

Life History: Judy Godfread, OTR

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Introduction

- The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the evolution of occupational therapy practice in the lens of the practitioner, Judy Godfread, in her years of practice in North Dakota from 1976-2012.
- The study collected 29 life histories of influential occupational therapy practitioners in ND and WY. The goal was to detail the contributions of these individuals and how they shaped the context of practice in two rural states. Key information was gathered regarding influences that influenced occupational therapy during the years the participants practiced.
- The 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.

Description of Participant

- Judy Godfread graduated from University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy program in 1972 and worked in a numbers of practice settings with various responsibilities.
- Her first job in Bottineau, ND (1972-1976).
 - She started the occupational therapy department after four years. Worked her way up from an x ray technician assistant.
- Mandan, ND School district (1976-1986).
 - Became the coordinator of preschool/ multi-handicapped children after her first year in Mandan (1977-1986)
- Grand Forks , ND (1986 – Present).
 - University of North Dakota Medical Center Rehabilitation Hospital (1986-1995)
 - Altru Health System (1995-2012)
 - Manager of Occupational Therapy Department (1995-2012)
 - Manager of Hand Therapy Center (1999-2012)
 - Manager of Pediatric Therapy Services (2002-2012)
- Retired in 2012, but still helps out wherever she can in the Grand Forks School District

Literature Review

- Entry level degree was only a Bachelors of Occupational Therapy (NDOTA, 1987).
- North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association was not a governing body in North Dakota until 1987 (NDOTA, 1987).
 - Governing body at the time the Judy started practicing was Dakota Occupational Therapy Association (DOTA) (NDOTA, 1987).
- IDEA was passed in 2002 influencing the school environment for school aged children with disabilities.
- No internet present at the time that Judy started practicing, and only networking available was by way of telephone
- Telehealth development in the early 2000's to help reach rural communities and deliver services (Cason, 2012)

Methodology

- Qualitative study using a life history approach
- Participants were purposively selected and assigned to student researchers.
- A semi structured interview was developed using the Kawa Model as a guide, researchers modified questions tailored uniquely to each individual
- IRB approval was obtained and informed consent was given by Judy prior to the interview.
- Additional data sources included a resume provide by the participant, internet search, and literature review.
- The interview was conducted at coffee shop in Grand Forks, ND.
- Following the interview, the researchers transcribed the interview verbatim.
- Trustworthiness was established by the researchers completing reflexive journals to control for bias and using field notes.
- Notation were made regarding body language, environmental influences, and additional information shared during the interview.

Data Analysis/ Findings

Data analysis was completed using the verbatim transcription of the interview. The data was coded , then grouped into categories and themes were identified. Three main categories were identified:

Category: Avocation

Themes:

- Get your foot in the door and show what you have, while developing what you don't
- Being by yourself grows confidence in your abilities

Emotional Intelligence

Themes:

- Pick up on what people are feeling and use it therapeutically

Delivering the best care/ becoming the best therapist

Themes:

- Enjoy what you do, and make it purposeful and holistic
- Be a good team member, know your role and collaborate

Occupational therapy has changed a lot in the eyes of Judy, and she has been impacted by the changing of time through different contexts.

Judy had to overcome many barriers when she first began practicing in rural North Dakota; barriers including being isolated, not having a large network to reach out to for assistance, having to get her foot in the door to advocate for herself what she could bring as an occupational therapists to the hospital in Bottineau, ND. She was diligent in growing the confidence in her skills and relying on her education.

The times changed while Judy was a practitioner, and she changed with them as well

- The growth of technology allowed for more access to resources and networking that was not available before
- Technology allowed for more clients to be reached via Telehealth while she was at Altru
- IDEA gave disabled kids in the school, more inclusivity and exposure, which helped them benefit greatly.

Judy's personality and open-mindedness have been factors that have allowed her to develop as a professional.

- Judy has developed her skills to grow confidence in herself and have no regrets from her career

The factor that helped Judy progress and become so beneficial in occupational therapy has been her emotional intelligence

- Being able to identify clients emotions as well your own emotions and being able to use them therapeutically

Discussion

- Judy Godfread has a decorated career in occupational therapy
 - Manager of multiple organizations and departments
- Judy has been able to work in diverse practice areas and experience the progression of occupational therapy.
 - Rural to urban settings, with all age groups experienced
 - Technology advancements and what the opportunities have lead to in occupational therapy and medicine
- Judy has had to advocate for herself and the services she can provide during her career as an occupational therapist
- Judy has had many opportunities that have allowed her to develop as a professional and grow confidence in her abilities
- Development, confidence and avocation are entrenched in becoming a professional; Judy believes that you should use yourself therapeutically and collaboratively to deliver the best purposeful client-centered services.
- Judy believes in the importance of being assertive and sharing with others the abilities that occupational therapists possess, and their abilities to influence the outcome of therapy.

Acknowledgments

- Thank you to Judy Godfread for allowing us to interview her and get to know her story. Judy's story was one that has influenced both researchers view on occupational therapy, as well as how we view ourselves. A great person to meet, thank you for this opportunity.
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References

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