Targeted Interventions to Facilitate Increased Community Participation and Life Satisfaction in Consumers

Evidence from the past two decades suggests hope can act as a personal asset, particularly for people with disabilities, and result in increased community participation and life satisfaction. As proposed by Snyder’s theory, hope is open to change and can be taught. The purpose of this research was to evaluate Snyder’s hope theory as a motivational model of participation and life satisfaction for individuals with disabilities.

Results

Snyder’s hope theory as a motivational model of participation and life satisfaction was validated with minor modifications. The results of this study suggest:

- Individuals who believe in cause and effect, i.e., that actions affect outcomes, have a greater belief in their ability to execute an action plan to achieve desired goals and increased levels of community participation.
- Individuals who have perceived control, i.e., the belief that they can formulate an action plan to achieve a desired goal, tend to perceive themselves as having a higher capacity for executing goal-related actions and have higher levels of active participation in the community.
- Resilience, i.e., the ability to “bounce back,” appears to facilitate hope and directly impacts individuals’ ability to formulate and execute an action plan to achieve desired goals.
- Hope, defined as a belief in one’s ability to achieve personal goals and motivation to take action to pursue those goals, has a direct effect on individuals’ levels of community participation and directly impacts life satisfaction.

Interventions

To promote increased community participation and a sense of well-being for rehabilitation clients, this study suggests value in using targeted interventions to strengthen the positive human traits of cause and effect, perceived control, resilience, and hope.

Cause and Effect

To assist consumers in gradually developing their belief that their actions effect outcomes, rehabilitation counselors should:

- Give simple assignments that have a high probably of success to break negative self-fulfilling prophecies
- Teach cognitive-behavioral skills
- Support self-efficacy
- Model cause and effect behaviors
**Perceived Control** To increase the sense of perceived control, counselors can draw from the theory of intentional counseling and:

- Focus on reframing clients’ perceptions of their sense of control in their lives by encouraging them to view themselves as narrators of their life scripts.
- Encourage storytelling, while avoiding focus on negative past experiences, to promote a sense of empowerment over adversity.

**Resilience** Enhance resilience in consumers by helping them develop:

- Coping skills
- Problem solving skills
- Social skills

**Hope** Facilitate hope by reformatting and redefining goals:

- Select optimal rehabilitation goals
- Establish an ideal level of challenge
- Endorse approach rather than avoidance goals
- Break down long-range goals into steps and sub-goals
- Use simple goal worksheets
- Encourage consideration of alternative pathways to goals
- Mentally rehearse scripts for occasions when obstacles are encountered
- Create visual scenarios of pathways to goals
- Increase positive self-talk

**Bottom Line**

Targeted interventions that focus on strengthening the positive human traits of cause and effect, perceived control, resilience, and hope could significantly impact the level of community participation and sense of well-being in people with disabilities.

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