

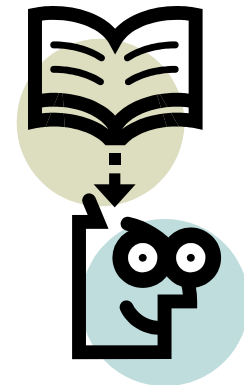
SWITCH ASSESSMENT, PART 3: DETERMINING THE BEST SWITCH TYPE AND LOCATION FOR CLIENTS WHO ARE NOT ENGAGED

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What are we covering?

- The client who is not engaged
 - Determining causes
 - Determining motivators
 - Interventions
 - Case Studies



The Client Who is Not Engaged

- Who is this client?
 - You ask the client to press the switch and they do not respond
 - If they do respond, they may bang the switch, pull the cord or throw it
 - The client does not see the switch as a tool



The Client Who is Not Engaged

- Who is this client?
 - Clients with significant developmental delays, significant cognitive limitations
 - Clients with very limited vision
 - Clients who have a lower level of alertness
 - Clients who don't trust you
 - Too many yucky medical appointments
 - Clients who are over-therapized
 - You want me to do this
 - Don't see the switch as a tool, rather than a task



Assessment Considerations

- How does this impact access?
 - If the client won't engage in the activity, determining the best switch type and location is difficult
 - If a switch type and site are determined, the client may not use the switch appropriately/functionally
 - Training switch use is hard



Assessment Considerations

- Establish rapport
- Determine motivators
- Determine likely switch types and sites

Let's get Practical!

- Think of a client you are working with
- As we move through the webinar, think of strategies that may be helpful

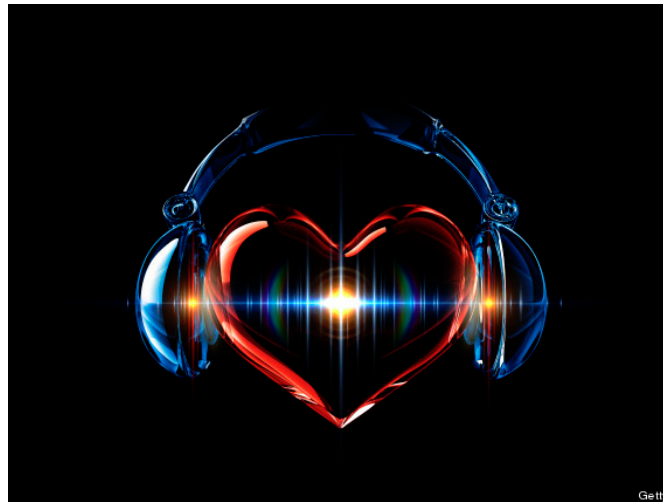
Establish Rapport

- It's all about the relationship
- We want the client to feel comfortable
 - For clients who don't trust you, reassure them
 - For clients who are over therapized, forget the typical therapy and focus on establishing that rapport



Determine Motivators

- Ask the caregivers, team members and client (as appropriate) what they like
- Many clients are motivated by music and sensory stimulation
- Other ideas: jokes, toy cars, video on iPad, balls, bubbles



Finding that Switch Site

- Once your client is feeling comfortable and you know what is motivating, bring in a switch
- When the client hits the switch at all, ensure they get a fantastic response!
 - The switch doesn't even have to be plugged in at this point



Case Studies

- This is easier to explore through some examples:
 - Alexi
 - Tommy
 - Rachel

Case Study: Alexi

- Alexi
- 10 years old
- 3 years post TBI
- Low vision
- Hypersensitive hands



Case Study: Alexi

- The problem:
- Initial goal was a communication evaluation, but Alexi had no access
- We “downshifted” to finding a switch site
- It took a while...

Case Study: Alexi

- Establishing rapport
- Alexi got quite agitated very easily
 - Common with TBI
- One of his triggers was going to any “medical appointment”
- I tried to reassure him that there would be “no ouchies”, but he was still very upset

Case Study: Alexi

- Establishing rapport
- I asked his caregivers what helped Alexi calm down
- He loved dramatic Broadway musical scores, no lyrics
 - He instantly melted!
 - They brought his tape player and tape collection
- We played the music to calm him down while we just got to know each other a bit
 - It took several visits for him to not scream as soon as he entered the building



Case Study: Alexi

- Motivation
- Alexi was obviously motivated by music
- He had an “old school” tape player
- Every time he touched a switch, I would press play on the tape player
 - My goal wasn't to set this up for independent control quite yet



Case Study: Alexi

- Switch Placement:
- Hands: Alexi's hands were very hypersensitive, so I couldn't even do "hand over hand" here
- Head: Alexi didn't like anything by his head, he also had a strong ATNR
- Knees: Alexi demonstrated potential by the lateral side of his left knee



Case Study: Alexi

- When Alexi pressed the switch, I turned on the music
- We then connected the tape player to a PowerLink
- He did not appear to realize that his movement had any connection to the music playing, he just thought someone turned it on
 - Because that is what had happened over the *past several years*
- With practice, he began to realize that *he* was turning the music on

Case Study: Alexi

- Latch didn't work very well, because he didn't want to turn off the music
- At first he became angry when the music stopped in timed mode, but was able to slowly work through this with encouragement that he could turn it on again by himself



Case Study: Alexi

- He needed lots of practice to develop this potential switch site
- We recommended a PowerLink, switch, and universal switch mount to allow control of the music
- He practiced at home and school, in addition to therapy



Case Study: Alexi

- Eventually, we started activities to develop scanning skills once this motor pattern was well established
- He then was able to transition switch access to a speech generating device and, eventually, a power wheelchair



Questions?

