

The Impact of the Educational Therapist's Therapeutic Relationship on Learning: Getting Rid of the Bad, Stupid, Lazy, and Crazy, Incorrect Self-Diagnoses, and Creating Successful Experiences

**AET National Conference
Friday, November 5**

Sheryl K. Pruitt, M.Ed., ET/P
2022

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Educational Therapist




The stated goal of educational therapy, according to AET, is to foster the development of self-confident independent individuals who feel positive about themselves and their potential as lifelong learners.

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Educational Therapist



- Has an extensive educational background in special education.
- Works collaboratively with psychiatrists, neurologists, neuropsychologists, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, educators and other healthcare professionals.
- Has a mission to help people get well.

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Comprehensive



- Looks at all aspects of client's life.
- Reads all evaluations and records.
- Interviews the client.
- Interviews the family.
- Talks to all professionals working with client.

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Collaborative



- Work as a team.
- Allow everyone's opinion to be respected and heard.
- Have varied professionals to allow symptoms identified to come from different points of view.

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Why Is The Relationship With An Educational Therapist A Therapeutic Relationship?



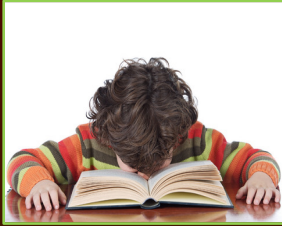
To understand the relationship with the student is a therapeutic relationship.

To realize that that relationship can lead to a student becoming available to learn when the student had previously given up or turned to negative behavioral responses due to an inability to meet the educational demands.

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Client-Centered




- Make sure the client comes first.
- Recognize when client is not available.
- Help the client to become available to learn.
- Make the client feel safe.

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Why Is The Relationship With An Educational Therapist A Therapeutic Relationship?




- It is well understood that relationships that build trust are the cornerstone of educational therapy.
- The therapeutic relationship established by the educational therapist with the student allows the student to persist in the face of adversity.

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Educational Therapist



Another distinguishing feature of the educational therapist's skill set is the ability to apply a breadth of creative strategies that positively impact a student's performance.

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Advantage of Having Learning Disability Training and Experience



- Educationally: reading reports, looking at the educational performance, and knowing what remediation will be successful.
- Behaviorally: teaching why and how to behave.
- Socially: understanding that teaching a social skills curriculum is necessary for success.

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Educational Therapist



The educational therapist has more tricks than just subject matter information: alternative learning techniques, professional resources, information for the community, support for the student and family, and support for the school.

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Clinically Based




- Rely on quality educational proven strategies.
- Base information where possible on research.
- Keep up in the field.
- Go to training on a continuous basis.

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Educational Therapist

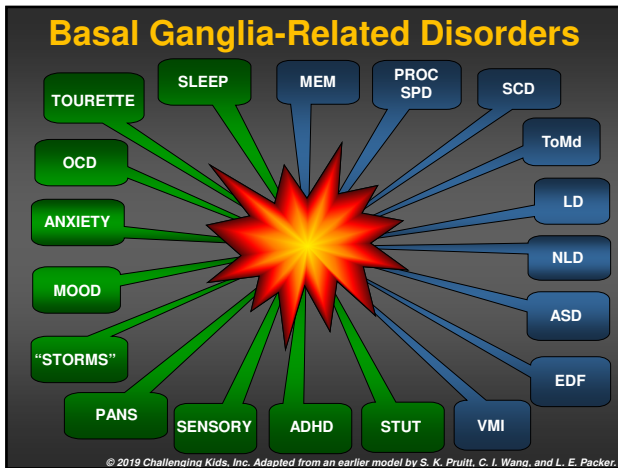


The educational therapist has the training to know when to refer for further diagnoses.

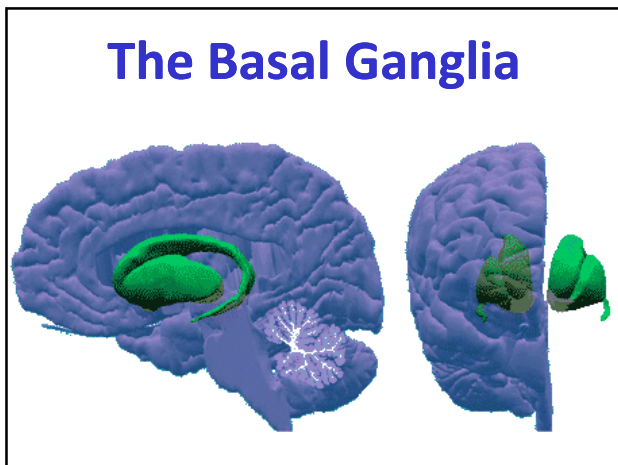
Finally, the educational therapist must educate the student and family to help clarify any misconceptions about the impact of the diagnosis on learning.

