Promoting Change and Developing Treatment Based on Understanding the Complex Relationships among Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health, Personality and Behavior

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Objectives:

1. Identify effective methods for the practical application of concepts related to improving the delivery of services for persons with developmental disabilities

2. Identify advances in clinical assessment and management of selected healthcare issues related to persons with developmental disabilities

3. Identify and emphasize attitudes that enhance the opportunities for persons with DD to achieve their optimal potential

Notes:
Promoting Change and Developing Treatment Based on Understanding the Complex Relationships Among Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health, Personality, and Behavior

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Developmental Enhancement, PLC

• Optimizing development and promoting mental wellness for individuals with developmental differences

• Helping ALL people reach their full potential

• Professional expertise in
  – Optimizing development
  – Promoting mental wellness
  – Assessment
  – Treatment
  – Consultation
  – Training
  – Program development

Breaking It Down

• Promoting Change
• Developing Treatment
• Complex Interactions
• Developmental Disabilities
• Mental Health
• Personality
• Behavior
Behavior

• The most obvious
• Biggest reason for referrals
• Reason for behavior plans
• Major reason for physical management
• Nothing simple about it

How do we put Behavior in PERSPECTIVE!

• We will not be successful without a WHOLE PERSON APPROACH

• Our effect will be limited if we do not have meaningful goals

What would you want for YOUR kids?

People LIVING and HAVING LIVES in the community should be the goal.

Just managing people in the community isn’t good enough for them – and it shouldn’t be for us
Accept Reality

- Challenging behaviors are things that are difficult for "us"; they are not things that are wrong with "them"
- Common approach - Manage people's behaviors to eliminate behaviors that are challenging
- Reality - Problems and conflict are part of the complex interactions between people and experience in the environment – and are critical for development

What Should our Goals Be?

- Promoting Change - MEANINGFUL CHANGE! - Thinking beyond behavior - If you do the work to really understand where a person is now – You can work with them to figure out where they should go and take steps to help them move in those directions
- Developing effective treatments for identified problems – REAL problems

DEVELOPMENT

- All people are developing all of the time – even people with developmental disabilities
- Differences vs. disabilities
- We must understand a person's development, including developmental differences in order to effectively promote change or develop treatment
- What is different and why?
Developmental Disabilities

• People not diagnoses
• Basic understanding of the developmental disability is a STARTING POINT for understanding the person
• Multiple types and causes
• Huge variability within each classification

Intellectual Disability (formerly Mental Retardation)

• IQ test score below 70 (or as high as 75)
• Adaptive behavior
  • Conceptual skills—language and literacy; money, time, and number concepts; and self-direction.
  • Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized.
  • Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone.

Intellectual Disability – What does it really tell us?

• Huge variability within categories
• Profile of abilities varies
• Cause of ID can be relevant
Autism Spectrum Disorders

• Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
  • marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction
  • failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
  • a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest)
  • lack of social or emotional reciprocity

Autism Spectrum Disorders

• Qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:
  • delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime)
  • in individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
  • stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
  • lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level

Autism Spectrum Disorders

• Restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests and activities, as manifested by at least one of the following:
  • encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
  • apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
  • stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g., hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements)
  • persistent preoccupation with parts of objects
Real Differences from a Neurodevelopmental Perspective

**Sensory Processing**
- Difficulties with person’s ability to effectively prioritize, regulate and integrate sensory input.
- This can be to varying degrees for tactile, auditory, visual, olfactory, and gustatory, as well as vestibular, proprioceptive, and kinesthetic senses.

**Perceptual Processing**
- feature detection and integration
- configural processing
- emotional recognition
- sustained and selective attention
- visual-spatial skills

**Executive Functioning**
- utilization of internal rules and representations
- behavioral regulation and inhibitory control
- planning and organization of tasks
- working memory
- cognitive flexibility and problem-solving
- planning and execution of motor skills
- regulation of emotions
- social cognition and social communication
Autism Spectrum Disorders

- DSM V – Autism Spectrum Disorder
- **Severity:** Requiring Support, Requiring Substantial Support, Requiring Very Substantial Support

Real Differences

Along the spectrum
- Within categories
- Within individuals

DIFFERENCES the SAME ways as the rest of us

Developmental Differences

- How do developmental differences affect a person’s functioning in ALL areas? – helps determine directions to promote change
  -
- How do developmental differences contribute to behavior problems? - helps determine specific treatments
  -
Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Problems

• PWDD are at least 2-3 times as likely to experience significant mental health and behavioral problems than the general population

• These have tremendous costs for PWDD and families.

PWDD can experience the full range of mental health disorders

• Symptoms may vary some from general population
• Diagnoses are more difficult due to high dependence on verbal report in DSM IV
• More dependent on observable and behavioral criteria
• Mental health issues experienced in daily life or during periods of life affect everyone, including people with developmental disabilities

Reasons for Vulnerability

• Developmental factors
• Biological, genetics, medical, neurological factors
• Environmental factors
More Reality

Due to a number of factors, the vast majority of people with developmental disabilities do not reach achievable levels of development and experience higher than necessary levels of behavioral health issues.

