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A Group Protocol for Individuals with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder: Transitioning Into College

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A Group Protocol for Individuals with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder

Transitioning into College

By

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Advisor: Julie Grabanski, PhD, OTR/L

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for the degree of

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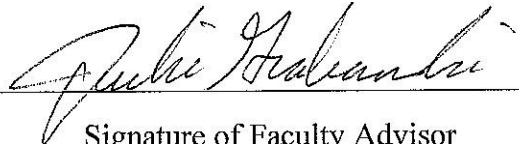
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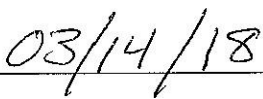
Approval Page

This Scholarly Project Paper, submitted by Annika Eckholm and Karol Santistevan, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Occupational Therapy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisor under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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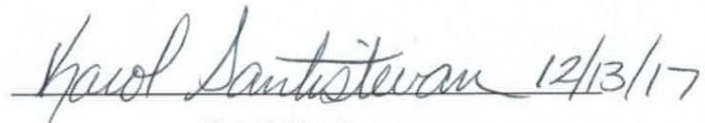
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Date

Karol Santistevan 12/13/17

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Group Protocol for Individuals with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder Transitioning into College. Annika Eckholm, MOTS, Karol Santistevan, MOTS, & Julie Grabanski, PhD., Department of Occupational Therapy, University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences, 501 North Columbia Road, Grand Forks, ND 58202

Purpose: The numbers for young adults with a disability transitioning to college are increasing yearly (U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, 2016). Changes and transitioning to the college context is particularly challenging for individuals with high functioning autism (HFA) (Elias & White, 2017; Wehman et al., 2014). The purpose of this scholarly project was to develop a group protocol as a resource for young adult students with HFA to transition successfully in a college setting.

Methodology: A literature review was conducted on topics relating to individuals with HFA, success and barriers to college, effective interventions for this population, and the role of OT on a college campus. There is literature to support the need for occupational therapy based programs on college campuses as occupational therapists are equipped to empower and focus holistically on individuals (Lotan & Ells, 2010).

Results: The group protocol, *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills*, was developed to enable young adult students with HFA to transition and engage in a college setting by addressing communication and social interaction skills. The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) was used to guide the design of this group protocol for occupational therapists to use in a college

setting. The protocol begins with information for the occupational therapist, including

CMOP-E resources, assessments to use, operational definitions, and application. This is

followed by fourteen intervention sessions. Particular features of the group protocol

include the format of Cole's Seven Steps and involvement of peer-mentors.

Conclusion: There are just under 2% of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

who have an 80% college incompletion rate (HEATH Resource Center at the National

Youth Transitions Center, n.d.). Through the implementation of this group protocol in

vivo, it is anticipated that young adults with HFA will increase interpersonal skills and

college engagement, thus resulting in a higher graduation rate and overall satisfying

college experience.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As young adults mature, they take on higher levels of responsibility to prepare them for independent living. With the increasing numbers of young adults entering college (U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, 2016), the shift in responsibilities naturally occurs through the transactions between various contexts and active participation in settings (Elias & White, 2017; Wei et al., 2016). However, the change in responsibilities significantly affects individuals with a disability, especially young adults with high functioning autism (HFA). Young adult students with HFA entering college may exhibit additional difficulties such as communicating and social skills with others necessary to establish and maintain appropriate relationships (Elias & White, 2017; Kasari, Rotheram-Fuller, Locke, & Gulsrud, 2012; Wehman et al., 2014). As a result, individuals with HFA may have impaired communication and social skills, thus hindering their engagement in a college setting.

The role of an occupational therapist is professionally trained to address the needs of individuals with HFA who would benefit from additional services, including communication and social skills in a college setting. Based on the findings of a literature search, young adult students with HFA are not adequately supported in a college context due to impaired communication and social skills (Kelly, LaVergne, Boone, & Boone, 2012; Rivers, Brackett, Omori, & Sickler, 2013; Savitz-Romer, Rowan-Kenyon, & Fancsali, 2015). Effective collaboration between occupational therapists and this population are beneficial to support successful occupational engagement in a college

environment. This is due to occupational therapists empowering individuals to engage in meaningful social relationships through expression of themselves with unique activities and encouraging involvement of the young adult students.

The purpose of this scholarly project was to address the gaps in literature related to young adult students with HFA transitioning to college by creating a college-based occupational therapy group protocol. The group protocol, *Putting the Pieces Together: Communication and Social Skills* was developed to encourage and enable individuals with HFA to promote successful engagement in a college context. Within the group protocol, various sources of information and group sessions are available to educate the occupational therapist while they facilitate the group.

The basis of the scholarly project was guided by the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E). This model focused on empowering a client through engagement, enabling skills, and spirituality (Krupa, 2016). The CMOP-E uses a holistic and client-centered approach (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007); thus, specific enablement skills were used throughout each group session. Furthermore, adult learning theories and concepts were also incorporated into the scholarly project. The Social Learning Theory and Social Constructivism (Bastable, Gramet, Jacobs, & Sopczyk, 2011) were used for collaboration between the occupational therapist and students, role-playing, and self-reflection.

There are other particular features of *Putting the Pieces Together: Communication and Social Skills*. The usage of Cole's Sevens Steps (Cole, 2012) was used as a format for the group protocol. The protocol was also designed to implement peer-mentors of the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources (SOAR)

program (Hofmeister, Schiller, & Morrison, 2015). Two assessments, Canadian

Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) and Assessment of Communication and

Interaction Skills (ACIS) (Asher, 2007; Boyt Schell, Gillen, & Scaffa, 2014), were

chosen to evaluate competency of the students.

This scholarly project includes five chapters. The following chapters include:

review of literature, methodology, product, and summary. Chapter two will review and

examine the literature associated with topics on young adult students with HFA

transitioning to college and utilization of occupational therapy services in a college

context. Chapter three discusses the process of developing the product and further details

about what is involved in *Putting the Pieces Together: Communication and Social Skills*.

Chapter four describes information for the occupational therapist, components of CMOP-

E utilized throughout the product, and individual group sessions. Chapter five

summarizes the scholarly project, limitations, and recommendations for the group

protocol.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Transitioning from high school to college can be a stressful change for any student, especially a student with a disability. It is a fact that 11.1% of freshman entering college in 2011 in the United States had a disability (U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, 2016). As young adults mature, they take on higher levels of responsibility to prepare them for adulthood and independent living. The shift in responsibilities naturally occurs through the transactions of occupations and environments (Kao, Kramer, Liljenquist, & Coster, 2014). As children mature and move into young adulthood, they may be responsible for completion of additional tasks such as chores around the house, caring for a pet, and being accountable for their homework. During this transition, the influence of other individuals, as well as the activities that one engages in, has an impact on social interaction skills. Young adulthood demands a higher level of social interaction skills and communication skills. Environmental elements and various contexts also affect an individual's well-being and sense of self. Social interactions drive an individual to participate in different environments. However, some disabilities impair an individual's social interactions, thus hindering their engagement.

High Functioning Autism

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a specific diagnosis that often causes

diminished social, emotional, and communication skills. According to the DSM V, Level

1 ASD, or more commonly referred to as High Functioning Autism (HFA), has

significant social impairments especially without appropriate supports (American

Psychiatric Association, 2013). People with HFA between the ages of 18-25 are

transitioning out of public schools and away from home into independent living

situations, such as attending college. However, this creates a large shift of responsibility

that they commonly are not prepared to handle without additional supports.

Young adults with HFA exhibit difficulties with living independently, paying

bills, meeting the task demands of a job, maintaining lifelong relationships, and self-

advocacy in everyday living (Elias & White, 2017; Wehman et al., 2014). These

difficulties are not due to lower cognition of the individuals, but rather, the challenges to

generalize or transfer skills to multiple contexts. This is problematic as young adults are

shifting to an independent stage of their lives. According to Wehman et al. (2014), young

people with ASD experience challenges relating to social skills, independence, and

emotional regulation skills. In the college environment, students with HFA need social

and emotional, communication, and organizational skills to be successful.

Social and Communication Skills

College is a time for individuals to meet friends and interact with peers. Some of

the demands required of these interpersonal interactions include: verbal and nonverbal

communication and appropriate expression of emotions. Individuals with ASD exhibit

social challenges that restrict formation and maintenance of relationships (Gantman,

Kapp, Orenski, & Laugeson, 2012). Typically, individuals with HFA struggle with

recognizing and responding appropriately to nonverbal social cues. For example, this

may include not realizing when other people are uninterested in conversing or discussing specific topics. Initiating and terminating conversations may also be difficult for individuals with HFA. Aside from starting and stopping a conversation, there is also social etiquette of taking turns in dialogue with other people (Kasari, Rotheram-Fuller, Locke, & Gulsrud, 2012). Another component of nonverbal communication is personal space and identifying other people's facial expressions. Many people value these skills in developing and maintaining relationships.

Young adults matriculating must learn to navigate peer and professor interactions, make new friends, and build long-term relationships including dating. Students with HFA have additional challenges with these different contexts of building relationships. The verbal and nonverbal communication skills are going to vary depending on the environment. Transitioning between these various contexts involves active participation in the different settings (Elias & White, 2017; Wei et al., 2016). An example of this includes conversing with a professor, and this is going to be different than interacting with a peer in a dormitory. Additionally, distinctive social skills are required for dating situations, such as understanding appropriate touch and the intent of the relationship. Without being able to form these relationships, social isolation may occur. Social isolation causes a disturbance in the psychosocial aspects of an individual (Elias & White, 2017; Hees, Moyson, & Roeyers, 2015). These psychosocial aspects may include feeling overwhelmed, fatigued, stressed, depressed, and anxious (Hees, Moyson, & Roeyers, 2015). These implications may lead to a disruption in an individual's ability to regulate their emotions.

Because individuals with HFA grapple with emotional regulation, additional

disruptions caused by social isolation further intensify these challenges. According to American Psychiatric Association (2013), individuals with HFA experience deficits in "reduced sharing of interests, emotions, or affect; . . . [and the] failure to initiate or respond to social interactions" (p. 50). Appropriate emotional regulation skills, or emotional intelligence, serves as a purpose of identifying and interpreting emotions from other individuals (Rivers et al., 2013). According to Rivers et al. (2013), emotional intelligence includes the following: "perception of emotions, use of emotions, understanding emotions, and regulating emotions" (p. 175). Thus, appropriate emotional regulation skills promote development of individuals and relationships with others (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008b).

Life Skills

Young adults transitioning from home to college are required to take on additional responsibilities. For example, some skills required are: self-care, laundry, living with a roommate, and shopping. Even though young adults may have learned life skills early on in their lives, generalizing these skills to a new context can be challenging as the routines are going to be different. Changes in routines are exceptionally problematic for individuals with HFA (Palmen, Diden, & Lang, 2012). Hees, Moyson, and Roeyers (2015) report that students with ASD exhibit difficulty with unexpected changes as they may become anxious while adjusting to new routines. The lack of structure and unpredictability of new situations causes further disruptions for individuals with ASD (Hees, Moyson, & Roeyers, 2015). When life skills are negatively influenced for individuals with HFA due to these disruptions, effective strategies can have a positive impact.

<center>**Typical Development**</center>

Life Stages

According to Erik Erikson, young adulthood (ages 18-40), the sixth life stage, is described as intimacy versus isolation (Cole & Tufano, 2008). When young adults do not develop intimate relationships, depression may result due to isolation. In this stage, individuals are forming close friendships and long-term relationships (Cole & Tufano, 2008). These stages are comparable with Daniel Levinson's stages of development.

Levinson's theory addresses "young and middle adulthood" (Cole & Tufano, 2008, p. 212). In the young adult transition, individuals ages 17-22 are experiencing four life tasks including: "forming the dream, the mentor relationship, forming an occupation, and marriage and family" (Cole & Tufano, 2008, p. 212). These areas are similar to Erikson's stages. They are essential to moving onto the next phase of young adulthood and achieving stability within the development period, and young adults are commonly transitioning into college during this period of time. The context of college provides an opportunity for young adults to explore career opportunities, relationships, and a sense of independence. However, there are specific skills necessary to prevent barriers for a successful college performance.

<center>**Successes and Barriers to College**</center>

When young adults matriculate, it is often the first time they are in a position to test their skills relating to independence, such as meeting new people, living with a roommate, utilizing organizational skills, and completing self-care. For many individuals, these are not new skills; however, changing contexts and environments

demand a response in order to enable the individual to be successful. According to

Savitz-Romer, Rowan-Kenyon, and Fancsali (2015), social and emotional skills are vital

in order for a college student to be successful. These skills promote engagement in

relationship building and social activities. Social influences provide stability for young

adults to adjust and persist in college (Kelly, LaVergne, Boone, and Boone,

2012). Social interactions are inevitable in a college setting, whether it may be in a

classroom, living with a roommate, or at a campus event. Having adequate social skills

encourages full participation in a college experience. College students have the

opportunity to interact with their professors and peers, participate in class discussions,

and advocate for themselves. Another aspect of relationship building is emotional

intelligence which includes recognizing and regulating emotions. These emotional skills

contribute to students effectively adjusting to college and beyond (Rivers, Brackett,

Omori, & Sickler, 2013).

Lack of emotional intelligence and social skills may result in the need for

effective coping strategies. Without appropriate emotional intelligence, college students

are not able to maintain healthy social functioning (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008a;

Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008b). As a result, emotional distress may impair a

student's well-being (Jantzer & Cashel, 2017). This psychological distress can lead to

anxiety or depression if students do not have adequate coping strategies. Social isolation

may develop from anxiety or depression when students do not have established resources,

such as social supports or coping strategies. Social skills and emotional intelligence are

some challenges for typically developing young adults. These are exceptional barriers

for young adults with HFA.

Effective Interventions

There have been numerous interventions for this population. Carter et al. (2004) examined how children with HFA interacted with their peers. "The Friendship Club" was created to enhance social interactions in a school setting, and activities were chosen to "facilitate social skills and reciprocal interpersonal relatedness between participants" (Carter et al., 2004, p.146). People with HFA need relationships with other individuals.

Additional studies have been completed using mentorship with adolescents. In 2010(a), Gutman, Raphael, Ceder, Khan, Timp, and Salvant explored the physical and cognitive components of learning in high school students with ASD between the ages of 15-21. A motor-based social skills intervention was utilized to incorporate sensory integration as well as cognitive behaviors. This intervention was relevant due to the experiential opportunities for the participations to develop social skills for high school students with ASD. The findings of this study showed an increase in their overall social behaviors, but further research is recommended. A repeated-measures design by Gutman, Raphael-Greenfield, and Rao (2012b) incorporated intervention techniques involving role-play activities without the sensory integration. Results indicated the largest gains were in the first of three phases. Because of this, longer durations of interventions are not necessarily the most effective (Gutman, Raphael-Greenfield, & Rao, 2012b). The motor-based role-playing was shown to be effective when working with individuals with ASD (Gutman, Raphael-Greenfield, & Rao, 2012b). The qualities of role-playing and sequencing also increase a young adult's way of thinking in social situations.

