

# Life History of Jeff McMenemy, OTR/L

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## Introduction

The life history of Jeff McMenemy was one of 31 life history interviews conducted as part of a larger project of *Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming*.

- The purpose of this life history is to gain information on an individual in Wyoming or North Dakota who has been instrumental in developing occupational therapy.
- The study is intended to provide current and future generations of occupational therapists a view of the history and how OT practice has evolved over time in North Dakota and Wyoming.
- The life history of Jeff McMenemy is a case study that examined his experiences as a cutting edge occupational therapist and successful business owner.
- The Kawa model was used to guide the interview and data analysis process.

## Description the Participant

Jeff is the founder of Teton Therapy and owns four branches of this business throughout Wyoming. His wife is a finance manager for Teton Therapy and travels with him to conferences throughout the nation.

- Occupational therapist Jeff McMenemy graduated in 1991 with his Bachelor of Occupational Therapy from the University of North Dakota.
- He started out his career in 1992 at Livingston Health and Rehab in Livingston, Montana.
- In 1996, he worked at Northridge Medical and Rehab Manitowoc in Wisconsin.
- Until 2001, Jeff was the Rehab Service Manager at Wind River Healthcare in Riverton, Wyoming.
- In 2002, Jeff founded Teton Therapy, an outpatient clinic in Riverton, WY.
- Teton Therapy offers therapy services to individuals in Cheyenne, Lander, Riverton and Sheridan Wyoming.
- Jeff also has his Occupational Therapy Licensure in Montana, Wisconsin, and Wyoming
- Jeff has professional memberships with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association and Montana Occupational Therapy Association.

## Literature Review

- In 1993, there was personal shortages, lack of specialized training, and inadequate continuing educations for therapists in rural northwest states (Kohler & Mayberry, 1993)
- Passing of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, a financial limitation was placed on Medicare (Pergolotti, Lavery, Reeve, and Dusetzina, 2018).
- In 2001, the University of British Columbia established inter-professional collaborative education, practice, and research forward. Others followed suit shortly after (Solomon, 2010).
- The Patient Protection and Affordable Act of 2010 emphasized patient-centered care, interdisciplinary team practice, payment reform, and the use of information technologies (Moyers & Metzler, 2014).

## Methodology

This was a qualitative study using a life history approach where participants were assigned to students from a list that was created by the project research directors.

- No specific gatekeeper issues.
- Informed consent was obtained from the UND IRB and the participant.
- There was a one-time interview, which was approximately one hour and forty five minutes in length.
- Interview was conducted virtually via Google Hangouts in a conference room at the Casper College campus and was audio recorded.
- The semi-structured interview was guided by an interview schedule provided by the project research directors. The researchers were allowed to ask additional questions that were specific and applicable to their interview.
- The data collected consisted of an interview that was transcribed verbatim.
- The transcription was coded the categories, themes and assertions were then developed.

## Data Analysis

The Kawa Model was the foundational theory that guided the study. Kawa, meaning "river" in Japanese, is a model used to help individuals identify their life flow. The central concepts of the model are harmony balance, and well being.

- This guided the data analysis and interview in which Jeff's life history was revealed.
- The categories that emerged from the codes of the transcription are: Interprofessional Relationships, Entrepreneur, and Cutting Edge Occupational Therapist.

## Findings

The categories were further analyzed to find the themes in order to understand his career path as an occupational therapist. From these themes, an assertion was formulated.

- Themes from the category of interprofessional relationships:
  - **As an occupational therapist and business owner, Jeff values collaborating and building strong interprofessional relationships with other professionals in the healthcare field.**
  - **Jeff partners with companies outside of the healthcare field and shares how occupational therapy services may be beneficial to their employees and company as a whole.**
- Themes from the category of entrepreneur:
  - **Jeff's professional experience has been influenced by his work history, personal inspiration, education, and running his own business as an entrepreneur.**
  - **Jeff creates businesses that are fueled by his inspiration, motivation, and past experiences to improve outpatient occupational therapy services in rural Wyoming.**
- Themes from the category of cutting edge occupational therapist:
  - **Jeff is a cutting edge therapist who implements emerging treatment modalities and advocates for the benefit of his clients.**
  - **Jeff is aware of the legislation components of occupational therapy in his state and works to stay competent and knowledgeable in the areas of treatment he provides in his business.**

*"The OT and OTA collaboration, that's a must, that's just a must...same thing with interprofessional education."*

*"I told my boss...I'm thinking about going out on my own. I just can't do this anymore. I don't believe in the model that you guys are doing....then I went ahead and went out on my own."*

*"For me, I always had a toolkit in the back of my car. I had drills, I had levels, stud finder, so I didn't wait for if I was out doing home, home evaluation stuff, I'm putting up grab bars right then and there."*

*"I try to really push the envelope as far as I can and promoting the use of OT that we're qualified to do this and we've got skills, better skills to do these things."*

## Conclusion

- Jeff McMenemy's experiences have made him a cutting edge therapist who collaborates with other healthcare disciplines and goes above and beyond to treat his clients by implementing emerging treatment modalities while improving outpatient services in rural Wyoming through his involvement as an entrepreneur.
- This is evident through his education, work, business experiences, and motivation to become competent in emerging treatments over time.
- When Jeff entered the field of occupational therapy, there were not as many federal regulations regarding Medicare and Medicaid.
  - Despite the changes to legislature, Jeff has continually evolved his scope of practice to implement the best care to his clients at his business in a rural, outpatient setting.

## References

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Picture provided by Jeff McMenemy