Case Study: Tommy

- Tommy
- Cerebral palsy, blindness
- Non-verbal
- Ambulatory for short distances
- Age 32
- Lives in a group home

Case Study: Tommy

- The problem:
- Tommy had tried various switches, basic EADLs and communication devices, but he just tended to bang everything, pull cords and throw items



Case Study: Tommy

- The evaluation:
- Tommy continually pulled, banged and threw everything we put in front of him
- He was very agitated by a new setting and new people
- We decided on a field trip...

Case Study: Tommy

- The group home: establishing rapport
- We went to the group home and observed Tommy
- He tended to wander around and would approach staff occasionally
 - We asked how he indicated his needs
 - The staff said he only approached them for assistance in toileting and to turn on his music
 - He became frustrated easily and would start yelling, screaming... and then the other clients would join in



Case Study: Tommy

- Finding a switch type and site
- Our first goal was to give Tommy a more appropriate means of indicating his needs
 - We took a Bigmack and attached it to the wall
 - He was unable to remove this, though he did try for a while
 - It said “I need help”
 - The staff was instructed to approach Tommy immediately to ask what he needed
 - After a while, the other clients started using it, too!



Case Study: Tommy

- Finding a switch type and site
- Our second goal was to give Tommy an independent means of controlling his music.
 - He liked one radio station only and would get very upset if this changed
 - He would crank up the volume if given the opportunity, so we did not give him that ability
 - The neighbors had called the police in the past!
 - The stereo was on a dresser in his room



Case Study: Tommy

- Finding a switch type and site
- Our second goal was to give Tommy an independent means of controlling his music.
 - We plugged the stereo into a PowerLink, out of Tommy's reach
 - We took a Big Beamer wireless switch and attached this to the side of the dresser so he couldn't remove it (he tried!)
 - Once he realized he couldn't destroy the switch, he noticed that it was turning on his music. He began to use this functionally.



Case Study: Tommy

- I would have loved to explore more sophisticated communication, mobility and control for Tommy
- He did not have the cognitive abilities to use more sophisticated AT
- However, he stopped yelling and began to use a simple communication strategy (I need help) and could turn on his music.
- The staff reported that Tommy was much more relaxed and content ... so was everyone else!

Questions?

Case Study: Rachel

- Rachel
- 8 years old
- Genetic condition, developmental delays, blindness, seizures



Case Study: Rachel

- The problem:
- Rachel didn't do anything all day long at school
 - She would put her head down, tuck her arm under her vest and look like she was napping
 - Withdrawn/sub-aroused



Case Study: Rachel

- Goal: communication
- Rachel had a communication device, but no access
- Staff would grab her hand and help her hit a switch, but she never initiated this movement and would actively pull away and get irritated

Case Study: Rachel

- The motivator:
- I asked Rachel's Mom what motivated her
 - Sensory
- Sensory stimulation also increased her alertness level



Case Study: Rachel

- Positioning
- I was concerned that Rachel was so “checked out” in her seating system
- Mom said that Rachel sat in a standard rocking chair at home!
 - She didn’t need that much postural support
 - She only “hung” on it
 - Rocking helped to increase her alertness (sensory again) and she would lift her head and engage



Case Study: Rachel

- Rachel trialed a Kid Rock dynamic manual wheelchair
- This moves at the hips and knees in response to client movement
- We had to demonstrate how it worked and encourage her to use the dynamic component
- Once she caught on...happy girl!



Case Study: Rachel

- Switch Type and Placement:
- Rachel was able to access a Jellybean switch by the right side of her head
- If she “checks out”, those around her provide sensory stimulation to increase her overall alertness
- Her initial choices on the communication device were all sensory choices, as this was most motivating



Case Study: Rachel

- Final results:
- Rachel still has many “withdrawn” times throughout her day
- She has sensory choices around her (i.e. attached to her chair) and does seek these out when she chooses
- The dynamic seat has increased her overall alertness at school

Case Study: Rachel

- Final results:
- She does use her communication device, though with a limited amount of vocabulary and not as frequently as I would like
- By having a switch and mount, she can choose to engage when she is alert and ready
- She also touches an iPad for recreation



Questions?

One more thought...

- Some switches are designed to engage the client
 - Lights, buzzers, vibration, texture
- Use with caution
 - The switch often becomes the task, rather than the tool



Let's get Practical!

- Think of that client you are working with
- What strategies may be helpful?

Take Home Message

- Switch Access for people who are not engaged
 - Requires identifying the probable cause of why the client is not engaged
 - Establishing rapport
 - Finding motivators
 - Finding the best switch type and placement
 - Patience!!!

Questions?

Thank You!

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