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This book is a revision of the fifth edition published in 2004. The material has been updated and new information has been included to expand the breadth and depth of the topics covered.

My goal in writing this book was to produce a text that would add to the practice knowledge of the profession, as well as enhance the technical abilities of therapeutic recreation students and clinicians. Ultimately, the purpose of this book is to improve the quality of therapeutic recreation services available to clients.

I wrote the original edition because there was a need for a book that explained how to practice therapeutic recreation. Instead of providing information about the therapeutic recreation services and client characteristics, I wrote a book that emphasized substantive concerns involved in the actual practice of therapeutic recreation. As in the first edition, in this sixth edition many practical guidelines, exercises, and examples are provided throughout the book. In this text I have discussed not only theory, but the implications of theories for the practice of therapeutic recreation.

The text was written to go beyond the common sense approach that utilizes knowledge gained primarily through personal experience. The content of this book includes literature from psychiatry, education, nursing, social work, rehabilitation, and counseling, as well as academic disciplines representing the behavioral sciences. This broad-based foundation provides a scholarly basis for understanding and applying therapeutic recreation processes and techniques. In sum, it can be a valuable resource for those who engage in evidence-based practice.

Finally, I wished to provide a book that is readable and easy to follow. Each chapter adheres to a set format that includes objectives to guide the reader’s learning and a set of reading comprehension questions. This structure is explained in detail in Chapter One.

There have been a number of changes in this edition. Chapter Two—Theories and Therapies—has been expanded to include an exciting new theoretical perspective for therapeutic recreation; positive psychology.
Three—Facilitation Techniques—now includes updated information to guide evidence-based practice, and new segments have been added on Pilates, laughter yoga, and the use of the Wii™ video game systems. Chapter Four—The Therapeutic Recreation Process—has increased emphasis on the assessment of strengths. Chapter Four—also contains a revised TR Intervention Plan developed by my colleague, Bryan McCormick. In Chapter Five, Helping Others— the section on cultural diversity has undergone major updating and expansion. Chapter Seven—Being a Leader—has also been extensively revised. The section on leader concerns has been enlarged to include tips on the modeling behaviors, dealing with members only looking toward the group leader, dealing with group members who monopolize, nonparticipative behavior, termination, and coleadership. A new section on group processing has also been included in Chapter Seven. Added to Chapter Eight has been a section on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). Throughout the book, sections have been expanded and additional tables have been added. Unique elements found in earlier editions of the book have been updated. These include information on drug therapy, therapeutic communication skills, developing self-awareness, models of practice, clinical supervision, and formulating goals and objectives. Over 150 new references appear in this sixth edition. In short, I am excited to be able to present what I believe are, by far, the best revisions ever made to this book.

A word about the choice of terms in this book is in order. The term “client” has been used because it is widely accepted in the world of therapeutic recreation today and is a more universal term than patient, student, or resident. Also, the terms “recreational therapist” or “therapist” have been consistently applied when referring to therapeutic recreation practitioners. I am indebted to many individuals and institutions for assistance in preparation of this book. I am particularly grateful for the work done by my wife, Joan; in addition to co-authoring Chapter Ten, she made many suggestions and edited drafts of the manuscript.

David R. Austin
CHAPTER PURPOSE

Therapeutic recreation accomplishes its goals through the actions of specialists who, as helping professionals, serve clients. To become a competent helping professional, recreational therapists must gain both the theoretical and the technical knowledge necessary for successful practice. An introduction to helping others and to the content and format of the book is presented within this chapter.

KEY TERMS

- Helping relationships
- Objectives
- Theory

OBJECTIVES

- Comprehend the nature of the content contained within this book.
- Grasp what makes the recreational therapist different from the layperson.
- Know the major topics to be covered in this book.
- Understand the format followed in each chapter.
- Recognize that the approach taken within this book is to make the readers the focus of instruction.
Since there are other books on therapeutic recreation, one might ask, “Why add another one to the collection?” One reason might be that an improved version of prior works is needed. However, there are already several well-prepared works among the current therapeutic recreation textbooks. I have written this book because I believe there is a great deal of information regarding therapeutic recreation that has not been covered in previously published textbooks.

Introductory therapeutic recreation textbooks necessarily provide information about therapeutic recreation services and client characteristics but do not deal extensively with the actual delivery of direct client service. This book marks a departure from the survey type of textbooks that have served the profession well as literature for introductory courses in therapeutic recreation. This book will examine the methods of therapeutic recreation. It is aimed toward the how of therapeutic recreation. Although it is based largely on theory, the book covers basic helping skills required in the practice of therapeutic recreation.

**ON HELPING OTHERS**

We in therapeutic recreation require literature that will expand our knowledge of the processes and techniques central to the delivery of direct client services. In successful helping relationships we assist the client to meet a problem or need. If we are to be able to do this better than the client can alone or with family or friends, we must possess more than good intentions. The difference between a layperson’s approach to the client and that of the trained practitioner is that the practitioner bases his or her service on processes and techniques drawn from the theoretical, scientific, and experiential knowledge of his or her profession. People rely recreational therapists to have the theory and skills that will enable them to do things they could not otherwise accomplish alone.

