



# Mental Health Concepts AND Techniques

*for the*  
**Occupational Therapy Assistant**

FIFTH EDITION

Mary Beth Early



Wolters Kluwer

F I F T H E D I T I O N

# Mental Health Concepts and Techniques

for the Occupational Therapy Assistant

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# Mental Health Concepts and Techniques

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for the Occupational Therapy Assistant

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# Preface

The fifth edition of *Mental Health Concepts and Techniques* aims to provide the occupational therapy assistant (OTA) student with a comprehensive and contemporary foundation for the practice of occupational therapy for persons with mental health problems. The book may also be useful to experienced occupational therapy assistants entering or reentering mental health practice. Occupational therapists with supervisory and administrative roles with an interest in exploring the delineation and relationships between the professional and technical levels of responsibility may use the book as a resource. It is assumed that readers of this text have a background in human growth and development, general psychology, group process, and activities used in occupational therapy.

Much has changed in mental health care since the first edition. New medications may better target specific disorders, making improved functioning possible and reducing adverse effects. Many people with mental disorders have become more assertive about their rights, alert and proactive as consumers of services. Recovery is the dominant paradigm in interventions for persons with mental disorders, and the text reflects this. The terms used to refer to “recipients of services” in the fifth edition correspond to current usage. Box 7-1 identifies some of the names given to the recipient of occupational therapy services in a range of settings: patient, client, consumer, member, inmate, resident, service user, survivor, and so on. The student and reader are encouraged to appreciate the ambiguity and subtle distinctions of these terms, and to be alert to new ones. It is important to develop a sense for which is the best term for a

specific situation, and to cultivate an empathic feel for the stigma that attaches to labels of any kind.

The text has been updated to reflect the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework, 3rd edition (OTPF-3E)*, and the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5)*.

## Overall Changes in the Text

Some chapters from the previous edition have been deleted, on the recommendation of reviewers of the proposal for this new edition. Their argument was that information from those chapters (the *OTPF-3E*, the OT process, documentation, supervision, and personal organization) is accessible in textbook and online resources that have been developed for occupational therapy assistants over the past 15 years. This was not the case when the first three editions of the book published.

The sequence of the remaining chapters has been revised (consumers placed before contexts, and the activity analysis chapter moved earlier in the book). It is the individual instructor's prerogative to determine the optimal sequence for assigning the chapters, depending on the desired content of a course of study.

Evidence-based practice (EBP) content has been enhanced. Boxes within chapters, and a new Appendix C, invite the curiosity of the reader. It is assumed that the student will encounter a thorough exposition of EBP elsewhere in the curriculum. In this text the purpose is to pose questions that suggest a need for thoughtful answers. The

answers may be multiple, argumentative, and sometimes contradictory. In many cases, no one answer is correct (to the exclusion of others). Our profession is developing its body of evidence despite some challenges, explained further in Appendix C.

Other changes include the following:

- Key terms, formerly italicized, are now in bold font.
- Some tables and large features have been relocated to the ends of some chapters to improve reading flow. The chapter on medication is an example.
- Challenge and reflection questions have been added to some chapters.
- In the medication chapter and elsewhere, the reader is encouraged to consult online resources to obtain the latest information, as textbook information can become obsolete.

## Organization of Content

The content is arranged into five sections. Section I (Chapters 1 to 4) establishes a framework, discussing the historical origins of psychiatric occupational therapy and the past and current theoretical foundations on which mental health practice is based. Case examples are included to illustrate how each theory can be applied.

Section II (Chapters 5 to 8) addresses the context of the occupational therapy intervention process and includes chapters on psychiatric diagnosis (*DSM-5*), settings, medications, and consumers. Content on practice with children, adolescents, families, veterans, victims of trauma, and other groups has been increased. The purpose of gathering chapters on such disparate topics under the heading “context” is to suggest the effects of these factors on the occupational therapy process.

Section III (Chapters 9 to 12) focuses on relationships with patients/clients/consumers.

The therapeutic relationship with the mental health worker is a primary force in motivating recovery, restoring the patient’s sense of direction, and supporting ability to function. Logically this material should precede any discipline-specific content. In addition, past students have expressed a desire to know what to *do* with the clients whom they meet on level I fieldwork, which may run concurrently with the mental health coursework in some curricula. A chapter on safety is included in this section, as is the chapter on groups.

Section IV (Chapters 13 and 14) describes the evaluation, planning, and intervention, stages of the occupational therapy process. Some information on clinical reasoning (from the deleted OT process chapter) has been integrated with the evaluation and intervention chapters. Evaluation instruments cited have been updated to reflect current practice, consistent with reasonable expectations of service competency for the OTA. The chapters in this section correspond to the terminology and concepts of the *OTPF-3E* and official documents of the American Occupational Therapy Association, at the time of this writing.