Harsh Reality – We are left to deal with far too many PWDD and MI who are difficult to treat

- Unpredictable and unstable
- Emotional instability
- Impulse control problems
- Dangerous behaviors toward self and others
- Heavy use of crisis services
- Frequent hospitalizations
- Eventual long-term hospitalization
- Learned behaviors to manipulate people and the system

Factors Contributing to Lack of Success with PWDD and/or MI who are difficult to treat

- Very complicated clinical cases
- Inaccurate and incomplete evaluation and diagnoses
- Inability to keep safe while providing treatment
- Too much management, not enough treatment
- Lack of intensive, longer-term treatment
- Inattention to developmental issues
- Lack of whole-person perspective
- Lack of sustained proactive approaches
Mental Health Issues

- How do mental health issues affect a person’s functioning in ALL areas? – helps determine directions to promote change

- How do mental health issues contribute to behavior problems? - helps determine specific treatments

Developmental Disabilities and Personality

- People with Developmental Disabilities actually have personalities and personality characteristics affect how they function

Scientific American -

- Personality Traits correlate With Brain Activity:
- Patterns of brain activity reflect our character

Personality and Personality Disorders

- How do personality factors affect a person’s functioning in ALL areas? – helps determine directions to promote change

- How do personality factors issues contribute to behavior problems? - helps determine specific treatments
Understanding Behavior

Start with Assumptions

• Almost all behavior that persists serves some purpose
• Every person is unique
• The best way to help someone change their behavior is to first understand the reasons behind the behavior

Understanding Behavior

Getting a clear description of the behavior

• What does the behavior look like?
• Does it occur in conjunction with other behaviors or in isolation? How long does it last?
• Is there any warning?
• How long has it been a problem?
• What would an alternative desirable behavior look like?

Understanding Behavior

• When is challenging behavior more (and less) likely to occur?
• What are the activities?
• What are the expectations?
• With whom does it occur?
Environmental Factors and Behavior

• What environmental factors affect the person’s functioning?
• Does challenging behavior occur more in some settings than others?
• What are the differences in environments?
• How does the environment fit with the person’s strengths, needs, and developmental/physical/mental health issues?
• What is the bigger context of the behavior?

Understanding Behavior

Developing a rationale

• Why is the behavior difficult?
• Why does it need to change?
• Who’s problem is it?
• Is it harmful to self or others or just inconvenient/annoying?

We need to understand behavior comprehensively

• Consider
  • Development, developmental differences, Developmental Disabilities
  • Mental health issues and disorders
  • Personality traits and disorders

• Evaluate behavior with the goal of
  • Discovering what changes you want to promote
  • Developing Effective Treatments
Other factors to consider

• Strengths and weaknesses
• Likes and dislikes
• Meaningful activities
• Values and cultural issues
• Medical and physical issues
• Motivation
• What is the history of intervention?
• What types of meaningful relationships does the person have?
• Sleep
• Stress

Truth

If you do not understand all of the above with regard to a person and their behavior, you are not prepared to promote change or develop effective treatments

Next Step – Promoting Change

• You should now have a good idea of what changes to promote and how to promote them
• Implement REAL Person-Centered or Family-Centered Planning – this should be a continual process
Promoting Change – Quality of Life

For real change, PWDD need to have more control in their lives

Teaching Control vs. Taking Control

Promoting Change – Quality of Life

- Build in exposure to multiple opportunities, experiences and options
- Ensure adequate exposure to appropriate role models
- Look for ways to reduce the person's dependence on others
- Evaluate and build in assistance and support for communication
- Build in adequate leisure and entertainment experiences
- Ensure that the individual can have a “sense of belonging” in the environments they spend time in
- Optimize relationship-based care and ensure all intervention efforts are from a relationship-based perspective

Developing Treatment – Preventing Behavior Problems

Altering the environment

- Evaluate the “goodness of fit” between the individual and the various environments they are typically in
- Pay particular attention to how environmental issues relate to challenging behaviors
- Determine what environmental changes would help the person utilize their strengths, accommodate for weaknesses, fit best with physical/developmental/mental health needs
- Environmental modifications help most when the antecedent events and consequences that reinforce the challenging behavior or that provoke challenging behavior are avoided
Developing Effective Treatments

• What types of treatment would benefit the person?
  • Medical?
  • Occupational therapy?
  • Speech language?
  • Psychological?
  • Other?

Developing Effective Treatments

• Use all of the information regarding development, mental health, personality and behavior to help determine and develop all treatments from professionals.

Developing Treatment - Teaching New Skills and Encouraging Desirable Behaviors

• Determine what skills the person needs to learn to function more effectively
• Determine which desirable behaviors would most benefit the person
• Keep a long-term perspective – teaching new behaviors can take time
• Determine how you will reinforce effective alternative behaviors you are teaching
• Use natural reinforcement as much as possible – heavy use of interpersonal rewards such as praise, positive feedback
### Developing Treatment - Teaching New Skills and Desirable Behaviors

- Make sure there is adequate modeling for desirable behaviors
- Help the individual establish realistic expectations for behavior
- Help the person establish helpful routines
- Fade the supports needed for desirable behavior by reducing prompts and rewards over time

### Developing Effective Treatments - Intervening When Challenging Behaviors Occur

- Once you understand challenging behaviors, prepare and plan for them purposefully
- Minimize the power of challenging behavior by developing planned reactions and responses
- Interrupt challenging behavior if necessary by using redirection, distraction, etc.
- Redirect the individual to effective alternative behavior with verbal reminders, using developed tools such as schedules, etc.

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<tr>
<th>Developing Effective Treatments - Intervening When Challenging Behaviors Occur</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Reinforce effective alternative behavior using natural and planned rewards</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Have an understanding of the potential consequences of challenging behavior and help the individual learn them</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Include managing crisis situations in order to develop consistent responses and teaching</td>
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Evaluate the Results

• Collect objective, observable, and measurable data of desired changes and problem behaviors
• Monitor the results continually
• Revise the plans when data indicate