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ADHD



**Lumpers
vs.
Splitters**




Images by M. Connors

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Tips and Strategies for OCD



"I can't go to school because I can't keep the people from touching my stuff!"

- Reduce handwriting.
- Do not give more than student can finish in allotted time.
- Remove triggers for compulsive behavior if possible, e.g., use of word processor instead of handwriting.

© 2005 Challenging Kids, Inc.

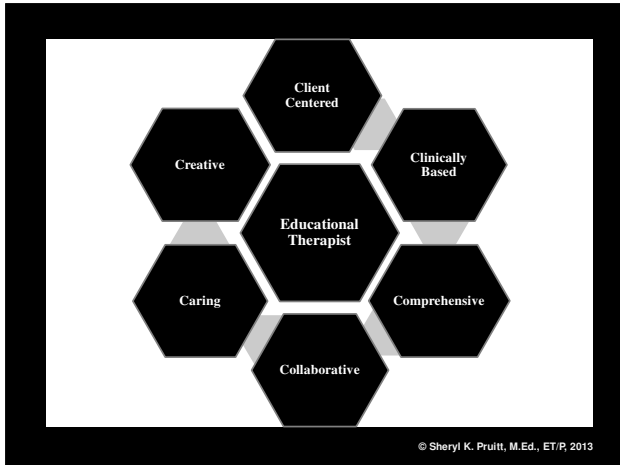
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The knowledge of side effects of medications that can impact school and homework performance.

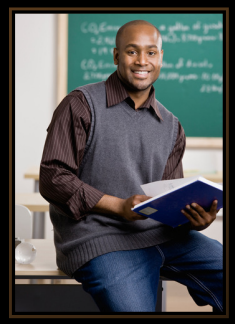
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Educational Therapist Premise



If the student does not give me the right answer, maybe I am not asking the right question.

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Sky and Echo Smart Pen by Live Scribe



- Pen that is a computer.
- Built-in microphone.
- What is written is linked to audio.
- Tap on any word and play the audio recorded at the time it was written.
- Sky is Wi-Fi compatible.

<http://www.livescribe.com/en-us/>

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Bookshare



- Free online library of digital books for people with disabilities.
- Exception to the copyright law for people with disabilities.
- Download textbooks and read in a text to read program or display book on computer screen.

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MOVEMENT



Prepositions

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What Do You Mean
I Can Study Better
Listening To Music?!

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Treatment



Three-Legged Stool Theory

Remember: All three legs are essential!

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The Executive Functions Are the Cuing of the Executive Skills!



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Hallmarks of Executive Function Skills Include Difficulties with:



The "Dreaded Book Bag Diagnostic Test"

- Goal Setting
- Organizing
- Initiating
- Shifting Flexibly
- Prioritizing
- Using Feedback
- Pacing
- Inhibiting
- Planning
- Self-monitoring
- Sequencing
- Executing

© 1999 L.W. Walter, S.K. Prullitt & L.E. Packer . Photo Credit: C. Wang

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INITIATE



- Routines with checklists
- Verbal or visual cue to start
- Work with peers
- Break up tasks
- Activity before starting
- Provide model work sample
- Teach brainstorming
- Pick topics of interest

© Sheryl K. Pruitt, M.Ed., 2001

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Executing Strategy



- Use the body double.
- Use checklists to make sure everything is done.
- Use a program like Outlook or a phone alarm to remind self about what is left.

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When a child with EDF sees a large problem that they can't comprehend and deal with as a whole, the typical reaction is:

Anxiety

Terror

Depression

-- Glenn S. Hirsch, M.D.

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Organization



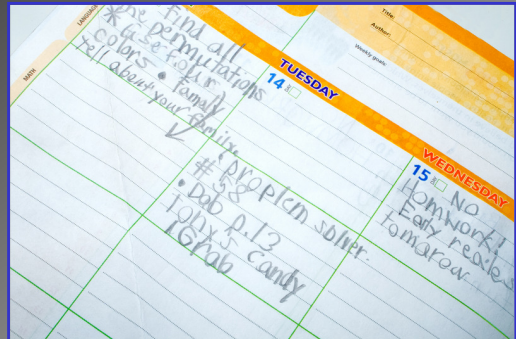
Filing Cabinet
or
Trash Can?

Internal
or
External
Organizer?

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Is the Battle Over the Assignment Book Worth It?



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DIFFICULTIES WITH LONG TERM PROJECTS



- Picking topics
- Getting started
- Breaking assignments into parts
- Evaluating performance
- Having finished product
- Planning assignments
- Gathering materials
- Determining deadlines
- Self-monitoring
- Estimating time

Educators Handbook Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada, 2001


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What makes you think that if you yell, she will be able to shift?

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When you say YES it means when?

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Blurt Blockers

- Put your hand in front of your mouth.
- Write your question on a piece of paper so you can wait without forgetting.