Additional research has been suggested since "social exclusion [has] become

pronounced in adolescents when developing and maintaining peer relationships"

(Gutman, Raphael-Greenfield, & Rao, 2012b, p. 530). The goal of increasing social

skills is dependent on environmental and personal factors with other

individuals. Orsmond and Seltzer (2007) discussed the importance of interpersonal

relationships, especially with individuals who have disabilities. Whether it is an intimate,

social, or personal connection between other people, it is still important to note the

significance of the bond. Understanding relationships are important in order to maintain

a healthy lifestyle. However, these associations can take a toll on others especially if

someone has a disability. Oftentimes, caregivers and siblings are affected particularly

with individuals who have ASD (Orsmond & Seltzer, 2007). Through maintaining

positive connections, people with ASD develop performance skills involving social

interactions (Orsmond & Seltzer, 2007). Thus, enabling individuals with ASD to explore

new relationships within their new contexts is essential. The environment certainly plays

a role in how an individual interacts, and resources in the surroundings can contribute to a

person's well-being.

Supports on College Campus

As individuals with HFA transition to college, they often require additional

supports and resources. Glennon (2016) discussed that success is achieved within a

context when resources are available to a college student. Some of the resources

available to a college student include: academic support, counseling, disability services,

and occasionally a peer-mentoring program. Hees, Moyson, & Roeyers (2015) discussed

the benefits of academic accommodations. Students are able to utilize these services for

increased timing on assignments or exams and completion of alternative assignments in

order to fulfill the requirements of the class (Hees, Moyson, & Roeyers, 2015). Other

academic supports, such as advising and tutoring, are also available to students in order to

help them achieve success. However, these supports may be challenging for a student

with HFA due to their deficits in social skills. For example, students with HFA may not

have the confidence or social skills to appropriately communicate their need for these

supports. However, this is not isolated to students with HFA; this is universal to many

college students. Dietsche (2012) explains that students are not using the campus support

services due to the stigma or lack of confidence in the services that are available,

primarily counseling and academic assistance.

Adequate psychosocial support is a resource that students can utilize to cope with

the stress and exhaustion related to college (Hees, Moyson, & Roeyers, 2015). The

psychosocial supports on campus available for individuals with HFA

include: counseling, peer-mentoring, and trained faculty personnel. Students with HFA

who experience negative emotions due to social isolation and stress may seek services

from a counselor. Counselors are able to support individuals with HFA by listening and

referring them to further services. According to Dietsche (2012), "personal counseling

was the most extensively used service of those examined" (p. 79). Counseling is a

support on nearly all campuses; although, peer-mentoring is not as common, but it has

shown to be effective. Adult mentors and peers play a crucial role in college success

(Unrau, Dawson, Hamilton, & Bennett, 2017). Occupational therapy majors at Casper

College in Casper, Wyoming (Student Occupational Therapy Association [SOTA], 2015)

offer a peer-mentorship program known as Student Organization of Accessibility and

Resources (SOAR), developed in 2012 by Suzanna Morrison. This program is used to

promote an enriched college experience to all students regardless of their disability and focuses on four areas: advocacy, organization, social and leisure participation, and resource identification (SOTA, 2015). Another example of peer-mentorship is the Campus-Based Inclusion Model (CBIM). The core of this collaboration between high schools and colleges fulfills educational requirements while supporting individuals with autism in a new environment (Bloomfield, 2015). Social communication skills and vocational preparation are interventions provided in this model to "fully integrate [students] into the college experience" (Bloomfield, 2015, p. 11). Yet, not all mentors are peers. Adult mentors might include advisors, career counselors, or faculty.

Role of Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy Role with HFA

Occupational Therapy is a perfect fit for working with individuals with HFA. Occupational therapists are professionally trained to address the needs of individuals who would benefit from additional services including communication, social, and emotional skills. According to Palmen, Didden, and Lang (2012), interventions involving low and/or high-tech assisted procedures were found to be the most promising in working with individuals with HFA on communication deficits. A couple techniques include video modeling and visual cues (Palmen, Didden, & Lang, 2012). These are beneficial for students with HFA as they promote successful engagement in communicating with advisor(s), professor(s), peer(s), and other social relationships. Furthermore, Palmen, Didden, and Lang (2012) discuss the implications associated with interventions occurring in natural environments. Interventions in-vivo allow for successful and effective communication skills which enable application of the

skills. Another area occupational therapists may address is social and emotional skills.

Occupational therapists empower individuals to engage in meaningful social relationships through expression of themselves with unique activities. Additionally, occupational therapists are able to collaborate with individuals with HFA to discuss the social expectations and roles of attending college. Ashbaugh, Koegel, and Koegel (2017) reported that community-based social activities, extracurricular activities, and peer interactions were increased for individuals with HFA through unique interventions relating to social skills and participant's values. Individuals with ASD reported a positive correlation with interventions such as a peer-mentor program and social skills training (Ashbaugh, Koegel, & Koegel, 2017), and occupational therapists are able to use this as a means of working with individuals with ASD. In addition to social skills training and peer-mentorship, a peer-mediated treatment is favored over non-peer-mediated treatments as significant improvements were found to increase social connections for individuals with ASD (Kasari, Rotheram-Fuller, Locke, & Gulsrud, 2012). These studies show the significance of social skills and the impact occupational therapists can make. Unfortunately, occupational therapists are not traditionally employed at colleges to provide services on campus.

Occupational Therapy Role on Campus

The typical supports that may be found on a college campus include: counseling, tutoring, advising, and disability services. Unfortunately, these services do not provide the unique services that occupational therapy offers. Crabtree and Demchick (2015) reported "self-perception, increased task leadership, social competence, and enhanced communication resulted from participation in this Challenge Course program . . . [and

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led] to greater self-perceptions of quality of life" (p. 262). The CRS Challenge Course was developed by Crabtree, who is an occupational therapist. This program was implemented by Campus Recreation Services on a university campus three times over the course of a year with young adults on the autism spectrum. Additionally, occupational therapists can support students through collaboration and advocacy to access additional services on a college campus. Due to the limited research supporting occupational therapy on a college campus setting, young adult students with HFA are not adequately supported in this context. Lotan and Ells (2010) promote the need for occupational therapy based programs to be developed on the college campus as occupational therapists focus holistically and identify strengths of clients.

CMOP-E Model

The Canadian Model of Occupation Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) is a client-centered and holistic theoretical model. This model focuses on empowering a client through engagement, enabling skills, and spirituality (Krupa, 2016). Engagement involves the human experience, as well as participation in a meaningful activity. This model uses enabling skills to promote self-efficacy, coping, problem solving, and autonomy in an occupation (Krupa, 2016). The enablement skills consist of: "adapt, advocate, coach, collaborate, consult, coordinate, design/build, educate, engage, [and] specialize" (Turpin & Iwama, 2011, p. 124). These skills promote a sharing of power between the student and the therapist (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007). The enablement skills also empower the students to apply previous knowledge and generalize in new contexts. Spirituality is another unique component of the CMOP-E model. It is a concept that reflects an individual's purpose and meaning in relationship with society

(Krupa, 2016). This sense of self enables a student to experience deeper meaning through engagement in the college experience. Young adult students with HFA struggle with relationships with others and how they fit into society. Thus, the CMOP-E is an effective guiding force for developing a group protocol for young adults with HFA transitioning into the college setting.

Group Protocol

A group protocol was chosen to support the college environment due to the frequency of group interactions. A group protocol supports the notion for feedback from peers, reducing stigma, and establishing relationships with other individuals. Incorporated within the protocol are several learning theories and concepts. Two in particular, social learning theory and social constructivism, are pertinent to this population. Social learning theory advocates for the use of role-modeling and role-playing (Bastable, Gramet, Jacobs, & Sopczyk, 2011). This learning theory is beneficial for young adult students with HFA because it encourages "desirable professional attitudes and behaviors" (Bastable, Gramet, Jacobs, & Sopczyk, 2011, p. 71). This fosters interpersonal relationships between peers and other college personnel. The concept, social constructivism allows for individuals with HFA to attach meaning to an experience to make it more generalizable. The CMOP-E was chosen as the overarching model and theory to support this group protocol. Cole's Seven Steps were used as a template for the sessions within the group protocol. Two assessments, Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) and Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS) were given throughout the group sessions to evaluate competency of the group members.

Cole's Seven Steps

A group protocol was created using Cole's Seven Steps as the framework. Each session consisted of "introduction, activity, sharing, processing, generalizing, application, and summary" (Cole, 2012, p. 4). This provided an outline for each intervention consistent with the desire for structure for this population. Cole's Seven Steps also offers students the opportunities to process and generalize the knowledge within a group setting to maximize competency.

Assessments and Outcomes

Two assessments, Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) and Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS), were chosen to evaluate competency of the students. The COPM was designed specifically for the CMOP-E and can also be used as an outcomes measure. The COPM assesses an individual's awareness in self-care, productivity, and leisure (Boyt Schell, Gillen, & Scaffa, 2014). This semi-structured interview is a reliable and valid occupational performance measure and takes approximately 30-40 minutes to administer (Asher, 2007).

The ACIS is a Model of Human Occupational (MOHO) assessment to evaluate an individual's communication and social interaction skills (Boyt Schell, Gillen, & Scaffa, 2014). While this is not specifically related to the CMOP-E, it is complementary to this model. This structured observation rating scale is reliable and valid (Asher, 2007). The three domains of "physicality, information exchange, and relations" are measured (Asher, 2007, p. 459). Additionally, there is a correlation between the ACIS terminology and the CMOP-E, specifically related to competency.

Summary

Success in college for individuals with HFA promotes increased engagement and performance in daily life. According to HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center (n.d.), statistics for individuals with ASD enrolling in college are not easily tracked; however, "0.7 percent to 1.9 percent of [this] college population [has] an 80% incompletion rate." Young adult students with HFA transitioning to college experience difficulties with communication and social skills which can create barriers to success. An implication for occupational therapy practice includes the necessity for presenting information in numerous ways for this population. A systematic review by Case-Smith and Arbesman (2008) discusses interventions and relevance for ASD. The social-cognitive skill training intervention showed to be effective when working with individuals who are high on the ASD scale. The mentorship methodology in this study will mirror this approach. However, according to the systematic review, performance improved with this intervention, but generalizing to everyday interactions were still difficult (Case-Smith & Arbesman, 2008). This is the basis of why the CMOP-E was chosen as the guide for the group protocol. The outcomes of the sessions for the group protocol correlate with the main concepts of the CMOP-E including spirituality, occupational engagement, and enablement skills (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007).

This protocol implements the various interventions over a fourteen-week time period with the goal of communication and social interaction skills improving for young adult students with HFA. It is felt that this intervention approach within the group protocol will have the greatest carry over in everyday life for individuals with ASD. This will increase their engagement in occupations within different environments. This group

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protocol is essential in addressing the gap of services and effective interventions for this

population in this setting. Based on a review of literature, there is no community college

that has an occupational therapist who provides services on campus in this format.

Research shows there are limited resources, especially occupational therapy, on campuses

specifically for HFA. Therefore, this group protocol is being developed for the Casper

College campus to complement the SOAR peer-mentorship program that is already

implemented. This group protocol is being designed to be piloted with the support of the

SOAR peer-mentors over the course of one semester. The following chapters will

discuss the group protocol in further detail.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This scholarly project was created to address the gaps in literature related to young adult students with High-Functioning Autism (HFA) transitioning to college. The purpose of this scholarly project was to provide a college-based occupational therapy group protocol to enable individuals with HFA and promote successful engagement in a college context.

A thorough literature review was generated by searching a variety of online databases using the Harley E. French Library and Chester Fritz Library. Journal articles were collected through multiple databases including: EBSCOhost, SAGE Journals, CINAHL, PubMed, SpringerLink Open Access, ERIC (U.S. Dept. of Education), Wiley Online Library, OneFile (GALE), PsychARTICLES (American Psychological Association), and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). Additionally, a variety of occupational therapy textbooks, diagnostic and statistical textbooks, and government-based website such as U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics were used to locate information. The following terms were searched in the research process: autism, college students, students with high-functioning autism, college students with autism, occupational therapy on college campus, high-functioning young adults, transitions to college, occupational therapy role on college, autism on college, resources on college campus, services on college campus, and life development stages. Each article reviewed was assessed for

pertinent information relating to the topic of young adult students transitioning to college. The level of evidence was evaluated to assure the validity and reliability of the articles. Research articles were chosen between the years of 2004-2017.

There was limited literature regarding to the role of occupational therapy on a college campus. The majority of the research articles were obtained from psychology, special education, autism developmental, mental health, and college student journals. The research revealed individuals with HFA demonstrate difficulties with social and communication skills and change in habits, routines, and contexts. Additionally, research indicated that evidence-based interventions including role-playing, peer-mentorship, and practicing skills in-vivo were effective for individuals with HFA transitioning into a new environment.

The authors sought to produce a group protocol to integrate the communication and social skills for individuals with HFA who experience difficulties with these skills. The unique role of a skilled professional on a college campus, such as an occupational therapist, addresses the needs of individuals with HFA transitioning to college, and it was evident that there was limited literature on this topic. Following a synthesis of literature, the need for a group protocol in a college context was obvious. The purpose of the group protocol was to enable young adult students with HFA to transition and engage in a college setting by addressing communication and social interaction skills. Cole's Seven Steps were used as a template for the design of the group interventions. Individual session topics were selected based on findings from the literature review. The group protocol, *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills*, had a total of fourteen sessions to enable engagement

and satisfaction within the college setting. The pre-session was designed for peer-mentors to be educated on the group protocol. The first session focused on introductions, overview of the program, and an assessment. Sessions two through eleven focused on activities involving communication and social interaction skills. The twelfth session celebrated the participants' achievements throughout the program and a final assessment was given to evaluate competency in communication and social skills of the group members. Lastly, the fourteenth or post-session was designed for the peer-mentors to reflect on the group.

Several occupation-based models were reviewed, and the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) was selected as the best model to complement the scholarly project. The CMOP-E was used to guide the development and organization of the scholarly project. The holistic and client-centered model was chosen to empower the needs of young adult students with HFA and promote individual spirituality while they transitioned to college. This model also implemented enablement skills which were used to intervene throughout the group sessions so that the students were able to have a sense of self. Further description of the model was provided in each group session.

