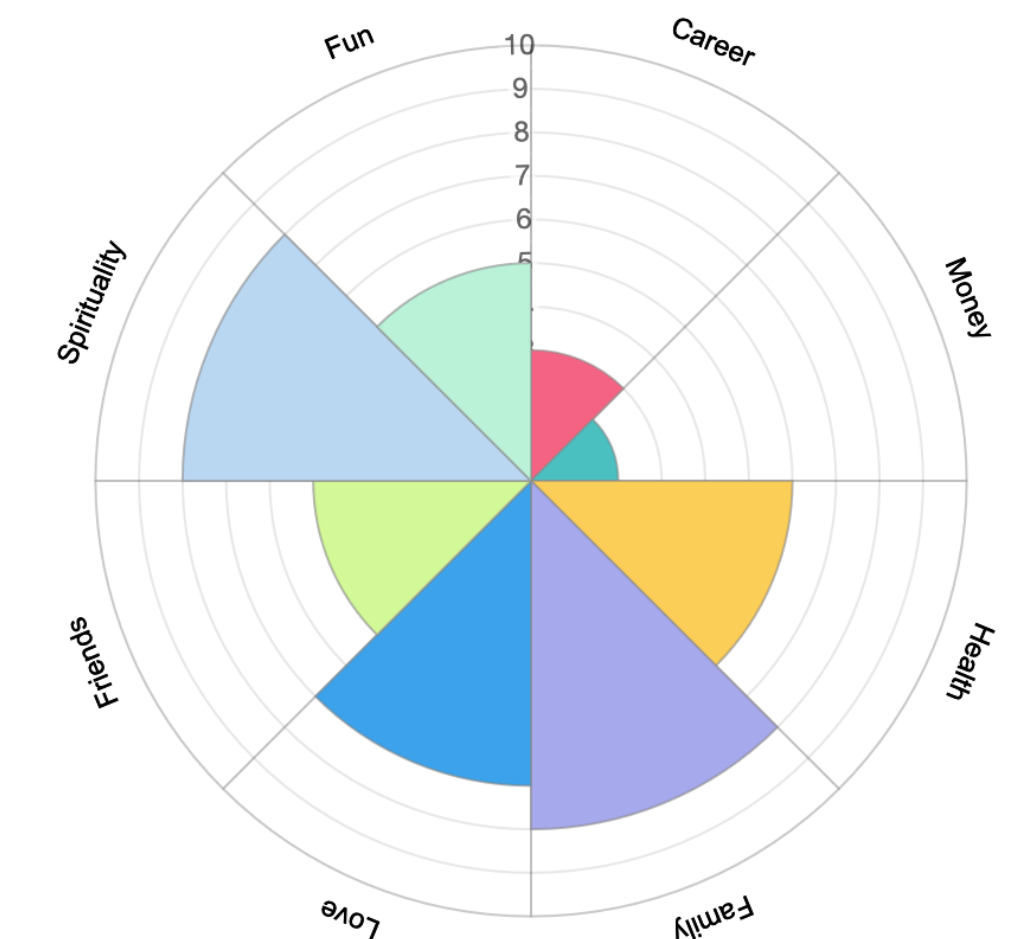
### Sessions

- Total sessions completed: 20
- Average sessions: 2

### Topics Addressed in Coaching

- Stress
- Trauma
- Caregiver burnout
- Lack of time
- Lack of family community participation
- Lack of support and resources

### Wheel of Life Assessment



(Adapted from Kimsey-House, 2011)

## OUTCOMES

### Case Study for OT Practitioners (OTP)

- Increase: self-efficacy in caregivers, family community participation, and advocacy for mental health services and child's needs
- Examples of coaching scenarios for OTP
- Submit to OT Practice
- Present at State and National Conferences

### References



### Implications for Practice and Research

- Coaching should range from 4-10 sessions to better achieve goals and build rapport with the caregiver.
- Field Notes and Coaching Practices Rating Scale should be completed after each session to assess coaching skills.
- Future research: apply for IRB approval to report the results from coaching sessions.