

What Do Men *Really* Talk About?

'Blokes With Strokes'- A Speech Pathologists Insight...





Why Run Groups? Rationale for Starting “Blokes with Strokes” ...

- Increasing number of younger men with ABI/Stroke reporting lack of ‘meaningful activity’
- Risk of social isolation
- Adjunct to 1:1 therapy in a ‘real life’ setting
- Groups have significant improvements over communicative, psychosocial, performance and economic domains
- Discharge Dilemma ... Where do our clients go?



The Group...

- Men...
- Who have sustained a neurological event
- Inpatient, community client or completed therapy
- Able to contribute to group processes
- May benefit from feedback from therapists and fellow group members.



Group Profile

- Initially stable group of 7 men
Currently 13-15 men attend
- Mix of aetiologies, professions and ages resulting in complimentary range of skills
- Group meets Monday morning
- Social model of health = providing "best care in the best place"





What Do We Do?

- No formal activities designed by Speech Pathologist.
- Extra activities are organised by the men





Case Presentation Harry...

- Harry is 56 year old man
- Hypoxic brain injury secondary to VF arrest 24/9/06
- Harry lives with wife and previously worked full time in his own business

Harry...

- Intact language skills, moderate-severe cognitive impairments which have an impact on communication
- “Therapy in The Home” for Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy and Social Work for rehabilitation.
- Demonstrated reduced insight
- Followed recommendations but remained determined to return to work and driving.



Harry...

- Commenced group as an inpatient facilitating transition home
- Group enabled assessment of cognitive difficulties in more natural and demanding setting
- Men provided direct feedback to Harry which assisted improving insight



Harry...

- Reduced insight = decreased motivation in 1:1 speech sessions
- Blokes with Strokes = opportunity for Harry to use strategies and he garnered insight through his success and failures.



Harry said:

- "I like it (the group). I like seeing men who are like me.. It shows the improvements I have made as other men are worse than me"
- On the Speech Pathologists "hold the group together... challenge you...force you to talk.. they are the catalyst"



Speech Pathology Role in Groups:

- Facilitates communication
- Clarifies/Focus
- Summarises
- Provides feedback, encourages peer feedback
- Provides resources
- Create and maintain supportive environment.





Direct Focus:

- Turn taking
- Word finding
- Idea generation
- Memory
- Speed of processing
- Verbal fluency
- Logic and reasoning
- Planning and organisation



Indirect Focus:

- Self monitoring
- Reducing burden of communication
- Use of natural clarification strategies
- Respecting other people's opinions/views
- Decrease dependence on primary speech therapist
- Increase self-esteem
- Increase self confidence
- Socialisation



Challenges...

- Difficult to show clear outcomes
- Group dependence on Therapist
- Transport
- Staffing
- Group size...?too big



Future Directions:

- Volunteer support
- Include inpatients to further develop the focus of group to assist with the transition from ward - home

So What do Men talk about?

When in a group...

With others who have had a similar life
experience...





A: Anything & Everything

When...

- Given plenty of time
- With “Blokes” who have some understanding

So what do Men *Really* Talk About?....

Nigella Lawson and how to attract women with dogs...