The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) assessment was selected as it was both an evaluation tool and outcomes measure. This was administered to the group members during the first session and the twelfth session to evaluate the effectiveness of the protocol as it addressed an individual's' perception of self-care, productivity, and leisure (Boyt Schell, Gillen, & Scaffa, 2014). The peer-mentors also took the COPM during their pre-and post-sessions. The Assessment of Communication

and Interaction Skills (ACIS) was assessed in the second session. This tool used observational skills of the peer-mentors during a meaningful activity (Forsyth, Lai, & Kielhofner, 1999).

Particular features of adult learning theories and concepts were also incorporated into the creation of the scholarly project. The group protocol provided individuals with social experiences, including role-modeling, observation of others, reflection of growth which corresponds with the Social Learning Theory (Bastable, Gramet, Jacobs, & Sopczyk, 2011). The group protocol also incorporated social constructivism. This allowed for young adult students to collaborate and exchange feedback among each other and the occupational therapist.

The group protocol was designed for Casper College, a community college in Casper, Wyoming. The sessions were designed to be implemented by an occupational therapist. The group protocol focused on peer-mentorship which was facilitated in conjunction with the Student Organization for Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program at the University of North Dakota-Casper College campus. The authors participated in the SOAR program as peer-mentors throughout their undergraduate educational experience in occupational therapy and have experienced the effectiveness of this program. Students with disabilities learn skills throughout the sessions and apply these skills with the peer-mentors of the SOAR program. These skills enable young adult students to engage in the new context of a college campus and potentially other environments.

CHAPTER IV
PRODUCT

Putting the Pieces Together

Series I: Communication and Social Skills

Annika Eckholm, MOTS

and

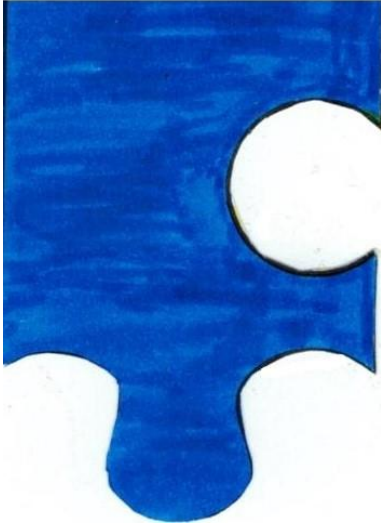**Karol Santistevan, MOTS**

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to extend their sincerest gratitude to their graduate advisor, Dr. Julie Grabanski for her continuous support and guidance throughout the creation of *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills*.

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<u>Introduction</u>

Transitioning from high school to college can be a stressful change for any student, especially a student with a disability. It is a fact that 11.1% of freshman entering college in 2011 in the United St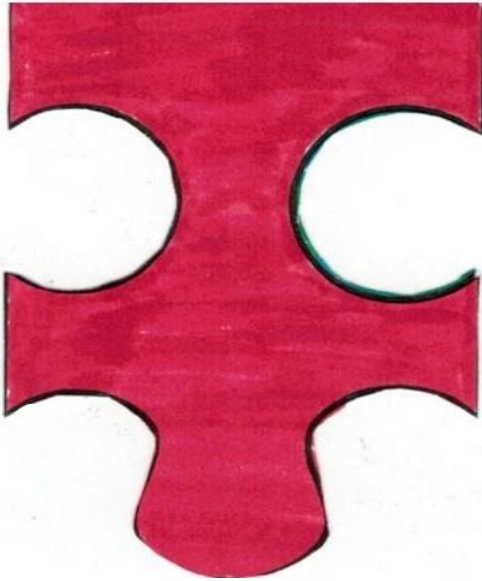ates had a disability (U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, 2016). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2015) currently estimates that 1 in 68 children are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). People with high-functioning autism (HFA) experience difficulties with verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as social interactions. Communication plays a vital role in every aspect of one's life. When this is impaired, occupational performance is hindered. Without proper communication strategies, individuals cannot effectively engage in everyday activities. This often leads to exclusion from peers and difficulty in building or maintaining relationships. Throughout the group sessions, members will learn how to identify nonverbal communication and will then practice using it. The sessions following will teach conversation patterns and will allow time to practice. By the end of the group, group members will be educated on many different forms of communication strategies to help them be successful in meaningful occupations.

Individuals with ASD are at a greater risk for peer rejection and social isolation, which means there is a strong need for interventions aimed at improving reciprocal social interaction skills, especially with peers (Freitag et. al, 2015). Throughout the group sessions, the members will be instructed on communication and social interaction skills which will then impact their maladaptive behavior. As a result, improvements in overall occupational performance and engagement will transpire.

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this group protocol is to provide college-based occupational therapy group sessions to enable participation for individuals with HFA and promote successful engagement in a college context. Throughout the group sessions, activities will be completed to specifically address communication and social interaction skills, and will be a closed group consisting of eight-ten students, male and female, with HFA between the ages of 18-25 years old. An occupational therapist will facilitate the session. Each young adult student will be paired with a peer-mentor from the Student Organization and Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program. Exclusion criteria for this group will include severe conduct disorders or prominent behavioral issues.

The overall goals and rationale of this protocol are to improve nonverbal and verbal conversation skills. Improving these skills address some of the barriers people with HFA experience in social situations. The use of role-playing social skills helps participants learn foundational skills (Gutman, Raphael, Ceder, Khan, Timp, & Salvant, 2010a). The goals address skills to enhance group members' engagement in effective communications and social interactions in everyday situations in a college setting.

Information for the Occupational Therapist

Occupational Therapist Role

- To lead and facilitate group discussion.
- To educate group members on communication and social interaction skills.
- To collaborate with the students to promote engagement and discussion during the sessions.
- To educate and collaborate with the mentors from the Student Organization for Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program.
- To utilize therapeutic reasoning skills to empower students' learning.
- To utilize clinical reasoning skills to enable students to learn and apply knowledge into the college context.
- To apply the concepts of the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) throughout each session.

Timing of Facilitation

Each group session was designed to be completed in a sequential manner. The focus of the group protocol was to promote engagement in a college setting. Students will learn communication and social skills through a variety of activities including role-playing, peer-mentorship, and interaction with other group members. This product was intended for implementation one time per week for 14 weeks with each session being 90 minutes. The product includes a pre-and post-session for the peer-mentors and a 12-week group protocol designed for young adult students with high-functioning autism (HFA). Additional time scheduled outside of class would enable students to practice these enablement skills with their peer-mentor in-vivo.
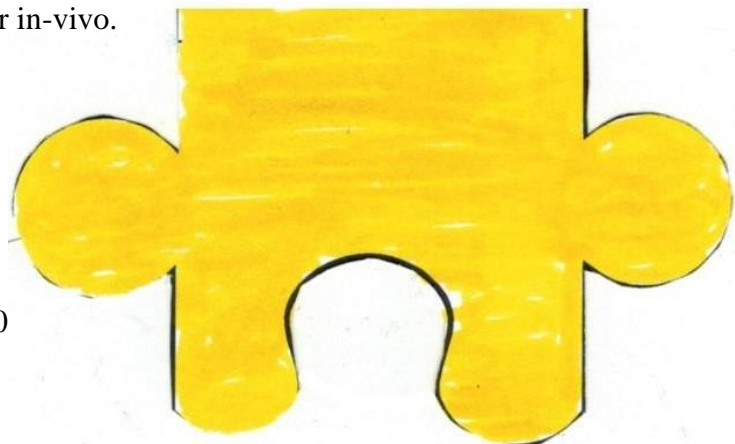
Overarching Goals

- **Overarching Goal #1:** Group members will appropriately recognize and express emotions within a conversational context.
- **Overarching Goal #2:** Group members will demonstrate conversation skills within the college context.
- **Overarching Goal #3:** Group members will engage in social interactions within the college context.
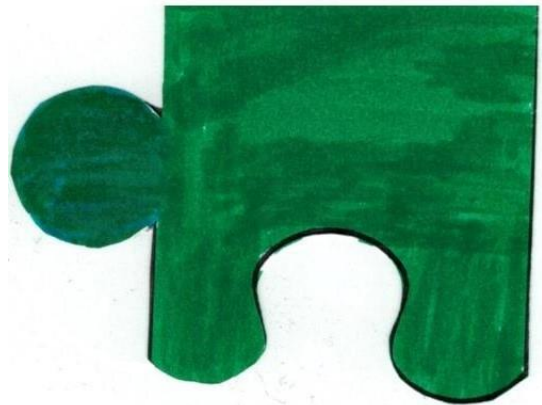
Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement

The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) was used while creating the group protocols. This model is used by occupational therapists to engage a person in aspects of daily life, including self-care, productivity, and leisure (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007).
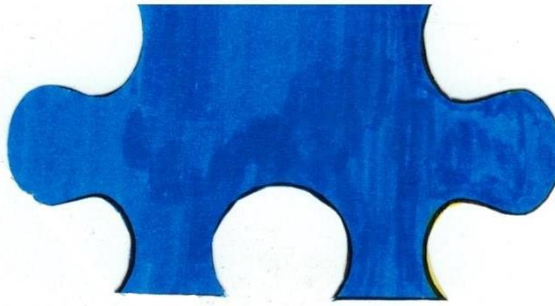
Basic Assumptions of the CMOP-E Applied to Students with HFA in a College Setting

- Occupation affects health and well-being— in college setting, occupations (self-care, productivity, and leisure) are where students have a sense of belonging with their peers. This allows for satisfaction with a person's self which is important to his or her daily lives'. Examples include: student occupations such as writing papers, communicating with peers and professors, and social participation inside and outside of the classroom in the college setting. These occupations promote health and well-being as they each give a student a sense of self and satisfaction as they complete these activities in a college setting.
- Occupation organizes time and brings structure to living— as a student engages in a college setting, they will begin to establish useful habits and routines for communication and social participation. These habits and routines help structure engagement in occupations with peers within the college setting.
- Occupation brings meaning to life— when a student engages in college, this brings sense of self, culture of self, and culture of college. A specific example includes completing group projects while engaging in social participation with peers, which results in a sense of satisfaction and meaning to life.
- Occupations are idiosyncratic— occupations are uniquely personal to everyone. Peer mentors are utilized in this project as they can establish rapport with group members to have the students feel like the occupation of participating in college is a unique and personal experience to everyone.

(Townsend & Polatajko, 2007)

CMOP-E Therapeutic Strategies

Enablement Skills

- **Adapt:** Students accommodate skills to fit the college setting.
- **Advocate:** Students develop and express their needs in a college environment.
- **Coach:** Occupational therapist and peer-mentors will guide and support students.
- **Collaborate:** Power-sharing between occupational therapist and students to work towards a common goal.
- **Consult:** Occupational therapist brainstorm ideas with students to integrate skills in a college context.
- **Coordinate:** Students identify campus resources.
- **Design/Build:** Students develop goals and strategize a plan to achieve them.
- **Educate:** Occupational therapists teach students strategies to be successful in a college setting.
- **Engage:** Students participate in various aspects of the college environment.
- **Specialize:** Students collaborate with peer-mentors of the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program.

(Townsend & Polatajko, 2007)
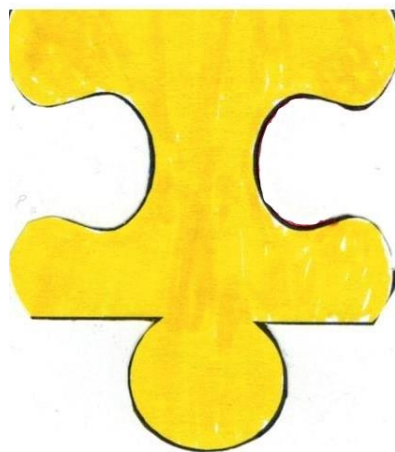
Key Concepts and Terminology

- **Competence:** The knowledge and ability to perform in activities.
- **Engagement:** The ability to be involved with or without participation.
- **Empowerment:** To build confidence and enable power-sharing.
- **Occupational Engagement:** To use communication and social skills to maximize participation in a college setting.
- **Occupational Performance:** The result of successful occupational engagement.
- **Participation:** To be involved in and do college activities.
- **Satisfaction:** To be pleased with a person's occupational performance.
- **Spirituality:** A sense of self that gives meaning to activities and connection and engagement in their context.

(Townsend & Polatajko, 2007)
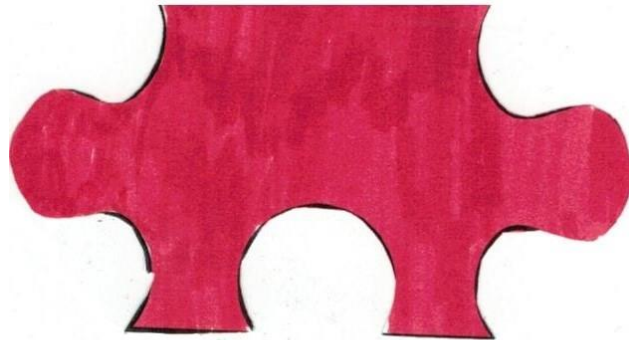
CMOP-E Therapeutic Process

1. Enter/Initiate
2. Set the Stage
3. Assess and Evaluate
4. Agree on Objectives and Plan
5. Implement Plan
6. Monitor/Modify
7. Evaluate the Outcomes
8. Conclude/Exit

(Townsend & Polatajko, 2007)

Assessments

Canadian Occupational Performance Measure

The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) is a CMOP-E assessment and is used to gain the perspective of the student. Administration of the COPM will be used as an outcomes measure for the peer-mentors will be in the pre-and post-sessions. Administration of the COPM will be used as an outcomes measure for the group members in sessions one and twelve. The COPM will also be used to set goals for individual students. The instrument measures three domains by a semi-structured interview identifying satisfaction with performance, as well as performance problems on a scale of 1-10 (Asher, 2007).

- Domains:
  - Self-care: care for body, mind, and spirit
  - Productivity: organization and time management skills
  - Leisure: social interactions and activities

Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills

The Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS) is a Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) assessment used to complement the COPM. The ACIS assesses individual students' skills during an activity in session two through skilled observation by the peer-mentors of the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program. The instrument measures three domains of communication and interaction skills on a four-point scale: competent, questionable, ineffective, or deficient (Asher, 2007).

