

Balancing the Scales

Internal and External Factors
that Influence Connection,
Communication and Learning

Kimberly Lauger, BSN, RN, Certified HANDLE® Practitioner
Kristina Manning, MA, TVI, Teacher for the Deaf
Megan Mogan, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist

First presented at the 2013 CHARGE Syndrome Conference

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger, Kristina Manning, Megan Mogan, note individual slides

1

Multiple diagnoses

As a parent of a child with a complex syndrome, we are often hit with one diagnosis after another. We are told what is “wrong,” which can lead to a sense of despair and hopelessness.

What we want to know is *what is right* and *what can we do* to help/support our child.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

2

Multiple diagnoses

As a teacher or provider we read the file. We are told what is “wrong” often leading to a sense of fear and a paralysis of not knowing where to start.

What we want to know is *what is right* and *what can we do* to help this student?

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

3

Even with the diagnoses, we notice how our child/student learns and what they do changes moment by moment.

Sometimes they “do” better than others.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

4

What influences that change?

•Internal factors: Everything going on inside the person.

•External factors: Everything going on outside the person.

“All people change moment by moment based on everything going on inside of and around them.”

Kimberly Lauger 2013

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

5

When internal factors and external supports are balanced, human function is optimal.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

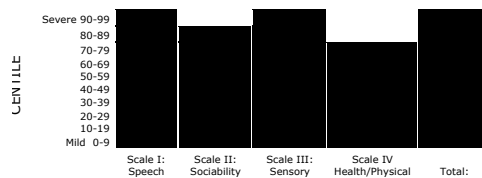
6

Understanding these factors
guides us to what to do,
contributing to a
sense of *hope* and *possibility*.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

7

•Figure 1: Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist at Baseline May 1, 2002



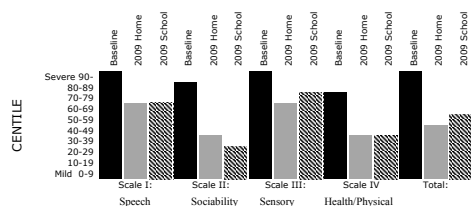
Case study to illustrate change in function for one student.

Year of greatest concern with total score in the 90-99th percentile for severity of symptoms of the autism spectrum

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

8

Figure 2: Autism Treatment Evaluation Baseline (May, 2002) and Follow-Up (April, 2009)



During Dylan's "magical year", his total score dropped to the 45th to 55th percentile for severity of symptoms.

This corresponded with noticeable improvement in self-regulation and ability to interact and learn.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

9

Internal Factors

Everything going on inside a person

- Physical feelings and sensations
- Emotional feelings and states
- How the body processes information
- How the body is made and how that influences access to information such as vision or hearing loss
- How the body functions such as ability to digest food well, integrate sensory information, and self-regulate
- Acute illness



Photo Credit Kimberly Lauger, 2013, All Rights Reserved

As parents and educators/providers we do not have direct control here.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

10

External Factors

Everything going on around a person



Photo Credit Kimberly Lauger, 2013, All Rights Reserved

- The physical environment such as lights, sounds, smells, movement and who is there
- How information is presented and use of educational strategies such as wait time, partial participation, rituals and routines, hand under hand
- Level of expectations, does the expectation match the student's internal ability to meet that demand or is it too much

External factors influence internal factors positively or negatively. This is where we have the ability to influence change.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

11



Photo Credit Kimberly Lauger, 2013, All Rights Reserved



Photo Credit Kimberly Lauger, 2013, All Rights Reserved

When internal and external factors are out of balance, the body experiences stress.

We see things like increased repetitive, obsessive, and other challenging behaviors; increased illness; decreased sleep, decreased attention and decreased availability for exploration, interaction, and learning.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

12



Photo Credits Kimberly Lauger, 2013, All Rights Reserved

When internal and external factors are balanced,
stress is managed and people function better.

We see more connection, communication, learning, and ease.