Occupational therapy methods and activities are the focus of Section V (Chapters 15 to 20). At the suggestion of reviewers, the chapter on activity analysis has been relocated and appears as the first in this section. The other five chapters detail specific activities and methods in the areas of daily living skills, education and work, leisure and social participation, emotional regulation and management of emotional needs, and cognitive and sensory and motor factors and skills.

Appendix A contains case examples, some of which are referred to in the text. Additional case examples appear within the chapters. Appendix B gives sample group protocols to supplement Chapter 12. Appendix C provides a brief introduction to evidence-based practice (EBP) in mental health occupational therapy, and EBP boxes can be found in many chapters. The end papers list abbreviations that students and practitioners may



encounter in mental health settings and medical records.

Popular text features are retained. Chapter objectives direct readers to the learning goals for the chapter, and chapter review questions test the readers' comprehension. Point-of-view boxes in selected chapters provide perspectives of consumers and other stakeholders. Additional retained features include concepts summary and

vocabulary review (found throughout selected chapters in Section I) that reinforce important concepts and provide definitions for key terms.

With each edition, we (author and publisher) try to move more perfectly toward gender-neutral language. However, the third person plural is not always appropriate and in such cases masculine or feminine names or pronouns have been employed.

# Acknowledgments

No project of this size is ever the work of one person. Many people have helped in direct and indirect ways throughout the five editions. I remain deeply grateful to Professor JoAnn Romeo Anderson, Dean Irwin Feifer, and former Dean of Faculty Martin Moed for their encouragement and mentorship during the T.A.R. project at LaGuardia Community College in 1980 and 1981; participation in that project enabled me to develop the course manual from which the first edition evolved. I am grateful to my colleagues and students at LaGuardia Community College for their companionship and inspiration.

I am most appreciative of the careful suggestions and collegial encouragement of past and present reviewers. Those for previous editions included Claudia Allen, Linda Barnes, Alfred Blake, Jody Bortone, Terry Brittell, Anne Brown, Leita Chalfin, Phyllis Clements, Carol Endebrock-Lee, Edith Fenton, Gloria Graham, Yvette Hachtel, Florence Hannes, Diane Harlowe, Noel Hepler, Carlotta Kip, Lorna Jean King, Tom Lawton, Siri Marken, Maureen Matthews, Ann Neville-Jan, Elizabeth Nyberg, Gertrude Pinto, Hermine D. Plotnick, Margaret D. Rerek, Anne Hiller Scott, Esther Simon, Scott Trudeau, Susan Voorhies, and Marla Wonser.

I am greatly indebted to the reviewers of the present edition. Their commitment to the project and their willingness to share their expertise were invaluable. The present text is very much a collaboration with them. I thank especially the following three individuals who gave many hours of thoughtful reading and commentary: Myrl Manley, MD; Lynnette Dagrosa, MA OTR/L; and

Maureen Matthews, OTR/L. All the reviewers of the present edition are listed on page v.

I am grateful to the staff at Wolters Kluwer Health, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, and their predecessor, Raven Press, for editorial and other support over the years. Vickie Thaw was especially encouraging in her stewardship of the project during the development of the second edition. For the third edition, Margaret Biblis, Linda Napora, Amy Amico, Lisa Franko, and Mario Fernandez created wonderful text features and a beautiful design, which live on in altered form in the current edition. For the fourth edition, Elizabeth Connolly provided careful and thoughtful guidance as managing editor. I am also indebted to Kim Battista (artist) and Jennifer Clements (art director) for enhancing the look of the book and the images within it.

The development of the current edition was managed with great patience and care by Amy Millholen. Her receptivity, flexibility, creativity, and concern were immensely helpful. Mike Nobel met with me and discussed the project via phone and e-mail for what seemed like several years, and encouraged me in countless ways. This project would not have happened without his and Amy's support. Others in the publication process who contributed their labors to this edition included Shauna Kelley, Marketing Manager; David Saltzberg, Production Product Manager; and Stephen Druding, Design Coordinator.

My husband, Bob, always assured me that I would manage to complete this edition just as I have completed others. To that end, he did not

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let me waste away but frequently offered treats and nurturance of all kinds, insisted that I go for a walk when I was tired, and distracted me appropriately (and sometimes inappropriately but hilariously) when I needed a break. He read

passages for clarity and for student readability, a job for which he is well suited given his decades of teaching high school English. Most of all, he was there for me when I needed him. What more can one ask? Thank you, Bob.

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