- Domains:
  - Physicality: personal space and boundaries
  - Information Exchange: reciprocal communication
  - Relations: interaction between others
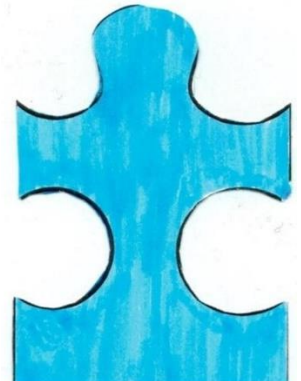
Structure of Cole's Seven Steps Group Sessions:

- **Introduction:** welcoming to the group, stating objectives, answering questions, setting the mood, stating expectations of the group, explaining the purpose clearly, brief outline of the session, and warm-up activity

- **Activity:** appropriate timing, therapeutic goals or objectives, understanding the physical and mental capacities of the group members, having the confidence and knowledge as a leader, and recognizing when to adapt and grade the activity

- **Sharing:** invite each member to share experiences or examples, accept and acknowledge group responses, ask for group members to volunteer, and allow for group members to have some control of the group

- **Processing:** feelings about the experiences, revealing relevant information, and nonverbal and verbal aspects of the group

- **Generalizing:** acknowledge the cognitive aspects of the group, independent decisions may be made, articulate the agreement and disagreement statements of the group, and understand the group's energy and drive

- **Application:** understanding of the principles learned throughout the group, verbalize the significance of the session, and problem-solve ways group members can utilize the group session to apply the learned information

- **Summary:** verbalize the significance of the group, restate objectives to make sure they were met, answer any final questions, summarize the session, thank the group members for being involved, and end the group on time

(Cole, 2012)

Application of CMOP-E

10 Key Enablement Skills	Occupational Therapy Application of Enablement in Group Session
Adapt	The occupational therapist will grade the session activities to meet the demands of the group members. The activities are designed for the student to use skills he or she already has and adapt them to the specific context of the college setting.
Advocate	The occupational therapist will simulate discussion throughout the sharing, processing, generalizing, and application stages of the group session in order for students to use conversation and social skills effectively to communicate with their peers and professors.
Coach	The occupational therapist will guide and encourage group members throughout the sessions in order to promote appropriate conversation and social skills.
Collaborate	The occupational therapist will use power sharing through group decision making and acknowledgment of the students with empathy and trust to achieve positive results.
Consult	The occupational therapist will ask for input from each group member in order to exchange views and confer.
Coordinate	The occupational therapist will integrate and synthesize information in order for the group members to facilitate conversation skills among each other.
Design/Build	The occupational therapist will design the activity to build strategies for future conversations and utilization of social skills.
Educate	The occupational therapist will emphasize reviewing skills through the discussion of appropriate and inappropriate communication and social skills in the college context.
Engage	The students will engage in discussion throughout the sessions.
Specialize	Discussion will be facilitated in the sessions in order to empower the students.

(Townsend & Polatajko, 2007)

Cultural: expectations and adhering to university policies, attending classes for degree, stigma around disabilities

Social: interactions among peers, advisors, and professors

Physical: size of college, location of college from student's home

Institutional: seeking available resources

Environment: College or University setting which demands a higher level of communication and social skills for success.
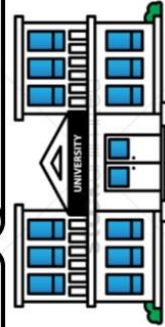
Productivity: studying, attending classes, completing homework, participating in classes, seeking help from instructors

Leisure: socializing, going to college activities, participating in college groups, building relationships

Occupation: The bridge between the person and the environment, enable a greater level of occupational performance and engagement. The areas of productivity and leisure support a person's occupational performance within the college context. Peer-mentors support persons with HFA to engage in productive and healthy leisure activities within the college environment.

Affective: Thoughts and emotions

Cognitive: Average to higher than average IQ

Spirituality: Sense of belonging

Person: Young adult with High-Functioning Autism (HFA) who has difficulty with communication and social skills, especially in new environments.

Townsend, E. A., & Polatajko, H. J. (2007). *Enabling occupation II: Advancing an occupational therapy vision for health, well-being and justice through occupation*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists.

Group Protocol Agenda

- **Peer-Mentor Pre-Session: Introduction to *Putting the Pieces Together***
  - Educate Peer-Mentors about the *Putting the Pieces Together* Group
- **Session 1: Introduction of Group**
  - Introduce Group Members
  - Set Guidelines and Expectations
  - Administration of COPM to Group Members
- **Session 2: Emotional Expression and Vocabulary**
  - Administration of ACIS (peer-mentors of SOAR to Group Members)
  - Healthy Emotional Vocabulary
  - Benefits of Emotional Expression
- **Session 3: Structure of a Conversation**
  - Communication Skills
  - Develop Relationships
- **Session 4: Creative Activity and Conversation Guide**
  - Social Skills
  - Develop Relationships
  - Show Interests of Others
- **Session 5: Communicating in Tight Spots**
  - Communicate in Difficult Situations
- **Session 6: Two-Way Relationships**
  - Communication Skills
  - One-Way and Two-Way Relationships
- **Session 7: Understanding Your Personal Boundaries**
  - Appropriate Personal Boundaries
- **Session 8: Setting Boundaries**
  - Setting Personal Appropriate Boundaries
  - Communication Skills with Boundaries
- **Session 9: Creative Love, Creating Love**
  - Fostering Close Relationships
- **Session 10: Friendship Quilt**
  - Positive Qualities of Oneself and Others
  - Encouragement of Healthy Friendships
- **Session 11: Supportive Relationships**
  - Qualities of Supportive People
  - Establishing Boundaries to Maintain Supportive Relationships
- **Session 12: Wrap-Up**
  - Review Sessions 1-11
  - Administration of COPM
  - Pizza party to celebrate group's achievements
- **Peer-Mentor Post-Session: Conclusion to Program**
  - Administration of COPM to Peer-Mentors
  - Reflection of *Putting the Pieces Together*

Supplies and Costs

- Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) Manual and 100 forms: $29.51
- Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS): $40.00
- Post-it Easel Pad: $24.99
- Sharpie (2): $1.79
- Ball: $3.00
- Pack of pens: $4.88
- Whiteboard marker: $1.79
- Notebook: $0.25
- Handouts ($0.05 each): $30
  - Copies of Enablement Skills Handout (Appendix A) for each peer-mentor (8-10)
  - Copies of Group Protocol Agenda (Appendix B) for each peer-mentor (8-10)
  - Copies of the Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS) for each of peer-mentor (16-20)
  - Emotions Plus Handout for each group member (Appendix C)
  - Structure of a Conversation Handout for each group member (Appendix D)
  - Introduction Handout for each group member and peer-mentor (Appendix E)
  - Creative Activity and Conversation Guide Handout for each group member and peer-mentor (Appendix F)
  - Communicating in Tight Spots Handout for each group member and peer-member and spare copies (Appendix G)
  - Communicating in Tight Spots boxes cut out and each taped to an index card
  - Two-Way Relationships Handout for each group member (Appendix H)
  - Understanding Your Personal Boundaries Handout for each peer-mentor

and group member (Appendix I)

- o Specific boundaries written on the Post-It easel board
- o Setting Boundaries Handout for every peer-mentor and group member (Appendix J)
- o Creative Love, Creating Love Handout for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix K)
- o Friendship Quilt Handout for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix L)
- o Supportive Relationships Handout for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix M)
- o Review Question Handout for the occupational therapist (Appendix N)
- Magazines (bring old ones): $0.00
- Tissue Paper: $1.00
- Crayons: $3.00
- Paper: $5.00
- Colored pencils: $5.00
- Glue: $1.00
- Construction paper: $10.00
- Scissors: $1.00
- Index Cards: $1.00
- Hula hoop for each person: $20.00
- Markers: $2.00
- Pizza: $50.00
- Soccer ball with written numbers 1-10: $10.00
- Scotch Tape: $1.00
- **Grand Total of Supplies: $246.21**

Useful Resources

Below are useful textbook references to assist in facilitation of the group. Under each textbook is a brief description.

Bastable, S. B., Gramet, P., Jacobs, K., & Sopczyk, D. L. (2011). *Health professional as educator: Principles of teaching and learning.* Mississauga, Ontario: Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC.

This textbook focuses on the role of a health professional as an educator for all clients, staff, and students. The authors use a wide range of strategies to implement into a clinical setting, including descriptions of learning styles, teaching plans, and instructional methods for a variety of populations.

Taylor, R. R. (2008). *The intentional relationship: Occupational therapy and use of self.* Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Co.

The author of this textbook describes *Six Therapeutic Modes* for an occupational therapist to facilitate group sessions through mode shifting. The author describes the *Intentional Relationship Model* which includes components of a client and therapist relationship. Also involved in this textbook are steps of interpersonal reasoning as the occupational therapist guides the relationship for purposeful and meaningful interactions.

Townsend, E. A., & Polatajko, H. J. (2007). *Enabling occupation II: Advancing an occupational therapy vision for health, well-being and justice through occupation.* Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists.

This textbook is beneficial as it describes the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) Model used to guide the group sessions. It has descriptions of the domains and enablement skills as these are used during each session.

Peer-Mentor Pre-Session: Introduction to *Putting the Pieces Together*

Purpose: The purpose of this informal session is to educate the peer-mentors of the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program about *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills* group, as well as the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E).

Objectives:
1. Peer-mentor students will be able to describe their role as a peer-mentor within the parameters of the group protocol.
2. Peer-mentor students will understand the CMOP-E and the concepts and assessment.
3. Peer-mentor students will be able to implement the Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS).

Supplies:
- Copies of Enablement Skills Handout for each peer-mentor (See Appendix A)
- Copies of Group Protocol Agenda for each peer-mentor (See Appendix B)
- Copies of the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) for each peer-mentor
- Copies of the Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS) for each of peer-mentor

Role of Peer-Mentor: Welcome and thank the peer-mentors of the SOAR program for being involved with *Putting the Pieces Together*. The role of a peer-mentor includes assisting the occupational therapist with facilitation of the group, collaborating with the group members who are young adult students with high-functioning autism (HFA), role-

playing activities, assisting in administering assessments, and participating in the group sessions. SOAR peer-mentors are also expected to engage in college activities with their participant (group member) to fulfill their three-hour requirement. Assign group members to the peer-mentors at this time.

Therapeutic Rapport: Explain to the peer-mentors the importance of therapeutic rapport in order to establish a relationship. This includes developing mutual trust and respect, communication, and collaboration between each other. The use of therapeutic rapport results in a fostered relationship between the group member, peer-mentor, and therapist.

Enablement Skills: Distribute enablement skills handout (Appendix A) to each peer-mentor. Explain how communication and social interaction skills learned in the group sessions will be guided by the CMOP-E. Review the ten enablement skills and how they will influence the group sessions. The enablement skills used throughout the sessions assist the young adult students to achieve occupational performance and engagement, as well as a sense of self and meaning (spirituality).

Goals: Describe how goals will be implemented in the group. This is important because the peer-mentors will be assisting in the creation of goals with the collaboration of the young adult students in session one when the COPM is being administered. It is imperative that goals are client-centered, occupation-based, achievable, specific, and have a timeline. This is the COAST format.

Canadian Occupational Performance Measure: Explain the COPM. It will be administered by the occupational therapist with the assistance of the peer-mentors during the first and twelfth sessions. It is being used as both an evaluation tool and outcomes measure. This is also known as a pretest and a posttest to evaluate the effectiveness of the protocol as it addresses an individual's' perception of self-care, productivity, and leisure. Goals will be developed during the first session following the completion of the assessment. The peer-mentors will be consulting with the young adult students during

the first session to design goals and collaborate with the group during the twelfth session to evaluate the effectiveness of the sessions. Also, the COPM will be administered to the peer-mentors at this time, in order to reduce biases and educate peer-mentors for when the group members complete the assessment.

Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS):
Explain the ACIS. The ACIS will be assessed by the peer-mentors in the second session. This assessment uses observational skills of the peer-mentors while the young adult students complete a meaningful activity. Discuss examples of observations skills relevant to the ACIS.

Group Protocol Agenda: Hand a copy of the group protocol agenda (Appendix B) to each peer-mentor. Explain that the group will meet one time per week for 90 minutes for twelve weeks and the following topics will be discussed on the handout.

<u>Session 1: Introduction to Group</u>

Purpose of the Group: To introduce group members to each other, set guidelines and expectations of the group, and administer the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) as a pre-test.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, coach, collaborate, consult, design/build, educate, engage, specialize

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Post-it Easel Pad
- Sharpie
- Ball
- Pens
- Index Cards
- COPM for each group member
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will develop both individual and group goals.
2. Group members will verbally participate in the group.
3. Group members will understand the overall purpose of the group.
4. Group members will be able to describe the expectations for acceptable behavior to promote engagement of the group.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome everyone. It is great to see you here. My name is _____. I also want to introduce the students who are here from the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources or SOAR program. They will be participating with this group as peer-mentors. (Introduce students and who their group member is.) The purpose of this group is to learn or adapt communication and social skills to be able to confidently and fully engage in the college experience. There will be two assessments completed throughout this group. The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) and Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS) will be administered. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) Each session will be 90 minutes long for twelve weeks. We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity, and the remaining time will be spent in discussion. The group expectations are participation from everyone, politeness, and confidentiality.

This is called a full-value contract in which the group collaborates or works together to determine acceptable behavior to promote engagement and participation. This contract will be displayed throughout the group sessions and can be added to if necessary. Does anyone have questions? (Answer any questions group members may have.) To start, let us all go around and learn each other's names. (Grab the ball). We will stand in a circle and toss this ball to each other. Before tossing the ball, you have to say the name of the person you are tossing it to. This continues until everyone has caught the ball. The ball has to end with the person who has started it. Repeat this activity multiple times getting faster each time. (Notice eye contact of each student.) Who would like to start first? Thank you everyone for participating.

Step 2 – Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) Activity (30 min)

At this point we are going to have you complete the first assessment called the COPM to better understand how you feel about your performance in various aspects of your life. This will allow us to make goals and collaborate with each other. (Hand out the COPM to each participant.) The peer-mentors will be available to help with any

questions you may have and to assist with goal-setting. Please write your goal(s) on this index card. (Distribute index cards and pens.)

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and share with each other one individual goal per person, including peer-mentors. (Facilitate discussion of goals, how goals are meaningful, and how achieving goals leads to satisfaction.)

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

How do you think this group will have meaning for you? Now, let us collaborate as a group to create one common goal. (Work together with the group to create goals and guide or coach the young adult students.) How does this activity enable you to participate in the college setting? How was this activity easy for you to participate in? How was this activity hard for you to participate in? How satisfied are you with your goals? (Discuss importance of displaying goals prominently.)

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar goals such as…

And some of you have chosen to create other goals like…

Some differences between the goals include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to explain what the group is, meet each other, and complete the COPM. How can you use the goals you designed today throughout this semester? Where will you display your goals in order to enable you to reflect on them daily?

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everybody feel that the objectives have been met? Next week, we are going to be discussing emotional vocabulary and the benefits of emotional expression. Does anyone have any

other questions? (Answer questions if anyone has them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Session 2: Emotional Expressions and Vocabulary

Purpose of the Group: To administer the Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS), recognize the benefits of appropriate emotional expression, and facilitate a healthy emotional vocabulary.