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger

13

External Factors: Educational Strategies

Kristina Manning, MA, TVI, Teacher for the Deaf

© 2013 Kristina Manning

14

Creating a Community

Establish common, accessible language and symbols

Create thematic, functional learning

Build routines, patterns, rituals

Control the schedule, environment

Recruit partners

Take ownership

© 2013 Kristina Manning

15

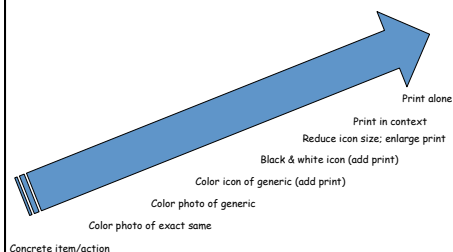
Establish Accessible Language, Symbols

- Use Vygotsky to promote natural language acquisition through peer partnership
- Teach symbols through use by peers in context
- See Ladder of Abstraction

© 2013 Kristina Manning

16

Ladder of Abstraction:



Adapted by K. Manning from Dr. Jane Erin (lecture), 2005

© 2013 Kristina Manning

17

Create Thematic Functional Learning

- Literature (EVERYONE READS)
- SMARTBoard technology
- Differentiated Instruction
- Themes that apply to students' lives now
- Ties to CBI, Science, Math
- Create class-made experience books
- Reliving = retelling

© 2013 Kristina Manning

18

Build Routines, Patterns, Rituals

- Predictable Sequencing
- Use motor memory
- Control the Environment
- Only the topic is new
- Allow no external interruptions
- Build Anticipation for Application
- CBI trips
- Reveal newest experience book

© 2013 Kristina Manning

19

Control Class Schedule and Environment

- Practice extreme environmental engineering
- See Neurological Visual Triggers Slide
- Strictly limit pull-outs; collaborate on pull-ins
- Hang a "stop" sign outside the door; wear earplugs

© 2013 Kristina Manning

20

How do we get the brain to look?

Neurological Visual Triggers

include:

- Color contrast
- Light sources
- Movement
- Lack of visual "clutter"
- Lack of glare
- Favored topics/items



Controlling the environment for neurological visual triggers helps the brain look.

Adapted from Dr. Christine Roman-Lantzy, AFB Press, 2007
Kristina Manning, M.A.

© 2013 Kristina Manning

21

Recruit Partners

- Team Planning!
- Intervener
- (HI, VI teachers--if that's not you)
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Orientation & Mobility Specialist
- ASL, OT, PT
- Admin (funding, CBI vehicles)
- Parents
- General Education Neighbors

© 2013 Kristina Manning

22

Take Ownership

- YOU must become THE teacher.
- (You can do it.)
- Fight for the right to follow student needs in developing curriculae based on living participants.
- Ask for what you need, but be willing to make decisions.
- BELIEVE!!!

© 2013 Kristina Manning

23

External Factors: Communication Strategies

Megan Mogan, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist

© 2013 Megan Mogan

24

Non-Traditional Support Services for Non-Traditional Learners

- Adapt to a push-in model (vs. pullout)
 - Engineer your caseload and schedule starting at the beginning of the school year
 - Prioritize your push-in students based on classroom teacher's limited options for scheduling

© 2013 Megan Mogan

25

Non-Traditional Support Services for Non-Traditional Learners

- Accept overlapping areas of expertise in a team model (we are all here for the same reason)
 - Model your specific knowledge and skill set through instruction
 - Know when to rely on other team members' unique backgrounds and skills

© 2013 Megan Mogan

26

Non-Traditional Support Services for Non-Traditional Learners

- Build *observation* into service delivery time and let this guide subsequent instruction
 - Observation of team members (collaborators)
 - Learn their routine and identify successful strategies
 - Learn their teaching and communication style
 - Observation of students
 - DO NOT intervene at first!
 - Learn how they access, understand, and express information

© 2013 Megan Mogan

27

Pushing in(to) Thematic Learning

- The concepts you are teaching do not change, only the topic does!
 - Play the same games
 - Utilize the same vocabulary templates
 - Practice the same conversational “scripts”
 - Model the same role-play scenarios
 - Work off the same sight word list
 - Use the same literacy formats and tools

© 2013 Megan Mogan

28

The Future...

- If you bond with your fellow educators/team members, your students WILL bond with their fellow peers.
- If you take the time to intentionally observe your students, you WILL provide richer instruction as a result.
- If you are committed to structure and routine, your students WILL regulate themselves for learning.
- If you are having fun, your students WILL have fun!

© 2013 Megan Mogan

29

•Kimberly Lauger, klauger@centurylink.net www.handle.org
 •Kristina Manning, kristina.manning@asdb.az.gov
 •Megan Mogan, megan.mogan@asdb.az.gov

© 2013 Kimberly Lauger, Kristina Manning, Megan Mogan, note individual slides

30