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**Teach them
to do it now --
not later!
Later is a lie!**

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Human Editor



Everyone benefits from a human editor but a student with executive dysfunction needs to know to ask for help with editing. In college, students who qualify can get assistance if they ask.

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Knowing the Need for Post-Secondary Support



- Learning how to ask for help.
- Getting supportive personnel.
- Executive functioning coach.
- Qualifying for disability services.
- Helping the family know when to intervene and when not to.

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Social Difficulties



One of the leading causes of teenage depression is social failure.

The impact of social failure can be deadly!

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Behavior



- Do not paint behaviors with only one brush!
- Clarify why negative behavioral responses are due to an inability to meet educational demands.
- Understand why being the class clown or bad kid is better than looking stupid!

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What Is The Communication?



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Who Owns the Problem?

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“He’s just not motivated!”

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Bad Day!?!



- Neurochemistry
- Brain “off”
- Medication problem
- Problem at home
- Illness
- Lack of sleep
- Unable to do it!

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Curiosity vs Judgment!



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Fair Is Not Equal!



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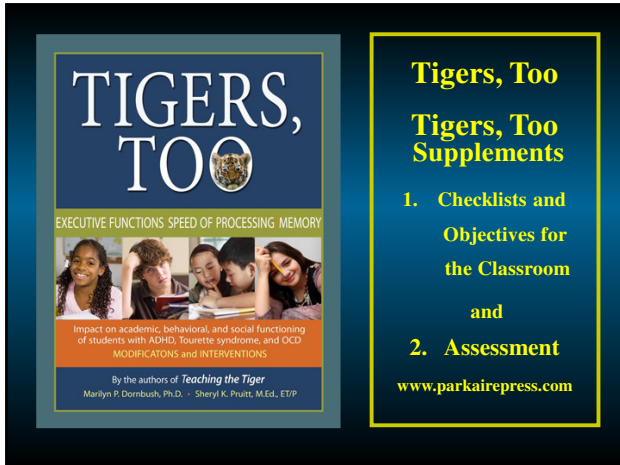
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Just Try Harder!



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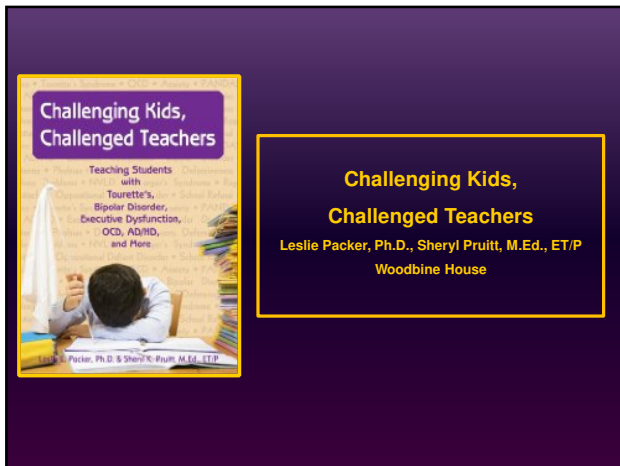


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2. Assessment**

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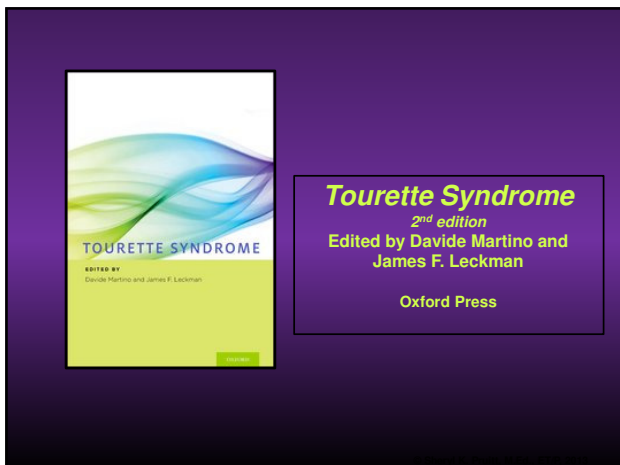
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**Challenging Kids,
Challenged Teachers**

Leslie Packer, Ph.D., Sheryl Pruitt, M.Ed., ET/P
Woodbine House

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Tourette Syndrome
2nd edition
Edited by Davide Martino and
James F. Leckman

Oxford Press

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Credits....


Thanks go to Leslie Packer, Ph. D. for her constant support and contributions for several of the power point slides used here today.

Thanks also to Marilyn Dornbush, Ph.D. and Warren Walter, Ph.D. for their contributions and support to several power point slides today.

Thanks especially to my husband, Daniel G. Pruitt, PCC, SCAC, who has been my supporter, partner in our clinic, my publisher, and a contributor to this presentation.

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Dedication

This program is cheerfully dedicated to the author's family, who have cleverly managed to have almost every problem described. Any problem my husband and I did not have I gave birth to. They are my first, and best, teachers.

© Shari Zellars Photography, 2009

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