

# **OT in Africa**

## **World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congress 2018**

### **OT in Africa**

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# Outline

1. Introduction
2. Contextual Framework
3. My Practice & Perspectives
4. Using Research to Inform Practice
5. Innovative Intervention Strategies from OT Practice
6. Discussion & Conclusions

# 1. Introduction

## **Dedication**

*When reflecting on this topic I was humbled by the dedication, passion, sacrifice and resilience of the women and men who were instrumental in the development of Occupational Therapy in Africa, and particularly, in South Africa.*

*This presentation is dedicated to all the OT Pioneers who introduced and established Occupational Therapy (OT) in South Africa 75 years ago (1943); in particular, to their unique contribution in the training, control, service establishment, innovative OT interventions and knowledge base for the OT Profession.*

*I am personally and professionally indebted to each of these Pioneers; and am equally honoured to represent my fellow South African OTs on this topic.*

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*I am Mandlenkosi, I am an Occupational Therapist*

# Introduction

## Contextual Framework

- Policy Framework and Strategy on Disability and Rehabilitation Service in South Africa values.
- The position statements by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists on global health, diversity and culture.
- The Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa South Position statement on OT in Primary Healthcare.

# **My Practice & Perspectives**

## **Traditional Healing and the Concept of Illness in Africa**

Challenges in implementing rehabilitation services in South Africa:

- Cultural sensitivity and respect of client value systems and beliefs.
- Delay early identification and interventions, misinterpretation of symptoms and misdiagnosis of client conditions.
- The acceptance of western medical practices and the prevalence of original concepts of illness amongst Africans.
- The formal recognition of Traditional Health Practitioners (THP) under the Traditional Health Practitioners Act No. 22 of 2007.

# My Practice & Perspectives

Beads Symbolic of Ancestral Spirit Connection



Bright coloured shawl with stars/ crosses signifying spiritual healing identity

Cross Symbolic of Christian Belief Connection

*(Source: Africa Check, a non-partisan fact-checking organisation. View the original piece on their website).*

# My Practice & Perspectives

There are many types of THPs in Africa but generally, there are three common types of indigenous practitioners which fall under the THP umbrella:

- **The Herbalist** (*inyanga*) who uses only herbal medicines.
- **The Diviner** (*isangoma*) who uses a combination of communication with the ancestors and traditional medicine.
- **The Faith Healer** (*umthandazi*) who mainly utilizes the power of prayer.

# My Practice & Perspectives

The concept of illness in the African Culture makes a distinction between theories of **natural causation**, “*just happening*” and **supernatural causation** from cosmological forces who work “*through ancestors, sorcery or bewitchment*”. Conditions of supernatural causation is *ukufa kwabantu*.

These comprise:

- *Ukuthakatha* (Sorcery): A practice used to cause or induce a variety of illnesses which range from physical and psychosocial disorders.
- *Umeqo* (Stepping over a sprinkled powder/ smeared paste): Mainly physical or neurological conditions which range from gangrene, sepsis, elephantiasis, stroke, phantom pain etc.
- *Ukudlisa* (Ingestion of a “magic poison”); and *ukuphonsa* (Put under a spell).
- *Amafufunyana*, (evil spirit possession) have been classified as a sort of “hysterical psychosis” or schizophrenia, and the symptoms of *Ukuthwasa* (Becoming a Sangoma): Illness syndrome indicating one’s calling to be a healer.

