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**Addressing the occupational needs of clients with homelessness background:  
The experience of Centro de Apoio Social de São Bento**

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"In Western cultures, having a home is a fundamental imperative and understanding the meaning of home is one important way to understand the shape of people's lives, their identities, and their everyday occupations" (Hasselkus, 2002). The fact that a homeless person leaves the street and finds a place to live doesn't mean that his or her occupational life will be restored. One of the main aims of Centro de Apoio Social de São Bento (CASSB), an institution for former homeless people, is to support clients in rebuilding their occupational lives. The objective of this study was to identify the needs for meaningful occupations and for occupational balance of the CASSB clients, through semi-structured interviews based on occupational balance and occupational needs concepts. The findings allowed to build each client profile and to find common needs of the group, such as having diversity in their occupational repertoire, having a balance between things they want to do and things they must do, doing things that allow them to achieve their personal goals and doing things that are pleasurable and help them being calm and at peace. These themes have been used in designing an intervention program to build clients' capacity to engage within their community resources and to promote their participation. These interviews not only allowed to identify the real occupational needs of the group but also promoted the opportunity for clients' insight about their own occupational needs and identity.

Hasselkus, R.B. (2002). *The meaning of everyday occupation*. Thorofare: Slack Inc.