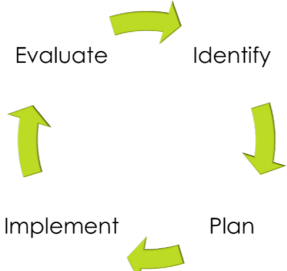


Re-connecting:
Using Facebook for Social Networking after an Acquired Brain Injury




Anita Hamilton, Judy Lin, Sarah Langenhoff, Erika Bannert, Nicole Anstey & Lily Ma.

Participatory Action Research

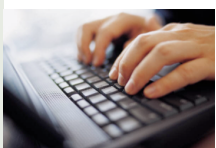



Participatory Action Research is aligned with occupational therapy as it values participant collaboration for meaningful research outcomes.

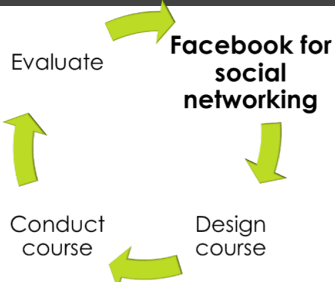
(Cockburn & Trentham, 2002)

Through our evaluation we identified

- Typing skills
- Computer set-up & accessibility
- Online security, passwords & banking
- Facebook





Identify




The emerging digital divide

- Cyberspace is not universally accessible (Fok et al., 2009)
- Cognitive-linguistic barriers and technology design barriers can prevent individuals with TBI from accessing the internet (Egan, Worrall, & Oxenham, 2005)
- "Digital literacy" disability (Fok et al., 2009)



Overcoming the digital divide

- Accessibility of Cyberspace (creating courses)
 - Egan, Worrall, & Oxenham, 2005
 - Sohlberg et al., 2005
- Internet training for individuals with ABI:
 - Moderate to high levels of independence achieved in internet use
 - Increased social connectedness




What are the risks?

- Online predators
- Exposure to unknown people
- Personal Difficulties
 - Remembering passwords or leaving open pages unattended
 - Forgetting procedures
 - Decision making
 - Awareness to potential problem
 - Impulsive responding




What are the benefits?

- Individuals with brain injuries often face the challenge of integration in their communities (Egan, Worrall, & Oxenham, 2005)
- Loneliness, depression, and social isolation have been reported as long-term mental health concerns in individuals with brain injuries (Crisp, 1994)

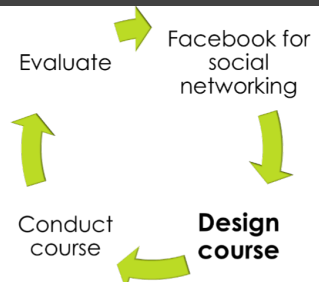


What are the benefits?

- Internet encourages new practices of social interaction (Vaccaro et al., 2007)
- Internet is a major source of information and a vehicle for increasing knowledge (2007)
- Opportunity to connect with people of similar interests/experiences
- Maintain and expand social connections



Plan




```

    graph TD
      Evaluate --> FB[Facebook for social networking]
      FB --> Design[Design course]
      Design --> Conduct[Conduct course]
      Conduct --> Evaluate
    
```


Concentration

- Small chunks of information
- Demonstrated in class
- Time to practise
- Planned breaks




Memory

- Manual for at home practise
- Summary sheets
- Linked steps
- Personal relevance
- EBIRS Facebook Profile




Frustration

- Step by step approach to teaching
- Guided practise
- Review with one to one assistance
- Technical Difficulties



Physical limitations

- Fatigue easily
 - Plan breaks
- Vision
- One-handed typing
 - Keyboard selection
 - Workstation set up
 - Hunt and Peck Typing




Overview of the course

- Five sessions of 2 hours
- Online privacy and safety
- Class 1: Finding Friends, Updating Privacy, Writing on Walls
- Class 2: Status Update, Posting Links, Sharing Photos
- Class 3: Tagging Photos, Joining Groups, Likes & Dislikes
- Class 4: Sending Messages, Blocking, Participant's Choice
- Class 5: Review



Our participants

1. Sherry, female, 40-45
2. Emily, female, 28-32
3. Maureen, female, 50-55
4. Hanna, female, 50-55
5. William, male, 55-60 - chose not to participate in interviews




All names changed to protect identity

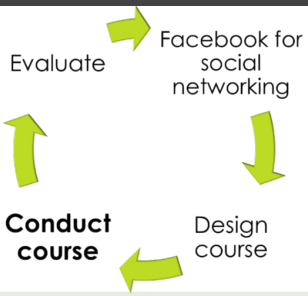
The course in progress

Learning stories and concerns brought up so far:

- Starting out slow
- Taking breaks
- Difficulties finding people they know
- YouTube
- Use of Facebook chat
- Participant focused (feedback)

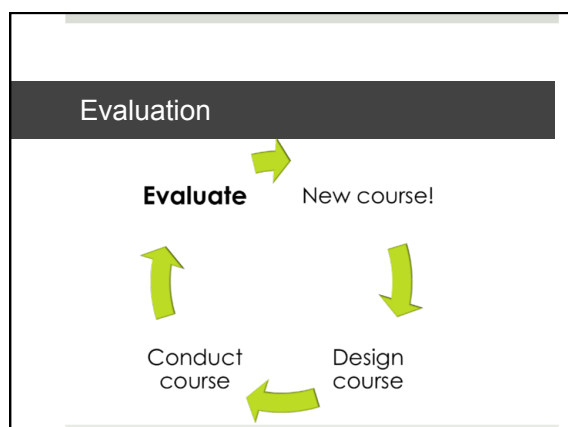


Implementation



```

    graph TD
      Evaluate --> Facebook[Facebook for social networking]
      Facebook --> Design[Design course]
      Design --> Conduct[Conduct course]
      Conduct --> Evaluate
  
```



In summary

- **Safe and effective use Web 2.0** tools, like blogs and Facebook, are excellent ways enable people to connect with self, others and information.
- Accessing the virtual world using a computer is now a **mainstream activity of daily living** & enhances feelings of connection & belonging.
- Enabling people to access a computer and participate in the virtual environment is therefore **part of our role as occupational therapists**.

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Questions and contact details

Please feel free to contact us for further information, we will be happy to share our resources with you.
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