Life History of Kathy Bangsund, OTR/L  
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**Introduction**

- This life history is one of 29 life history interviews which are a part of a larger project, *Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming*.
- The purpose of the project is to gather information about the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states.
- It is anticipated that the life history process will be a powerful way to gather this information.
- This study is intended to provide current and future generations of occupational therapists a view of the history and how occupational therapy practice has evolved from its inception to current practice in North Dakota and Wyoming.

**Methodology**

- Kathy is a retired occupational therapist. She graduated with a bachelor’s degree in 1972 from the University of North Dakota.
- She served a variety of populations ranging from infants to geriatric adults. Her practice primarily took place in Lincoln, Nebraska.
- Kathy continued to advance her education and professional development through a variety of specialty certifications, research, organizational memberships, teaching opportunities, and publications.
- She has received several awards to commend her work with the Arthritis Foundation, Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and more.

**Data Analysis**

- Each interview was transcribed verbatim and coded. From the codes, four categories and corresponding themes emerged.
- Data analysis and findings were influenced by the Kawa Model.

**Findings**

**Values**

- Personal traits and background aided in passion for occupational therapy.
- Utilized a support system and resources to overcome challenges.

**Professional Experience**

- Kathy took initiative to advance her education and development after college.
- Specialty certifications allowed for a variety of work experiences.

**Changes Over Time**

- Occupational therapy evolved from a crafts-based practice to a more client-centered practice.
- The educational demands have become increasingly rigorous.
- Historical events impacted the way occupational therapy was delivered.
- Occupational therapy has become more versatile.

**Service Delivery**

- Variety of populations served in practice.
- Utilized client-centered and occupation-based activities to restore function.
- Returning to occupation is the goal.

**References**


**Participant Description**

- **Methodology**
  - This qualitative study used a life history approach. The participant was assigned to the researchers from a list developed by the course instructors through purposive sampling.
  - There were no specific gatekeeper issues; initial contact was made by course instructors. Informed consent was obtained.
  - The semi-structured interviews were guided by an interview schedule prepared by the course instructors. The researchers were allowed to modify or add interview questions; the Kawa model was utilized to formulate additional questions.
  - The researchers collected research data with one unstructured, preliminary interview to gather demographic information and two semi-structured interviews with the participant. The second semi-structured interview was conducted for the purpose of member checking.
  - The interviews were conducted via telephone.
  - In addition to the data collected through the use of interview, the researchers received, via mail, a copy of the participant’s Curriculum Vitae (CV), a self-portrait, and pictures taken while in practice.

**Conclusion**

**Assertion**: Kathy’s unique experiences, personal traits, and external shifts in the occupational therapy field have all influenced her growth as an occupational therapist who uses client-centered and occupation-based intervention to help her clients reach their full potential.

- Consistent with the time period, Kathy obtained a baccalaureate degree in occupational therapy and practiced in a variety of different settings. She utilized occupation and activity based interventions to help restore her clients’ function. The Vietnam War occurred during Kathy’s time of practice and she reported working with many veterans of the war who returned with amputations and post traumatic stress disorder. Also during the Vietnam War, hand surgery and rehabilitation was revolutionized. Kathy is certified in several types of hand therapy and worked with several clients who had crush injuries. Her knowledge in this area of practice was first warranted by Vietnam War veterans.
- The Kawa Model guided the interview schedule and the researchers’ understanding of Kathy’s life history. The walls of the riverbed (contextual factors) that influenced Kathy’s river flow (life history) included her family as a support system and the variety of settings she practiced in. The rocks (challenges) in her river flow primarily consisted of developing meaningful, client-centered interventions. The driftwood (influencing factors) was her education, leadership experiences, specialty certifications, and professional recognitions. All of these factors combined optimized her river’s flow. (Tech & Iwama, 2015)

“I think you continue to impact occupational therapy no matter what you do.”