

Joy in occupational therapy practice: reflective journaling to promote longevity in fieldwork educators and future practitioners

Beth Rollinger, MS, MHA, OTR/L,¹ Jo Shear, OTR/L;²

¹Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle, WA; ²Linn-Benton Community College, Lebanon, OR

Poster and references available on AOTA conference site-you may upload this addendum as well as a pdf of the poster and of a handout with a summary of the poster, references and resources.

We asked participants to add joyful moments of practice to our poster and to suggest some journaling prompts to support students developing skills in identifying joy in their practice. Here are the additions:

Joyful moments:

- Seeing a child in early intervention for brachial plexus injury put a string/shoelace through a 1” diameter bead for the first time.
- Helping an entry-level OT find her voice as part of an IEP team and seeing her confidence as she was able to put it all in writing.
- The tears in her eyes after learning how to use a sock aide. “I haven’t worn socks in 12 years because I couldn’t reach my feet and I LOVESOCKS>” Total joy on her face.
- When “Frankie” (2nd grade child with ASD) wrote me the following letter and left it on my desk the last day of school: “May you be happy, may you be safe, may by health, may your life be filled with joy.”
- Working on the mental health unity with a 73 yo pt with major depressive disorder and multiple physical comorbidities: “Every day they promised me a shower but it never happened. You promised me and actually followed through! Not only that, but you made me feel good. You gave me something to live for today. After the shower and your visit, I finally feel a little better.”
- Working with a severely depressed patient who started laughing during a treatment session and said it was the first time she laughed in month’
- Going in to eval a pt who was intubated, received tube feedings and was unresponsive, then on my last day of FW he was able to walk with Max A and the use of a walker.
- I can go for months in a routine of doing similar treatments, then there is a moment when you know you really made a difference and it restores you.

More examples of prompts for reflective journaling about joyful moments (some are on the handout you can download from AOTA)

First third:

- Think about an opportunity a patient was afforded by an OT session. Did they or their caregiver feel or look better after the session?
- When did you first feel you could breathe “free” from your supervisor? Explain what that felt like.

Middle third:

- How did it feel to share a defeating moment with your client? We celebrate a lot of victories, but it's important to notice how you can help that person through their most challenging times. You have the power to make an impact!
- Describe a time when a patient spontaneously commented about benefits of a treatment session.

Last third:

- Describe a successful interdisciplinary collaboration or meeting in which you took suggestions and implemented in in your tx session, that led to improvement in your (OT) focus. Example, using speech therapist strategies of use of language to improve your verbal cues/skills in increasing FM performance.
- How could you apply this FW experience education to your next/previous one? (i.e. if you had two different populations)
- Strategy note offered about journaling: Keep entries brief and make process manageable.

Some apps for meditation and self-reinforcement shared by a participant:

- Sleep Pillow, \$3 <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sleep-pillow-sounds-white-noise-rain-ocean-fan/id410351918?mt=8>
- Insight Tower
- Head Space, free <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/headspace-guided-meditation-and-mindfulness/id493145008?mt=8>
- I am (can set phone to randomly cue you multiple times each day, then offer a different positive comment about you each time -“You’re awesome” etc), free <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/i-am-daily-positive-reminders/id874656917?mt=8>
- Pacifica <https://www.thinkpacific.com/>