It is therefore critical that basic processes and techniques of therapeutic recreation be thoroughly understood and skillfully applied by those practicing in the profession. This book provides professional information to assist those developing themselves for careers in therapeutic recreation to gain competencies necessary for the provision of quality therapeutic recreation services.

**MAJOR TOPICS COVERED**

**Chapter 1: Basic Concepts**

A brief overview and discussion of this book’s major concepts, purposes, and its organization.
Chapter 2: Theories and Therapies

One distinction between the layperson and the professional is that the professional draws on theory as a basis for action. Differentiating among psychoanalytic, behavioristic, cognitive-behavioral, growth psychology, positive psychology and other theories—and therapeutic approaches related to these orientations—provides a fundamental level of knowledge for recreational therapists.

Chapter 3: Facilitation Techniques

Facilitation techniques such as values clarification, horticulture therapy, therapeutic touch, social skills training, progressive relaxation training, animal-assisted therapy, reality orientation, and reminiscing are less comprehensive in their development than the major theories and therapies presented in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, many facilitation techniques can be used as interventions by recreational therapists.

Chapter 4: The Therapeutic Recreation Process

The therapeutic recreation process is a systematic method of problem solving applied in therapeutic recreation. Through a progression of steps involving assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation, the therapeutic recreation process is utilized to bring about changes in the client and the client’s environment.

Chapter 5: Helping Others

Therapeutic recreation takes place through interpersonal relations. Helping people is a complex act requiring an understanding of both human behavior and what constitutes an effective helper and a helping relationship. This understanding is an essential ingredient for the recreational therapist in order to bring about the therapeutic use of self. The development of self-awareness is vital to recreational therapists, because knowing one’s self is a basic competency necessary for helping others.

Chapter 6: Communication Skills

All interpersonal relationships depend on communication. Without communication, no relationship can exist, because relationships depend on a two-way sharing of ideas and experiences (Sundeen, Stuart, Rankin, & Cohen, 1998). This is unquestionably true in therapeutic recreation; good interpersonal communication is necessary for effective relating with clients in clinical practice.

Chapter 7: Being a Leader

One of the most critical elements in therapeutic recreation is leadership. The interactions that occur between the leader and the client, and among clients, are
central to the success of therapeutic recreation programs. Skills in leadership help the recreational therapist use therapeutic interventions or facilitate client growth. Leadership in therapeutic recreation calls for competencies in dealing with both individuals and groups.

**Chapter 8: Specific Leadership Tasks and Concerns**

Leadership in therapeutic recreation requires knowledge of a number of specific tasks and concerns. Among these tasks and concerns are (1) individual client documentation, (2) incident reports, (3) teaching/learning principles, (4) motivating clients, (5) teamwork, (6) advocacy, (7) the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), and (8) understanding transactions with clients. Areas covered within the section on understanding transactions are self-concept, learned helplessness, the self-fulfilling prophecy, labeling, loneliness, self-efficacy, and attributional processes.

**Chapter 9: Clinical Supervision**

Clinical supervision is a cooperative process between a supervisor and an individual who has direct responsibility for carrying out the agency’s clinical program through work with clients. The supervisor helps the supervisee to improve his or her clinical abilities and to achieve the goals sought for the clinical program. The clinical supervision process has come to be recognized as a key to successful clinical practice of therapeutic recreation.

**Chapter 10: Health and Safety Considerations**

Theory forms the underpinnings for professional practice; however, recreational therapists also must possess certain technical knowledge and skills. Among the areas of technical knowledge that may be required in therapeutic recreation are the use of first aid and safety procedures with members of specific client groups, the proper use of mechanical aids, procedures for transfers and assistive techniques, and information on the effects of commonly used psychotropic and anticonvulsant drugs.

**THIS BOOK’S FORMAT**

Each chapter begins with a brief statement of purpose and key terms, which are followed by a listing of the major objectives for the chapter. At the conclusion of the chapter, reading comprehension questions are provided to guide your reading. They also serve the instructor and students as questions for class discussion. Within the chapter you will find questions or statements heading each section. These questions or statements are often designed to further break down the objectives for the chapter into smaller, more digestible parts.
The Focus of Instruction

You the reader are the central point of focus for this book. The focus is on you and the objectives you must achieve to possess competencies necessary to meet the personal and professional demands that you will face as a recreational therapist. Your mastery of the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required for professional service in therapeutic recreation is critical to your personal success and that of your profession.

The Objectives

The objectives at the beginning of each chapter form a roadmap for learning. Making the purpose clear by the listing of major objectives enhances learning and removes the mystique that sometimes accompanies, and plagues, instruction.

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How does this book claim to differ from the traditional “survey” textbooks often used in therapeutic recreation courses?
2. Why does a recreational therapist need more than “good intentions” in order to practice successfully?
3. What makes the recreational therapist, or any professional helper, different from the layperson?
4. Outline the parts or items found in each chapter.
5. Where is the focus of the book directed?