

President Report

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President's Report - Don't Know What You've Got 'Til It's Gone

Allow me to use myself as a case study for a reflection on the power of occupation and the value of everyday participation.

Remember that ice storm in December? I waited until the ice (almost) melted to slip and break my right ankle. As I write this, I have my leg propped up in a purple cast and non-weight-bearing for an undetermined number of weeks. Then I'll progress to partial WB and a walking boot. My orthopedist says that recovery will take a season - until spring. Those of you who have broken bones and sprained ligaments recognize the process.

As a result, my occupations are challenged, reminding me of the truth in songwriter Joni Mitchell's classic "Big Yellow Taxi" that "you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone."

Gone are routines like 5:30 a.m. exercise, Friday night ballroom dancing, neighborhood walks, and driving. Added are occupational adaptations in mobility (my Roll-a-Bout is creating a left Bun of Steel and equipped with a pink bike horn), scooting items around the kitchen on the counters, showering on a bench, and accepting graciously offered rides to work and extracurricular activities. Advice that we freely give to clients and families. Yet taking one's own medicine is a humbling experience.

All of which brings me to the point that our work in developing, restoring, and adapting occupations is vitally important, in both effect and meaning, to society. Participation in necessary and chosen occupations is an immeasurable blessing that becomes conscious once occupations are challenged by context, illness, or injury.

Students learning the art and science of occupational therapy and practitioners providing it through education, consultation, and occupation-based practice should take pride in the everyday miracles you work.