Enablement Skills: Advocate, collaborate, educate, engage, specialize

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Post-it easel pad
- Sharpie
- Pens
- Whiteboard marker
- Assessment of Communication and Interaction Skills (ACIS)
- Emotions Plus Handout (See Appendix C)

Objectives:

1. Group members will develop a healthy emotional vocabulary.
2. Group members will recognize the benefits of emotional expression.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome everyone. It is great to see you here. To remind you, my name is _____. I also want you to recall the peer-mentor students who are here from the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources or SOAR program. The purpose of this group is to recognize the benefits of appropriate emotional expressions and assist you in having healthy emotional vocabulary. This is so that you are able to confidently participate and engage in the college experience. The peer-mentors will also be completing the second assessment called Assessment of Interaction and Communication Skills (ACIS) by observing each of their mentees later on in the session. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity, and the remaining time will be spent in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions about the full-value contract from last week? (Answer any questions group members may have.) To start, let us all go around in a circle and remind each other of our names. Let us also briefly talk about where we displayed our goals from last week. Who would like to start first? Thank you everyone for participating.

Step 2 – Emotions Plus Activity (30 min)
At this point, the SOAR peer-mentors are going to start observing their mentees for the ACIS. While they are doing that, we are going to do an activity called Emotions Plus. On this Post-It easel pad, I am going to write, "How are you feeling?" (write this with the sharpie on the easel pad). We are going to go around in a circle and please engage in answering this question (typically you will hear the following words as responses: "good", "fine", and "OK"). This session is about expanding your emotional vocabulary, so you can communicate effectively in college.

Okay, now let us discuss the consequences of NOT expressing emotions. (Facilitate discussion about what would happen if emotions are not expressed. Some suggestions may include: not articulating what a person wants, leading to sadness or disappointment, and not effectively elaborating what is on a person's mind, thus leading to a decrease in

occupational performance.) (Distribute handouts (Appendix C) and pens to each group member.) While we look at this handout, I want to explain to you that emotions rarely appear just one at a time. Also, emotions may not necessarily be positive or negative, and it can be helpful to think of them as comfortable and uncomfortable. Let us discuss the benefits of feeling both comfortable AND uncomfortable emotions. (Facilitate discussion; examples may include taking an exam in college and being excited to pursue a degree, but also being nervous about the content of the exam, etc.) Now let us circle one uncomfortable emotion and one comfortable emotion on the handout felt in the past few days.

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and share with each other how each of you felt about completing this activity (Acknowledge group member responses).

I see everyone is done circling one uncomfortable and one comfortable emotion on their handout. Let us please share what we circled with the group. Who would like to start? (Have group members share.)

Thank you everyone for sharing. I am encouraging everyone to post this handout in a visible place for future use. It can be helpful as you continue your journey in your college career.

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

How do you think this activity will enable you to participate in the college setting? How do you think this activity was easy for you? How do you think this activity was hard for to participate in? How competent or knowledgeable do you feel you are with emotional expression and vocabulary?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to emotions such as…
And some of you have different responses to emotions like…

Some differences between the emotions activity include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to collaborate with each other about emotional expressions and emotional vocabulary. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of how we are going to use these skills this week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everybody feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be discussing the structure of a conversation. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if group members have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills VIII: Reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 18). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.
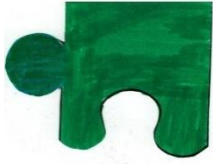
Session 3: Structure of a Conversation

Purpose of the Group: To build communication skills for young adult students with HFA in order to adapt conversation skills needed to meet and develop relationships with other people in a college context.

Enablement Skills: Advocate, collaborate, design/build, educate, engage, specialize

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. There should also be eight separate tables with two chairs at each table for teams to practice the activity with minimal distractions. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies and Costs:

- Pens
- Structure of a Conversation Handout (Appendix D)
- Introduction Handout (Appendix E)
- Whiteboard marker
- Paper

Objectives:

1. Group members will be able to verbalize two appropriate conversation greetings and one conversation farewell examples.
2. Group members will be able to identify the three parts of a conversation.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced expression

of emotions and healthy emotional vocabulary. Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? Thank you for sharing these examples. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions about the full-value contract from last week? (Answer any questions group members may have.)   To start, let us all go around and share what you might find difficult about having a conversation with someone. Who would like to participate first? (Have everyone tell what is difficult for them and write it down.) Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Structure of a Conversation Activity (30 min)

Conversations can be separated into three parts or stages: starting, replying, and ending. Today we will learn about each of these separately. (Structure of a Conversation Handout (Appendix D) will be handed out.) The peer-mentors will assist with this activity by collaborating and participating with you about conversations. Now that everyone has their handout, please take 15 minutes to complete the worksheet. (Allow for time.)

1. How to start a conversation (5 min)
   a) Greeting
   b) General questions
2. How to reply during a conversation (5 min)
   a) Appropriate topics
   b) Inappropriate topics
   c) Empathy
   d) Facial expressions
3. How to end a conversation (5 min)
   a) Watch for signals
   b) Farewells

Now that we have the handout finished, please move to a station to role-play conversation scenarios with your peer-mentor. (Allow 10 min.)

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share one new approach they learned. Please identify if it would be used to start, reply, or end a conversation.

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

What would you change or adapt in order to engage in this activity? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in? Why you think this activity will enable you to participate in the college setting? How competent or knowledgeable do you feel with conversation structure?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to the conversation structure such as…
And some of you have different responses to conversations like…
Some differences between the conversation activity includes…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to teach you conversation skills required for social interactions with other people. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of how we are going to use these skills this week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

(Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they met the objectives? Next week we are going to build on this activity by practicing our three stages of conversation. Here is a worksheet to take home and complete. (Hand out Introduction Worksheet (Appendix

E)). Please bring this completed sheet with you next week. Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Cole, M. (2012). *Group dynamics in occupational therapy: The theoretical basis and practice application of group intervention.* (p. 9). Thorofare, NJ: SLACK Incorporated.

Session adapted from Miller-Wilson, K. (n.d.). Social Skills Activities for Adults with Autism. Retrieved from
http://autism.lovetoknow.com/Social_Skills_Activities_for_Autistic_Adults

Session 4: Creative Activity and Conversation Guide

Purpose of the Group: To build social skills in which people with HFA can meet and develop relationships with other people.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, advocate, collaborate, educate, engage, and specialize

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard with enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Copies of Creative Activity and Conversation Guide Handout for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix F)
- Paper
- Colored pencils
- Markers
- Glue
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will demonstrate the ability to have a conversation about a topic of their peer-partner's interest for 3 minutes.
2. Group members will appropriately express and recognize non-verbal cues during a conversation with their peer-mentor for 3 minutes.

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Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced verbal communication, and this week we are going further develop and adapt our verbal communication skills. Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) So to start, let us all go around and share what you have on your homework sheets from last week. Who would like to start first? (Have everyone tell what is difficult for them and write it down.) Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Creative Activity and Conversation Guide (30 min)

Each participant and peer-mentor have access to art supplies and is asked to make a piece of art representing someone or something special to them. This is a self-directed activity based on the individual's interpretation. Each piece will be displayed with the artist's name.

Participants pair off with their SOAR peer-mentors to practice using conversation skills. Conversations will be focused on this artwork with the intent of participants practicing communication about interests of their conversation partner. Each piece of art will be the topic of conversation for three minutes (per pair). Peer-mentors will start the conversation to role-model the activity. (The Creative Activity and Conversation Guide is in Appendix F.)

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share our one interesting fact they learned about

their partner's artwork. (Acknowledge group member responses).

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? How satisfied are you with your artwork? How do you think this activity will enable you to participate in conversations in the college setting? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in? How competent or knowledgeable do you feel you are in discussing other people's interests?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to discussing interests of other people such as…

And some of you have different responses to discussing interests of other individuals like…

Some differences between the conversation activity includes…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to teach you social skills needed for conversations with other people. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? (Remind them they have the guide to refer to and may take this home.) Let us all give one example of how we are going to use these skills this week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Do you feel you have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be discussing communicating in challenging situations. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from The National Autistic Society. (2017). Social interaction for adults and teens. Retrieved October 09, 2017, from http://www.autism.org.uk/socialskills
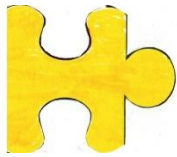
Session 5: Communicating in Tight Spots

Purpose of the Group: To understand how to communicate in difficult situations.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, advocate, coach, collaborate, educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard with enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Communicating in Tight Spots Handout for each participant and spare copies (See Appendix G)
- Scissors
- Scotch Tape
- Communicating in Tight Spots boxes cut out and each taped to an index card
- Index Cards
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will identify one difficult situation they have experienced.
2. Group members will express one "right way" to communicate in a difficult situation they have identified.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced communicating with each other after completing a creative activity. Does anyone have

any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) So to start, let us all go around and say an example of what we find challenging in a social situation. Who would like to share first? (Have everyone tell what is difficult for them and write it down.) Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Communicating in Tight Spots Activity (30 min)

Now we are going to continue with a communication activity. (Occupational therapist needs to have the Communicating in Tight Spots (Appendix G) boxes cut out and one box taped to each index card.) (Prepare the cards that may fit to each specific group members.) Explain to group members the concepts of the General Comments on the handout. Hand out the index cards to the young adult students and discuss the General Rules. The peer-mentors may assist in handing out the index cards.

After each group member has an index card, ask someone to volunteer to read the card. Encourage group members to consider one "right way" of communicating and one "wrong way" of communicating, keeping in mind that there is no one way of doing it wrong or right. The occupational therapist may probe further facilitation of discussion in order to encourage the group members to participate and engage in conversations.

The peer-mentors are encouraged to collaborate and coach with the young adult students to creatively role-play in social situations. Encourage group members to take the spare handouts with them and discuss the activity with a significant person in their life.

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share one new way they learned and identify

how they can adapt to a challenging situation. (Acknowledge group member responses).

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Why do you think this activity will enable you to participate in the college setting? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in? How competent or knowledgeable do you feel you are in engaging in conversations?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to having a difficult conversation such as…

And some of you have different responses to having difficult conversations like…

Some differences between the difficult conversations include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to explore how to communicate in challenging situations. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of how we are going to use these skills this week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be discussing two-way relationships. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills VIII: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 4). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Session 6: Two-Way Relationships

Purpose of the Group: To understand the role an individual has in one-way and two-way relationships.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, collaborate, educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard with enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Post-It Easel Board
- Sharpie
- Whiteboard marker
- Two-Way Relationships Handout for each student (See Appendix H)

Objectives:

1. Group members will identify one example of a "two-way relationship."
2. Group members will collaborate with peer-mentors to develop one relationship goal.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced communicating in challenging situations. Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately

30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion. Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) So to start, let us please list one example about how communicating was challenging. Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Two-Way Relationships Activity (30 min)

Now we are going to continue with a two-way relationship activity. I would like everyone to pretend that there is a good friend or family member listening to today's session. Please think about someone who has been involved in your care within the last few weeks or months.

(Write "Two-Way Relationship" on the Post-It Easel.) I would like one student mentor to record everyone's definitions and examples about what they think about a two-way relationship. (Distribute handout [Appendix G] and pen to each person.) Please fill out the handout individually and then we will discuss it together. (Give group members time to complete individually.)

With your peer-mentor, please create a two-way relationship goal. (Encourage power-sharing and discussion between each other about the responses they chose.)

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

I am encouraging each person to stand and share with the group their goal that they have created and who the goal relates to besides themselves.

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How do you think this activity will enable you to foster relationships in the college setting? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in? How competent or knowledgeable do you feel you are in engaging in conversations?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to two-way relationships such as…

And some of you have different responses to having two-way relationships like…

Some differences between the discussion of the two-way relationships include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to explore how to communicate in a 'give and take' relationship. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of a goal we would like to work on this week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be discussing personal boundaries. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills VIII: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 37). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.
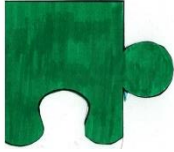
Session 7: Understanding Your Personal Boundaries

Purpose of the Group: To understand appropriate personal boundaries in relationships.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, collaborate, educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard with enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Hula hoop for each person
- Understanding Your Personal Boundaries Handout (Appendix I), copy for each peer-mentor and group member
- Post-It easel board
- Sharpie
- Colored Pencils
- Markers
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will develop a definition of personal boundaries.
2. Group members will verbalize at least two reasons why personal boundaries are important.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced interacting

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in two-way relationships. Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) So to start, we are going to do a different warm-up activity this week.   I would like everyone to grab a hula hoop and stand in it. (Have reasonable spacing between hula hoops, and not overlapping each other, to represent personal space.) Now, notice the distance between each other. What do you think of the distance? Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Understanding Your Personal Boundaries Activity (30 min)
(Have group members sit down.) Now we are going to continue with an activity called "Understanding Your Personal Boundaries." To begin, we are going to talk about relationships and personal boundaries. I would like each of you to share how you would define "personal boundaries", and I am going to write the definitions (with a sharpie) on the Post-It easel board. (Write definitions.)

Now I am going to distribute the handout activity (Understanding Your Boundaries Handout, see Appendix I) to each of you, as well as colored pencils and markers. You may use colored pencils or markers to outline the circles on your handout as we discuss them.

We are going to discuss the reasons to outline a *solid line* around "ME" and *dotted lines* around the others. (Have participants draw the solid and dotted lines on their handouts with the colored pencils or markers to be used as a colorful visual representation.) The *solid line* represents your individual rights and only yours. You can choose what and when to share. However, if you have *dotted lines*, these do not represent a sense of personal identity and meaning. We would most likely feel uncomfortable and exposed to

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or controlled by others around us. The *dotted lines* represent the ability for people in a relationship to move closer or further from us by our own choice, and boundaries are not static. This means that boundaries are dynamic, and they constantly move.

At this point, I would like you and your peer-mentor to discuss with each other the characteristics of the different types relationships associated boundaries. I am also encouraging you to discuss other characteristics of each types of relationships. After you are done discussing with each other, we are going to discuss as a whole group. (Talk about the discussions between the young adult students and peer-mentors as a whole group.)

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share one new characteristic they learned about boundaries and their effect on relationships. (Acknowledge group member responses).

