

HOLISTIC
CIRCUS
THERAPY



EMPOWERING
INDIVIDUALS AND
COMMUNITIES THROUGH

ENGAGEMENT

In CIRCUS
ARTS



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

is concerned with the connection between the activities people pursue for self-care, productivity, leisure and their overall health and well-being.



Health is viewed, in occupational therapy, as more than the absence of disease, and strongly influenced by what people do in everyday life (CAOT, 2002). Occupational therapists share the belief that engagement in activities, which provide a mix of challenging and achievable tasks, promotes health and well-being among individuals and communities.

The occupational therapy sector continually tries to use innovative and creative ways to help clients achieve balance and a greater sense of well-being in their lives. Occupational therapists work with people who have various limitations in physical, cognitive and emotional functioning.

The benefit of combining circus and occupational therapy lies in its ability to increase coordination, body awareness, team work, problem solving, perseverance, fitness, strength, and the acquisition of life skills for various populations.





HOLISTIC CIRCUS THERAPY®

Uses circus as an empowerment and educational tool for individuals and communities.

Activities are client centered to reflect the interests, goals and functional levels of participants.

Tasks are continually graded to be challenging yet achievable, therefore increasing self - motivation to participate and engage in the therapeutic process.

Interventions focus on increasing capacities which enable participants to thrive and experience success in achieving their self-care, leisure and productivity goals.

Circus, as a discipline, provides a variety of experiences and activities which facilitates positive emotional, physical and mental health outcomes.

Occupational therapy and circus promote a better quality of life using the experience of play, fun and creative expression.



BENEFITS

1

EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Interacting in appropriately pitched circus activities promotes turn-taking, leadership, communication, empathy, expression, trust and dependability.

2

PHYSICAL HEALTH

The activities used in HCT® increase body awareness, circulation, strength, tone and flexibility

3

COGNITIVE FUNCTION

Circus works the brain. The varied activities, equipment, and structured repetition, provide individuals with opportunities to increase gross and fine motor control, visual perceptual abilities, sequencing, sense of rhythm and timing, reactions, coordination, bimanual hand use, and concentration.



4

SOCIAL HEALTH

Circus skills assist in the formation of healthy peer interaction as well as provide opportunities for teamwork. Utilizing an occupational therapy approach, an important part of this program is focused on discovering and highlighting each individual's strengths. The "life skills" acquired by the participants contribute to how they function socially, as well as their ability to positively contribute to their communities.

LIFE SKILLS

Circus promotes the acquisition of life skills essential for healthy development.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

BODY AWARENESS

COMMUNICATION

PHYSICAL AND
SOCIAL SUPPORT

LEADERSHIP

SOCIAL
CONNECTEDNESS

PROBLEM
SOLVING



ACTIVITIES

CLOWNING AND THEATRE GAMES involve games and activities that are achievable for everyone and encourage various forms of verbal and non-verbal communication, reciprocation, establishing eye contact, and planning behaviors. The activities involve running, jumping, crawling and balancing. Social interaction, problem solving, and a wide range of motor experiences are explored.

ACROBALANCE AND YOGA activities promote physical, cognitive, and social health. Normalizing reactions to touch, building core strength and body awareness of self and others are important components of this activity and are encouraged through physical contact involving different positions where participants combine body parts to make a shape. Acrobalance can involve as little as two people or an infinite amount of people.

BALANCED BASED ACTIVITIES strengthen the vestibular system while encouraging participants to become familiar with their limitations. Body awareness and trust of oneself and a spotter is promoted. These activities also provide the opportunity for increasing challenges by incorporating multiple skills at the same time.

MANIPULATION: JUGGLING, HULA HOOP, PLATE SPINNING, POI activities address gross and fine motor control providing repetition and practice of specific motor skills. Gross motor skills are necessary for proper body movement and are the foundation upon which fine motor skills develop. Focusing on an individual's gross motor skills can improve handwriting, social interaction, and self-esteem. The various activities provide opportunities for participants to improve coordination, sense of timing, and rhythm. Perseverance and problem solving is encouraged while participants engage in bimanual hand use and crossing the midline to manipulate, grasp and reach different objects.

PERFORMANCE - INFORMAL AND STRUCTURED performance provides goal-setting opportunities for the participants, enabling them to see achievable results from their work while appreciating the accomplishments of others. Performance opportunities promote:

- Motivation for engagement.
- Opportunity for positive risk taking
- Spontaneity and improvisation
- Creativity-combining skills into a sequence.
- Opportunity for collaboration.
- Exploration of theatrical themes and states of being.



JILL MAGLIO

Jill Maglio is a licensed and registered occupational therapist who founded Holistic Circus Therapy® in 2007. HCT® combines occupational therapy with circus arts to address the unique health and wellbeing needs of individuals and communities worldwide.

Jill has developed circus programs in Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, France, Greece and North America and has trained over 1000 people in the methodology she has developed.

In 2016 Jill launched CircusAid, a social and emotional support service for political and environmental refugees.

Jill's involvement with circus intervention research has been published in the Australian Journal of Occupational Therapy and was noted for her innovative work on community circus and the acquisition of life skills. See the [article here](#)

Jill Maglio has pioneered the use of circus within the field of occupational therapy.



HOLISTIC CIRCUS THERAPY®

Holistic Circus Therapy (HCT) is a registered and accredited occupational therapy practice that combines occupational therapy evidence based practices with circus arts to address the unique health and well-being needs of individuals and communities.

HCT partners with educational institutions, community centers and disability service providers to enable people with varying abilities and social pressures the opportunity to access and benefit from circus and performing arts programs.

HCT has been in existence since 2007 and runs as a social enterprise donating 100% of profits from individual and group client services and professional development trainings to generate funds for CircusAid projects.

For training learning objectives please open this [link](#)

See one of our past trainings from 2019 [here](#)

CONTACT US

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