# My Practice & Perspectives

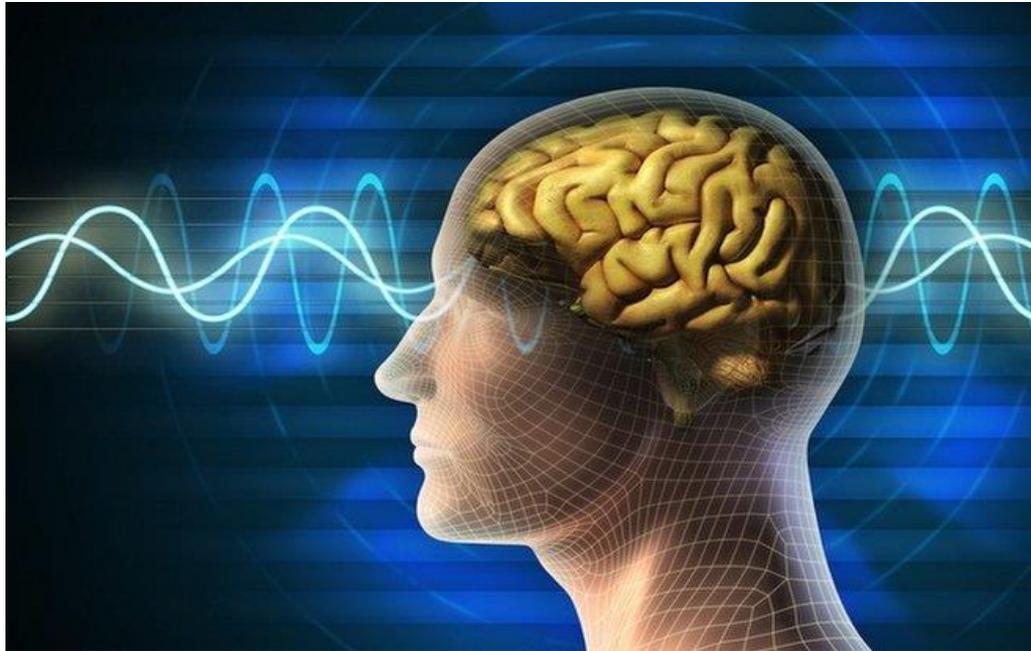
## Phantom Pain & Sorcery



*(Source: Science Photo Library)*

# My Practice & Perspectives

## Faith Healing Gift & Psychosis



*(Source: The Health Site)*

# My Practice & Perspectives

## Culture, Religion & Adherence to Treatment



*(Julian Angelo. "Difference Between Religion and Culture." DifferenceBetween.net. March 13, 2018 < <http://www.differencebetween.net/miscellaneous/religion-miscellaneous/difference-between-religion-and-culture> )*

# Using Research to Inform Practice

## The Criminogenic Effects of Imprisonment and Function

- On imprisonment, prisoners relinquish their freedom and autonomy to make own choices and decisions.
- In order to cope, prisoners have to adapt to confined physical environment with accompanying rigidly structured procedures and rules.
- In order to survive, prisoners have to be always vigilant in an often highly threatening social environment.
- Over time offenders begin to adjust to these conditions and become increasingly dependent on prison structures and schedules to function.
- This results in the gradual deterioration of critical components necessary for independent function.

# My Practice & Perspectives

## Sakhisizwe Day Centre

- The feedback was used to initiate the development of the **Sakhisizwe Day Centre** (Building the Nation) for Parolees.
- This project was based on the collaborative Partnership between the Parolee Officer, the local Chief (Inkosi), the Area Social Worker and Community Development Committee Representatives and TVET colleges.
- One of the key recommendation from the study was the review of the (unemployable) ex-prisoner support programme to include the family psychosocial support, food security, housing and

# My Practice & Perspectives

## OT in Primary Healthcare

- According to the August 2011 WFOT statement on OT, the broad scope of OT training equips Occupational Therapists (OT's) to work in a variety of settings and levels of care, which include health promotion and prevention of disease and disability.
- The OTASA Position Statement 2015 on OT in PHC outlines its support for PHC principles on access, appropriateness, equity and effectiveness of OT services at PHC level (OTASA, 2015).
- The loss of function and productivity from the disabling effects of some communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS highlights the relevance of OT involvement in health promotion and disease prevention.
- The introduction of the Provider Initiated Counselling and Testing (PICT) to augment the client-initiated Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VST) WHO, 2007) by the World Health Organisation (WHO) mandated all practitioners to be involved in early diagnosis of HIV/AIDS.

# Innovative Intervention Strategies from OT Practice

## Innovative OT Intervention Strategies from OT Practice



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# **Innovative Intervention Strategies from OT Practice**

## **The Empowerment & Integration of Clients with Chronic Mental Illness into Society**

### **Project Main Aims:**

- To develop client work skills for placement in sheltered employment.
- To de-stigmatise mental illness and to raise community awareness on the potential of clients with mental illness.
- To re-integrate clients into community through a positive contribution to disadvantaged children.

*(Nerena Ramith- Kuppersamy & OTT Team, Ekuhlengeni Psychiatric Hospital, Durban)*

# Innovative Intervention Strategies from OT Practice

## Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Assessment & Treatment Protocol

The Live Life Rehabilitation Project

### Main Project Aims

- Empowerment of individuals with knowledge and skills to minimise relapses.
- Treatment of MS residual symptoms.
- Maintenance of individuals' physical and psychosocial levels of function.

*(Amanda Marshall, Bsc. Occupational Therapy (UCT); Lindi Bester Speech Therapist), Lindsay Van Der Westhuizen (Social Worker), Samantha James (Physiotherapist), Luchille Oliver (Dietician), Marna Oettle (Dietician)*

# Innovative Intervention Strategies from OT Practice

## Mental Healthcare in Rural Settings



*(Source: Rural Health Advocacy Project)*

# **Innovative Intervention Strategies from OT Practice**

## **Celebrating the Recipient of the Rural Therapist of the Year Award by a Rural Hospital based Occupational Therapist.**

### **Her achievements included:**

- The establishment and the strengthening of the provision of mental health care services in rural areas.
- Contribution towards the strengthening of the health-community interface at Manguzi through close working relationship with the community health workers and community support groups.
- Involvement in the implementation of various rehabilitation programs and interventions in the area.

*(Project initiated by rural partners: RuDASA, RuReSA and RHAP with PACASA, Section 27, TAC and others & Jabulile Ndlovu -Awardee)*

# Conclusions & Discussions

**Thank You.**

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