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

What personal changes do you need to make in order to develop and maintain healthy and appropriate personal boundaries? How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to setting boundaries with others such as…

And some of you have different responses to setting boundaries with other individuals like…

Some differences between setting boundaries include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to understand personal boundaries in relationships. How

can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of a personal boundary goal we would like to work on this week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to discuss setting boundaries. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 42). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Session 8: Setting Boundaries

Purpose of the Group: To increase awareness of what is meant by personal boundaries and improve language skills to communicate boundaries.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, advocate, coach, collaborate, educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Setting Boundaries Handout (Appendix J) for every group member and peer-mentor
- Pencils for everyone
- Sharpie
- Post-It easel board
- Specific boundaries written on the Post-It easel board
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will advocate for themselves by expressing two approaches to communicating personal boundaries.
2. Group members will identify one person with whom they want to establish clear boundaries.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced personal boundaries within a relationship. Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) To start, we are going to do a warm-up activity.   Please reflect on your boundary goal from last week. Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Setting Boundaries Activity (30 min)

Now we are going to continue our discussion from last week about personal boundaries. This activity is called "Setting Boundaries." First, I would like to review our definitions of boundaries from last week. (Flip to definitions from last week on the Post-It easel board.) Does anyone have anything new they would like to add to the definitions?

I am going to distribute the handouts and pencils. Now, we are going to discuss examples of boundaries. With your peer-mentors, please discuss each of these different boundary examples: (Have these written on the Post-It easel board.)

- I do not permit smoking in my apartment.
- I do not loan my car.
- I sleep late on weekends.
- I never lend money.
- I only visit my in-laws (or other family members) once a month.
- I do not mix my work and my personal life.
- I only host one extended family dinner per year.

We are going to look at the handout and review the list of ways to communicate boundaries as a large group. (Share responses.) Thank you for sharing everyone.

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share and identify one personal boundary they need to establish immediately, and with whom. (Refer to "Who do I need to be establishing clear boundaries with?" question on handout.) (Acknowledge group member responses.)

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

Please turn your handout over so you are not looking at it. What can you recall from this handout? (Reinforce points as they are mentioned.) What personal adaptations do you need to make in order to develop and maintain healthy and appropriate personal boundaries? How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in?

Step 5 – Generalizing (3 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses to setting boundaries such as…
And some of you have different responses to setting boundaries like…
Some differences between setting boundaries include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to increase awareness of what is meant by personal boundaries, and to improve language skills to communicate boundaries. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of a goal we would like to work on this week about setting boundaries.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be going over fostering close relationships. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 41). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Session 9: Creative Love, Creating Love

Purpose of the Group: To provide a visual aid and expressive view of close relationships and to foster critical and creative ways of looking at them.

Enablement Skills: Advocate, collaborate, coordinate, design/build, educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Creative Love, Creating Love Handouts for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix K)
- Colored Pencils
- Markers
- Pens
- Sharpie
- Post-It easel board
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will recall one word that fosters love and one word that triggers anger.
2. Group members will identify two positive qualities they bring to a relationship.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you practiced setting personal boundaries and using language skills to communicate boundaries. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) To start, we are going to a warm-up activity. Please reflect on your setting boundaries goal from last week. Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Creative Love, Creating Love Activity (30 min)
Now we are going to discuss fostering relationships. This activity is called "Creative Love, Creating Love." Introduce the topic of fostering relationships and the vital importance of healthy relationships. (Facilitator may include relevant stories.) Ask young adults students why they believe fostering relationships and healthy relationships are essential in college.

Distribute handouts (Appendix K), pens, colored pencils, and markers. Once these supplies are handed out, ask group members to complete the handouts (may use colored pencils or markers if they so desire). After five minutes are up, please discuss with your peer-mentor what you wrote for each of the answers. Following this, we are going to discuss the handout as a whole group. I will write the responses on the Post-It easel board.

We are going to discuss the importance of honest, ongoing communications. (Stress the basics, e.g., expressing one's own reaction to situations or behaviors is usually more effective than blaming others.) I would like everyone to discuss a word or phrase that tends to foster love. I will also list these on the Post-It easel board. (Thanks for

sharing.) Next, let us discuss a word or phrase that triggers anger, and I will also list these on the Post-It easel board. (Thank you for sharing.)

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)
Now let us go around and have everyone share two positive qualities that they feel will foster a healthy relationship. (Cover up the Post-It easel board.) (Acknowledge group member responses.)

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)
What personal adaptations do you need to make in order to develop and maintain healthy and appropriate relationships? How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)
Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses about viewing close and appropriate relationships such as…
And some of you have different responses about viewing close and appropriate relationships like…
Some differences between the responses of fostering relationships include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)
The purpose of this session was to provide a visual aid and expressive view of close relationships and to foster critical and creative ways of looking at them. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of how you can apply fostering healthy relationships to the college setting in the upcoming week.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)
These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does

everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be going over increasing relationships by encouraging healthy friendships. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 39). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Session 10: Friendship Quilt

Purpose of the Group: To identify positive/interesting characteristics/qualities of oneself and others, and to increase relationships by encouraging healthy friendships.

Enablement Skills: Advocate, collaborate, design/build**,** educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Friendship Quilt Handouts for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix L)
- Glue
- Magazines
- Crayons
- Markers
- Colored pencils
- Tissue paper
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will identify two interesting characteristics of their peer-mentor.
2. Group members will build a list of qualities important in a friendly relationship.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you worked on fostering

healthy relationships. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) To start, we are going to a warm-up activity.   Please reflect on how you applied fostering healthy relationships from last week. Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Friendship Quilt Activity (30 min)

Now we are going to discuss increasing relationships by encouraging healthy friendships. This activity is called "Friendship Quilt." (Introduce the concept of friendship.) We are going to discuss qualities that are important in a friendly relationship.

Next, I am going to distribute the handouts (Appendix L) and pens/pencils. I would like you to interview your peer-mentor and find out at least four areas of interests. Examples may include: favorite food, sport, hobby, season, type of movie, card game, etc. These items may vary. You may take notes on the top part of the handout, but please do not write in the quilt square. You will have ten minutes to interview your peer-mentor.

We are going to decorate the friendship quilt handout from the information you asked your peer-mentor. Using any four areas of information you just gathered from your peer-mentor, I would like you to fill the four corners of the quilt. Magazines are available to cut out the representative items or you may choose to create drawings. The side panels can be completed with crayons, markers, colored pencils, or tissue paper. The center of the square is left blank. Please write your name in the center of it.

We are going to create a, "QUILT OF FAME" by mounting all of the squares on the wall

to form a Friendship Quilt. I would like you to share your piece of quilt and describe what you found out about your peer-mentors. These descriptions are some of the strategies you may use when developing healthy friendships and communicating with other people.

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share what they learned from interviewing their peer-mentors in relation to fostering healthy friendships. (Acknowledge group member responses.)

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

What personal adaptations do you need to make in order to encourage healthy relationships in college? How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How difficult was it for you to share the information of your peer-mentor in the whole group? Please explain if it was easy or hard for you to interview someone else? Why do you think this? How satisfied do you feel about the finished quilt?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses about identifying positive/interesting characteristics/qualities of others such as…
And some of you have different responses about viewing healthy friendships like…
Some differences between the responses of describing healthy relationships include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to identify positive/interesting characteristics/qualities of oneself and others and to increase relationships by encouraging healthy friendships. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of a goal we would like to work on this week about maintaining a healthy friendship.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week we are going to be going over supportive relationships. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 40). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Session 11: Supportive Relationships

Purpose of the Group: To improve supportive relationships by recognizing qualities of supportive people and establishing boundaries using discriminating levels of personal disclosures.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, advocate, coach, collaborate, design/build**,** educate, engage

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Supportive Relationships Handouts for every group member and peer-mentor (Appendix M)
- Pens
- Whiteboard marker

Objectives:

1. Group members will describe two qualities of supportive people.
2. Group members will describe their personal meaning of 'private'.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (15 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you identified positive/interesting characteristics/qualities of oneself and others and encouraged healthy friendships. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they

applied their skills over the last week? We will spend approximately 30 minutes doing an activity and spend the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) To start, we are going to a warm-up activity. Please reflect on your goal about maintaining a healthy friendship from last week. Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

Step 2 – Supportive Relationships Activity (30 min)

Now we are going to discuss recognizing qualities of supportive people and establishing boundaries using discriminating levels of personal disclosures. This activity is called "Supportive Relationships." I am going to distribute the handouts and pens, and I would like everyone to complete the handout. You may ask your peer-mentor any questions if you need any clarifications. Please do not complete the last section. We will do this later. We will do another activity in ten minutes.

Next, we are going to focus on the development of establishing boundaries by role-playing specific situations from the handout. For example, if someone indicated that 'financial problems' was a 'difficult situation' on their handout, then I would ask a group member and their peer-mentor to role-play that 'difficult situation' in front of the group. We are going to also role-play significant members in your lives. You and your peer-mentor may choose anyone, and we will take turns to role-play. Some examples may include:

- Noisy neighbor
- Meddling mother
- Interested in-law

I am also encouraging everyone to offer support and feedback to each other as this encourages positive relationships. (Involve everyone in the group before instructing

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group members to the last question on the handout.)

At this point, please fill out the last section of your handout.

Step 3 – Sharing (10 min)

Now let us go around and have everyone share what each person learned about this supportive relationship activity. (Acknowledge group member responses.)

Step 4 – Processing (15 min)

How difficult was it for you to role-play with your peer-mentor in front of the whole group?   What personal adaptations do you need to make in order to have supportive relationships in college? How do you think this activity will have meaning for you? Please explain if this activity will be helpful for you. Why or why not? How do you think this activity was easy for you to participate in? How do you think this activity was hard for you to participate in?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses about supportive relationships such as…
And some of you have different responses about viewing supportive relationships like…
Some differences between the responses of describing supportive relationships include…

Step 6 – Application (10 min)

The purpose of this session was to improve supportive relationships by recognizing qualities of supportive people and establishing boundaries using discriminating levels of personal disclosures. How can you use the skills you learned today during this upcoming week? Let us all give one example of a goal we would like to work on this week about maintaining supportive relationships.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does

everyone feel they have met the objectives? Next week is our last session. We are going to have a pizza party while reviewing all of the sessions. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.) Thank you everyone for participating.

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills IV: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 30). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Session 12: Wrap-Up

Purpose of the Group: To review group sessions one-eleven and celebrate the young adult students' achievements with a pizza party.

Enablement Skills: Adapt, advocate, coach, collaborate, consult, coordinate, design/build, educate, engage, specialize

Room Set-Up:

Arrange a classroom with a whiteboard and enough tables and chairs for 20 people. The occupational therapist will ensure that all supplies are ready and organized, and they will write the objectives on the board.

Supplies:

- Enough pizza for the entire group
- Ball with numbers 1-10 written on it
- Sharpie
- COPM assessment for each young adult student
- Pens
- Whiteboard marker
- One Review Question Handout (Appendix N)

Objectives:

1. Group members will answer two questions relating to communication and social skills learned during the group sessions.
2. Group members will reflect and share on meaningful experiences gained throughout the semester.
3. Group members will evaluate progress on COPM goals.

Description of Session Structure:

Step 1 – Introduction (35 min)

Welcome back everyone. It is great to see you here. Last week you identified how to improve supportive relationships by recognizing qualities of healthy relationships and establishing boundaries. The objectives of this session are written on the board. (Go over the objectives.) Does anyone have any questions about this or an example of how they applied their skills over the last week? We will spend approximately 40 minutes reviewing sessions one-eleven through an activity and the remaining time in discussion.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about our full value contract? (Answer any questions they may have.) Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer any questions they may have.) To start, we are going to a quick warm-up activity.   Please reflect on your goal about maintaining supportive relationships from last week. Who would like to share first? Thank you everyone.

At this point, I am going to have you fill out the COPM to see what progress was made on your goals. (Hand out each participant's COPM.) The peer-mentors will be available to help with any questions you may have. Please reflect with your peer-mentors on your goals from the COPM.

Steps 2, 3, and 4 (Activity, Sharing, and Processing) – Tossing Ball Review (40 min)

Now we are going to stand in a circle while completing a ball review activity. This ball (grabs ball) has numbers 1-10 on it. When you are tossed the ball by one of your group members, you will say the number aloud where your right thumb lands. I will then ask a question, and I would like for you to respond to it. (See review question handout in Appendix N.) The peer-mentors will also be participating. If you feel like you cannot answer the question, you may pass the ball to someone else for them to answer. However, you will have to answer their question and you will not get to pass the ball for a second time. Does anyone have any questions? (Acknowledge group member responses.)

(Have pizza available now for all peer-mentors and young adult students.)

Was it difficult for you to share your responses with the group? Why or why not?

Step 5 – Generalizing (5 min)

Overall, it sounds like several of you have similar responses about this semester such as…

And some of you have different responses about participating in this group like…

Some differences between the responses of describing this group this semester include…

Step 6 – Application (5 min)

The purpose of this session was to review group sessions one-eleven and celebrate your achievements from the group during this semester. How will you use these skills you learned from the group to engage in college next semester? Describe the most beneficial thing you learned from this group this semester. Let us all give one example of a goal we would like to work on next semester.

Step 7 – Summary (5 min)

These are the objectives that we have gone over today. (Restate objectives.) Does everyone feel they have met the objectives? Thank you so much for participating in *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills* group this semester. Does anyone have any other questions? (Answer questions if people have them.)

Peer-Mentor Post-Session: Conclusion to Program

Supplies:
- COPM assessment for each peer-mentor
- Pen
- Notebook paper

Enablement Skills: Adapt, collaborate, consult, coordinate, engage, specialize

COPM: Administer the COPM to the peer-mentors. (Answer any questions they may have.)

Reflection: Thank you so much for participating as a peer-mentor this semester for the *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills* group. I would like to ask you to reflect on this group, so we can make changes if need-be for the future. (Write down peer-mentors' responses.)

- What did you like about this group?
- Please explain any feedback you wish to give about this group?
- What was the most beneficial and/or meaningful aspect of this group for you?
- What did you learn about adapting any of your approaches for working with individuals with HFA this semester?
- How will you use the skills you learned from this group to assist you in the SOAR program in the future?
- How satisfied are you with your occupational performance and engagement in this group?

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Appendices

Appendix A

Application of CMOP-E

10 Key Enablement Skills	Occupational Therapy Application of Enablement in Group Session
Adapt	The occupational therapist will grade the session activities to meet the demands of the group members. The activities are designed for the student to use skills he or she already has and adapt them to the specific context of the college setting.
Advocate	The occupational therapist will simulate discussion throughout the sharing, processing, generalizing, and application stages of the group session in order for students to use conversation and social skills effectively to communicate with their peers and professors.
Coach	The occupational therapist will guide and encourage group members throughout the sessions in order to promote appropriate conversation and social skills.
Collaborate	The occupational therapist will use power sharing through group decision making and acknowledgment of the students with empathy and trust to achieve positive results.
Consult	The occupational therapist will ask for input from each group member in order to exchange views and confer.
Coordinate	The occupational therapist will integrate and synthesize information in order for the group members to facilitate conversation skills among each other.
Design/Build	The occupational therapist will design the activity to build strategies for future conversations and utilization of social skills.
Educate	The occupational therapist will emphasize reviewing skills through the discussion of appropriate and inappropriate communication and social skills in the college context.
Engage	The students will engage in discussion throughout the sessions.
Specialize	Discussion will be facilitated in the sessions in order to empower the students.

(Townsend & Polatajko, 2007)

Appendix B

Group Protocol Agenda

- **Peer-Mentor Pre-Session: Introduction to Putting the Pieces Together**
    - ○ Educate Peer-Mentors about the *Putting the Pieces Together* Group
- **Session 1: Introduction of Group**
    - ○ Introduce Group Members
    - ○ Set Guidelines and Expectations
    - ○ Administration of COPM to Group Members
- **Session 2: Emotional Expression and Vocabulary**
    - ○ Administration of ACIS (peer-mentors of SOAR to Group Members)
    - ○ Healthy Emotional Vocabulary
    - ○ Benefits of Emotional Expression
- **Session 3: Structure of a Conversation**
    - ○ Communication Skills
    - ○ Develop Relationships
- **Session 4: Creative Activity and Conversation Guide**
    - ○ Social Skills
    - ○ Develop Relationships
    - ○ Show Interests of Others
- **Session 5: Communicating in Tight Spots**
    - ○ Communicate in Difficult Situations
- **Session 6: Two-Way Relationships**
    - ○ Communication Skills
    - ○ One-Way and Two-Way Relationships
- **Session 7: Understanding Your Personal Boundaries**
    - ○ Appropriate Personal Boundaries
- **Session 8: Setting Boundaries**
    - ○ Setting Personal Appropriate Boundaries
    - ○ Communication Skills with Boundaries
- **Session 9: Creative Love, Creating Love**
    - ○ Fostering Close Relationships
- **Session 10: Friendship Quilt**
    - ○ Positive Qualities of Oneself and Others
    - ○ Encouragement of Healthy Friendships
- **Session 11: Supportive Relationships**
    - ○ Qualities of Supportive People
    - ○ Establishing Boundaries to Maintain Supportive Relationships
- **Session 12: Wrap-Up**
    - ○ Review Sessions 1-11
    - ○ Administration of COPM
    - ○ Pizza party to celebrate group's achievements
- **Peer-Mentor Post-Session: Conclusion to Program**
    - ○ Administration of COPM to Peer-Mentors
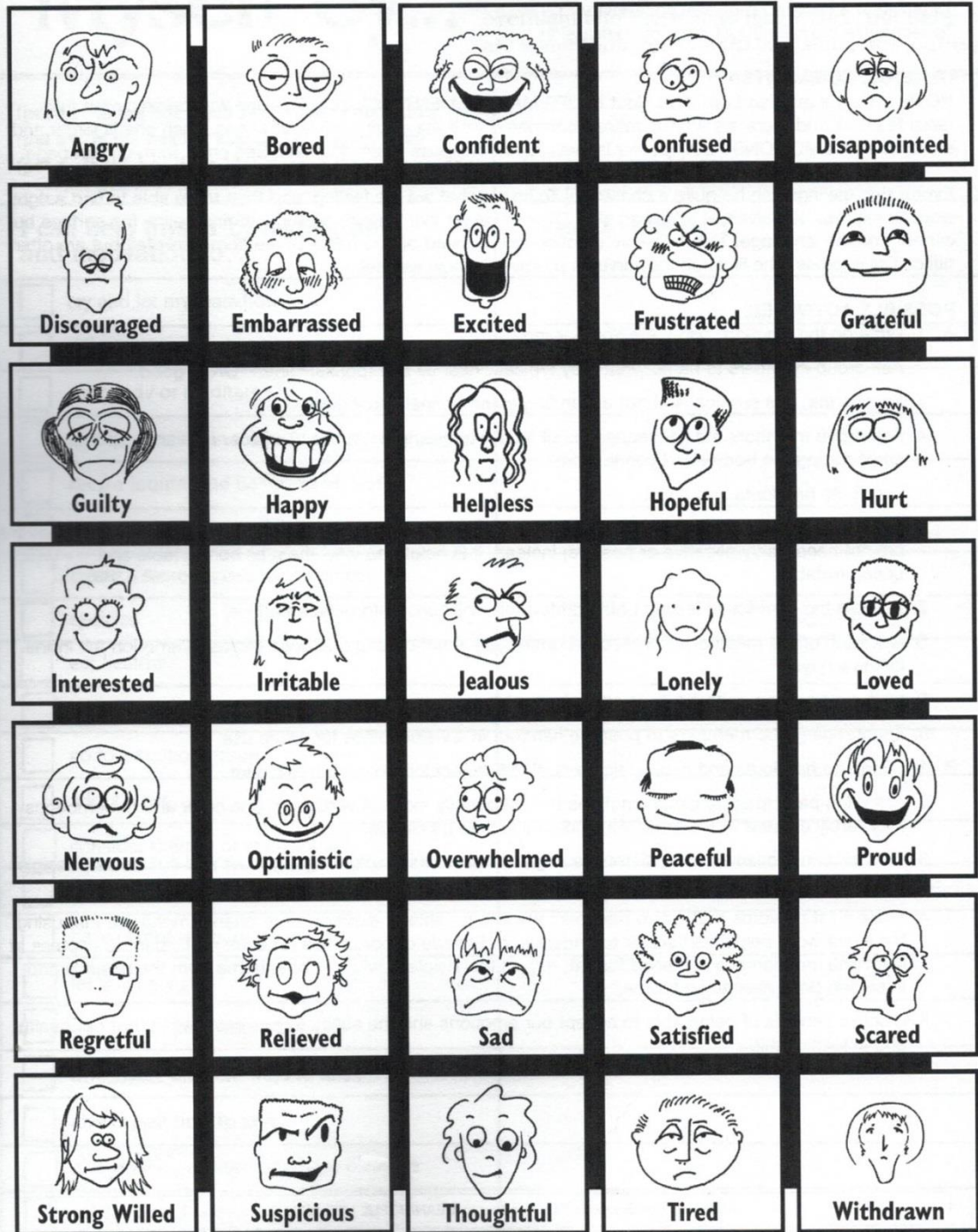   - ○ Reflection of *Putting the Pieces Together*

Appendix C

Emotions Plus Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills VIII: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 18). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Emotions Plus
a Lifetime of Feelings

Angry	Bored	Confident	Confused	Disappointed
Discouraged	Embarrassed	Excited	Frustrated	Grateful
Guilty	Happy	Helpless	Hopeful	Hurt
Interested	Irritable	Jealous	Lonely	Loved
Nervous	Optimistic	Overwhelmed	Peaceful	Proud
Regretful	Relieved	Sad	Satisfied	Scared
Strong Willed	Suspicious	Thoughtful	Tired	Withdrawn

Appendix D

Structure of a Conversation Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Miller-Wilson, K. (n.d.). Social Skills Activities for Adults with

Autism. Retrieved October 11, 2017, from

http://autism.lovetoknow.com/Social_Skills_Activities_for_Autistic_Adults

	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Greetings/General Questions		
Topics		
Empathy		
Facial expressions		
Farewells		

Appendix E

Introduction Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Cole, M. (2012). *Group dynamics in occupational therapy: The theoretical basis and practice application of group intervention.* (p. 9). Thorofare, NJ: SLACK Incorporated.

Directions: Answer the questions about yourself.

Hi, my name is _____ (your name)

I like:

1.

2.

3.

I appreciate or value:

1.

2.

3.

Some things I dislike or pet peeves:

1.

2.

3.

Someday I would like to:

1.

2.

3.

Creative Activity and Conversation Guide

Disclaimer:

Session Adapted from The National Autistic Society. (2017). Social interaction for adults and teens. Retrieved October 09, 2017, from http://www.autism.org.uk/socialskills

Good questions to ask:

- What is the topic of your picture?
- Why is this topic special to you?
- Can you tell me more about it?
- How did you get that idea?

Things to avoid:

- Criticism of the artwork
- Criticism of the topic
- Changing the topic of conversation to yourself

Appendix G

Communicating in Tight Spots Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills VIII: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 4). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

COMMUNICATING IN TIGHT SPOTS

Even the best communicator gets 'stuck' in conversations once in a while. These 'tight spots' can occur at work, at home, at parties, with friends or virtually anywhere in which someone asks you a question . . . and you are not really sure how to answer.

GENERAL RULES:
1. Think if you can, what might be a 'tight spot' in a conversation. Anticipate a question that might bring about anxiety or reason to pause.
2. Always feel free to say, 'I need to give that some thought.' Do not feel rushed to speak up if you are not ready.
3. Do not disclose or say anything that you will be sorry for later.

You are at a party and you meet some old family friends. They ask you how your husband is doing. (He is recovering at home after a two-week stay in a psychiatric unit.)	Someone makes a racial joke.	You are at a friend's house. At dinner, the host asks your opinion on a Presidential candidate you are not supporting.
You did not finish high school. A person who is interviewing you for a job asks you why you didn't finish.	You are grieving the loss of a family member. Someone who has not heard of her death asks you how she is.	Someone at work teases you about your religious beliefs.
A friend tells you that he is involved with a married woman.	You bump into an old friend who says, "You used to be so thin, I hardly recognized you now!"	Your friend drove you to a party. It is time to go home. Your friend is now too drunk to drive, but says "I'm fine . . . I can drive."
Your good friend asks you if you plan on dating someone whom she does not like.	Your sister wants you to go in on buying a gift for your parents' anniversary. She suggests a dollar amount that is triple what you planned on spending.	You see someone who looks vaguely familiar and he or she says "You remember who I am, don't you?"

Appendix H


Two-Way Relationships Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills VIII: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 37). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Two-Way Relationships

When we are not feeling well, we often allow others to help take care of us. These friends or family members may care for us by helping us get things done at home, at work or in the community. They might show care for us by calling, writing or visiting.

It is wise to make sure, even during difficult times, to maintain two-way relationships in which there is some degree of give and take. If not, people will eventually feel tired, 'burnt-out', taken advantage of or resentful.

RATE HOW YOU DO IN THE FOLLOWING: (poorly) 1   2   3   4   5 (really well)

1. Returning calls	1	2	3	4	5
2. Asking the caller about him / her self	1	2	3	4	5
3. Returning emails / letters	1	2	3	4	5
4. Asking the writer about him / her self	1	2	3	4	5
5. Calling / writing without needing anything	1	2	3	4	5
6. Sending birthday cards / gifts	1	2	3	4	5
7. Sending thank you notes	1	2	3	4	5
8. Reciprocal inviting (if someone asks you over for dinner, you invite them to your home)	1	2	3	4	5
9. Listening to your friends / family members' problems / concerns	1	2	3	4	5
10. Saying 'thanks' to the people who help you	1	2	3	4	5
11. Sending get-well notes or calling the ill person	1	2	3	4	5
12. Sending condolence cards or calling the person who is mourning	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL

TOTALS   **45-60 WOW!!!! Excellent!** You really do two-way relationships well!
        28-44 Good, but could use some improvement in at least one category.
        12-27 Not so good...you might want to look at two or three areas for improvement.

GOAL: _____

Appendix I

Understanding your Personal Boundaries Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 42). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Understanding Your Personal Boundaries

- might see often or rarely
- small talk/ conversation
- friendly
- limited emotional closeness
- shared interests
- mutual
- shared values
- flexibility
- comfort
- dependability
- risking is OK
- many feelings shared
- information exchanged
- mutuality, balance
- trust
- emotional closeness
- information freely exchanged

ME
privacy
choices
rights
identity

- non-judgemental
- sharing by choice
- unconditional love
- respect
- predictability
- specific
- no emotional closeness
- contextual limited trust
- camaraderie
- involved by choice
- share comfortable emotions
- strangers
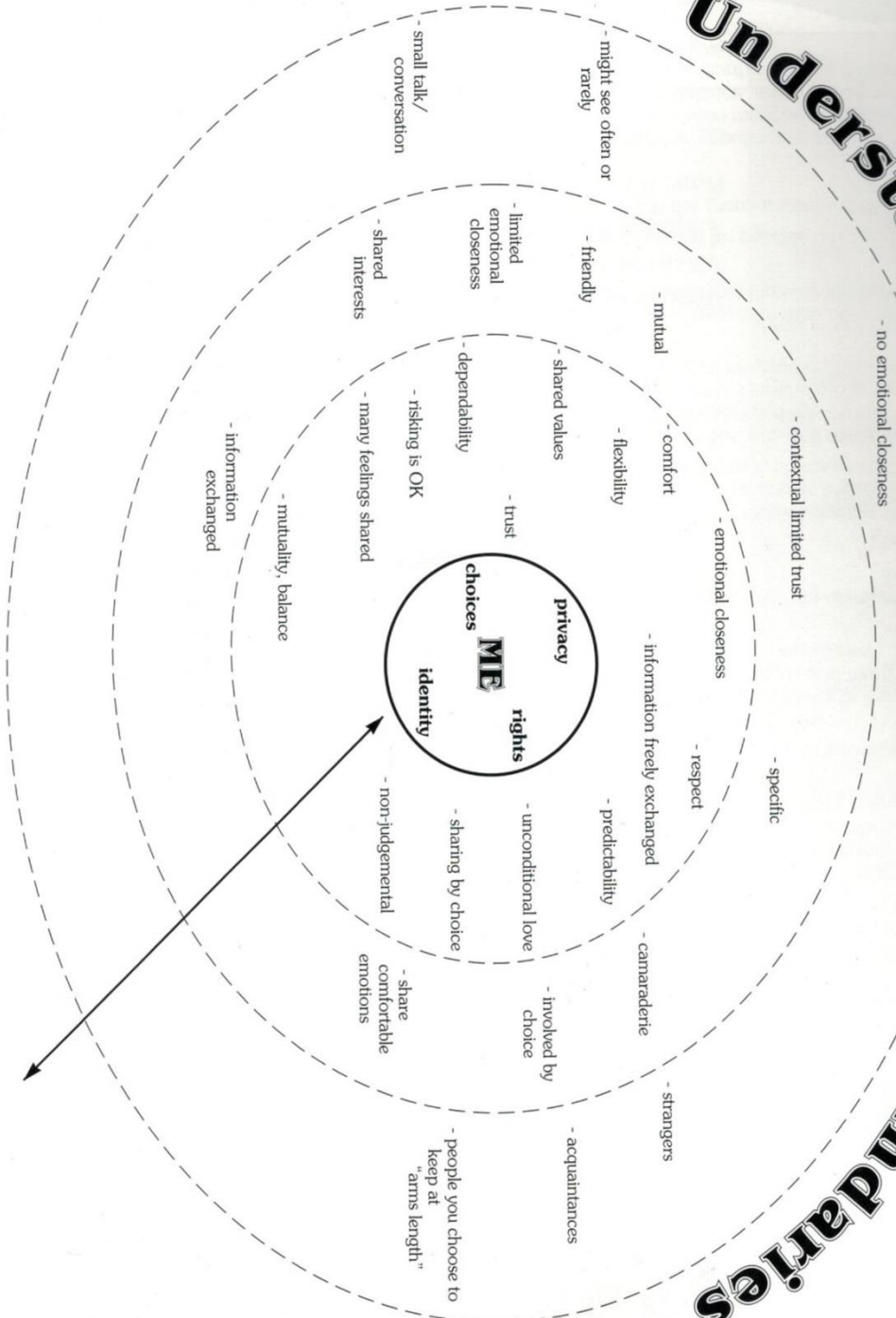- acquaintances
- people you choose to keep at "arms length"

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Appendix J

Setting Boundaries Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 41). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Setting Boundaries

What IS A BOUNDARY?

A boundary is an invisible "barrier" between you and other people – limits beyond which you will not go and beyond which others are not welcome.

It is healthy to have a good sense of where your feelings and opinions start and stop, and where the other person's feelings and opinions start and stop.

It is especially important to know how to set boundaries with "difficult" people – particularly with those individuals who are critical, controlling, manipulative, demanding or aggressive.

How DO I COMMUNICATE MY BOUNDARIES TO OTHER PEOPLE?

Here are some words to use:

I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT. _____

I DON'T WANT TO . . . _____

I'VE DECIDED NOT TO . . . _____

THIS IS WHAT I NEED. _____

THIS IS HARD FOR ME TO SAY . . . _____

I UNDERSTAND YOUR POINT OF VIEW BUT _____

I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT . . . _____

I'D RATHER NOT. _____

YES, I DO MIND _____

I'D PREFER NOT TO . . . _____

IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME. _____

I'LL THINK ABOUT IT. _____

THAT'S UNACCEPTABLE. _____

I GUESS WE SEE IT DIFFERENTLY. _____

Who DO I NEED TO BE ESTABLISHING CLEAR BOUNDARIES WITH?

_____

Appendix K

Creative Love, Creating Love Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 39). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Creative Love, Creating Love

1. On the opposite side of this paper, draw those closest to you. Briefly label their role in your life.

2. What qualities do you appreciate most in them?

_____

_____

_____

3. What positive qualities do you bring to these relationships?

_____

_____

4. Can you usually express your feelings in an encouraging, non-threatening manner?

_____

_____

5. Can you think of ways in which these relationships could be improved?

_____

_____

6. Love for others may be expressed in many different ways. Rank how you would choose to 'create love' for someone special. (1 most likely, number 7 or 8 least likely)

- ♥ a poem _____
- ♥ an art / craft project _____
- ♥ a special letter _____
- ♥ a handmade card _____
- ♥ a handmade gift _____
- ♥ a special food _____
- ♥ a needlework project _____
- ♥ other _____

Appendix L

Friendship Quilt

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills V: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 40). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

Friendship QUILT

Appendix M

Supportive Relationships Handout

Disclaimer:

Session adapted from Korb-Khalsa, K. L., & Leutenberg, E. A. (2004). *Life management skills IV: reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators.* (p. 30). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions.

SUPPORTIVE relationships

WHO TO TRUST?

WHAT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS?

WHO NOT TO TRUST?

WHAT NOT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS?
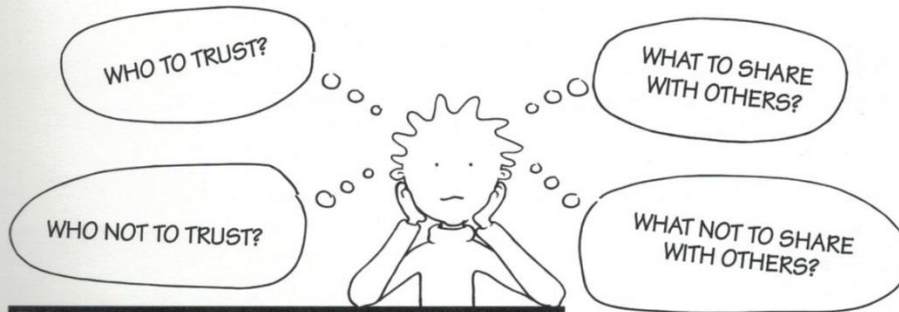
It is wise to trust "supportive people".

SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE...

- keep us from feeling alone
- offer approval
- are honest
-

- give strength
- want what is "best for us"
- help us to keep our heads up
-

- supply us with kind listening
- keep us from falling or sinking
- speak in favor of us
-

What would a supportive person say to you? _____

What would a supportive person do for you? _____

What would a supportive person do with you? _____

Knowing what information to share and when to share is a healthy boundary, and will assist in developing supportive relationships.

What does "private" mean to you? _____

Why do people need to keep some thoughts to themselves sometimes? _____

What happens to you if you tell everyone everything all the time? _____

How does that affect the way people treat you? _____

What type of information do you feel comfortable sharing? _____

Who are you most comfortable sharing private information with? _____

❶ Here's a list of "difficult situations". Circle one that you might have been up against recently or might be up against in the near future:

- financial problems
- significant other/ marital concerns
- feeling sick
- unwanted pregnancy
- religious/spiritual conflicts
- family problems
- feelings of fear

❷ Write the name of the person, in the center rectangle, with whom you'd share this information. ❸ Write on the inside of the square what you would feel comfortable sharing. ❹ Write on the outside of the square the type of information you'd feel uncomfortable sharing.

Appendix N

Review Question Handout

1. **Questions to use for #1**
   a. Demonstrate with a partner what appropriate personal space looks like.
   b. What is a consequence of not expressing your emotions fully?
   c. Give an example of an emotional response.

2. **Questions to use for #2**
   a. How do you think you have done this semester with appropriate topic conversations?
   b. Give an example of an appropriate conversation you have had with a classmate.
   c. Demonstrate a facial expression to indicate it is time to end the conversation.

3. **Questions to use for #3**
   a. How would you ask your professor for help with an assignment?
   b. How do you politely end a conversation you are not interested in?
   c. How have you adapted your conversations skills to meet new people over the course of this semester?

4. **Questions to use for #4**
   a. How do you respond if someone asks you to a party that you do not want to go to?
   b. How would you reply to a text message you received that says, "wanna hook up?"
   c. How do you respond if someone asks if they can copy your homework?

5. **Questions to use for #5**
   a. Describe a time you invited someone to do something with you.
   b. Tell us about a time when you called someone just to say, "hi, how are you?" without asking for anything.

      c. Describe how you would tell someone that you appreciate something they have done for you.

6. **Questions to use for #6**

      a. Explain what kind of conversation you would have with someone standing in line at the grocery store.

      b. What kind of information would you share with your professor?

      c. What kind of information would you share with a classmate you just met?

7. **Questions to use for #7**

      a. Give an example when you established a clear boundary with someone.

      b. How do you handle aggressive people trying to get you to do something you do not want to do?

      c. What do you do if someone asks to borrow money from you?

8. **Questions to use for #8**

      a. What positive qualities do you bring to a relationship?

      b. Describe a time you were able to express your feelings in an encouraging, non-threatening manner.

      c. How do you express your love for others?

9. **Questions to use for #9**

      a. Name one thing your peer-mentor or peer group member likes to do as a hobby.

      b. Name your peer-mentor or peer group member's favorite food.

      c. Describe how you reacted when your peer-mentor or peer group member did not like something you liked.

10. **Questions to use for #10**

      a. Give an example of how you coped with stress this semester.

      b. What does "private" mean to you?

      c. What would a supportive person say to you?
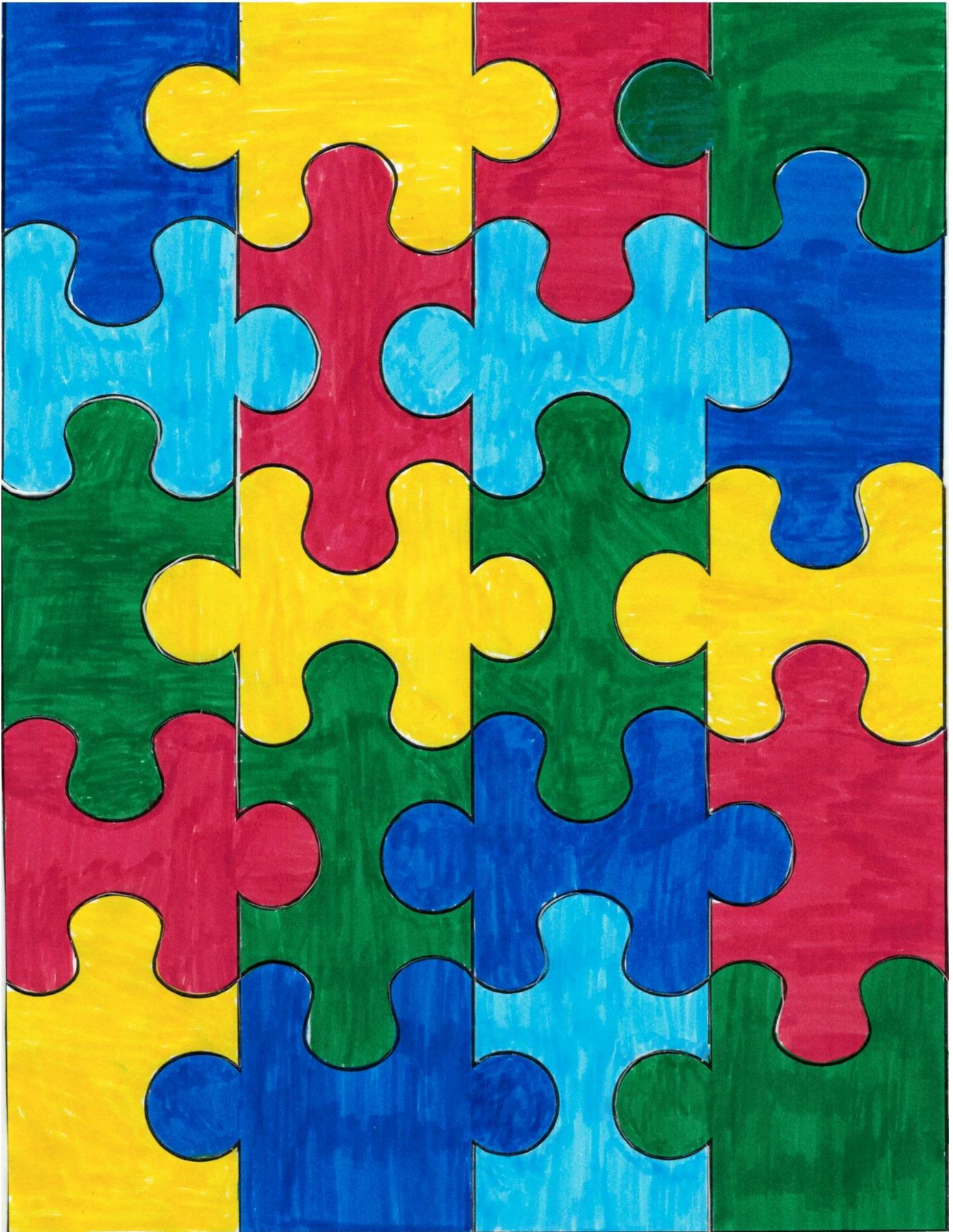
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this scholarly project, *A Group Protocol for Individuals with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder Transitioning into College*, was to provide a college-based occupational therapy group protocol to enable individuals with high-functioning autism (HFA) and promote successful engagement in a college context. The literature review in chapter two indicated the need for the group protocol in a college setting to address communication and social skills for students with high-functioning autism (HFA) as there was limited literature relating to the role of occupational therapy on a college campus. A holistic and client-centered model, the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E), was selected to highlight interventions related to communication and social skills by promoting engagement to individuals with HFA within a college setting. The group protocol, *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills*, was developed to enable young adult students with HFA to transition and engage in a college setting by addressing communication and social interaction skills.

This protocol implemented the various interventions over a fourteen-week time period with the goal of communication and social interaction skills being improved for young adult students with HFA. Included in the protocol was information for the occupational therapist in the beginning that would aid in the facilitation of each session. Additional resources and information on the CMOP-E were also provided to ensure

maximized efficacy of the entire group protocol. Additionally, the protocol also contained information for the peer-mentors from the Student Organization of Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) program. The authors felt the intervention approach within the group protocol had the greatest carry over in everyday life for individuals with ASD. This would increase their engagement in occupations within different environments, and this group protocol was essential in addressing the gap of services and effective interventions for this population in the college setting. Based on an extensive review of literature, there were no community colleges that had an occupational therapist that provided services on campus in this format. Research showed there were limited resources, especially occupational therapy, on campuses specifically for the diagnosis of HFA. Therefore, this group protocol was developed for the Casper College in Casper, Wyoming to complement the SOAR peer-mentorship program that is already implemented. This group protocol was designed to be piloted with the support of the SOAR peer-mentors over the course of one semester.

Limitations

Upon completion of the product, limitations were found. The group protocol was designed for an optimal group size (between eight to ten members) so the small group size may limit additional students who want to attend the group at a time. However, if the group exceeds the 8-10 members, occupational therapists are equipped to modify and adapt it through reevaluating the amount of supplies required for each session to fit the member's needs. An additional group may also be added on a college campus. The second limitation, communication and social skills were the overarching skills that were of focus within the group. This limited other skills that individuals with HFA may need

assistance with while they are in college.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations for further expansion and utilization of *A Group Protocol for Individuals with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder Transitioning into College*. First, the group protocol advocates for the role of an occupational therapist to implement communication and social skills to individuals with HFA in a college setting. It would also be beneficial to increase the awareness of the role of occupational therapy in addressing the unique needs of young adult students with HFA. The second recommendation includes conducting randomized controlled studies focused on the role of occupational therapy services in identifying further skills for individuals with HFA in a college setting. There is a need for evidence-based research regarding occupational needs of this population. The third recommendation includes retaining an updated group protocol for occupational therapists providing services to young adult students with HFA. The authors intended for, *Putting the Pieces Together: Series I: Communication and Social Skills*, to be the first of a series of group protocols for individuals with HFA in college. This could be completed by reviewing research, updating resources as needed, and continuation of the group protocol.

Conclusion

There is a significant need for continued research and implementation of addressing the needs for individuals with HFA in college. Areas of further research include other skills required to complete college and resources to obtain and maintain a job following college. Specifications for further research include organizational and life,

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relationships, and emotional skills. Overall, occupational therapists can use this group

protocol to implement communication and social skills to address the needs of

individuals with HFA in a college setting. This protocol allows occupational therapists to

provide client-centered and evidence-based research to provide occupation-based

interventions through a holistic approach. Following implementation of the protocol, it is

anticipated young adult students will HFA will demonstrate the ability to attend college

more effectively and efficiently.

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