



# OT 24 Hour Virtual Exchange

October 29/30/31

[Depending on where you are]

## Exploring Balance



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### *English*

#### **The *ideal* of balance: Considering entrenched disadvantage and policy in context**

In Western contexts, having a meaningful and ‘balanced’ life appears to be the ultimate goals or *ends* that we seek as occupational beings. A review of interdisciplinary literature which explored the concept of balance, determined that life balance could be possible through regular participation in diverse occupations for health (Wilcock, 1998), identity (Matuska & Christiansen, 2009; Phelan & Kinsella, 2009) and meaning (Albrecht & Devlieger, 1999; Matuska & Christiansen). From an occupational perspective, Matuska and Christiansen’s (2008; 2009) theory of life balance further attested that such a proposition also required a combination of having the skills and competencies to effectively use time and manage resources for wellbeing and quality of life.

This paper presents an alternative view of ‘balance’ from an occupational perspective by presenting findings from the author’s doctoral research into the existential realities of living with entrenched disadvantage resulting from poverty, disability and other social issues in context with Australian social inclusion policy. In doing so, it challenges Western, individualistic and reductionistic views and assumptions of life balance, including ideas surrounding skills, mastery, competence, time use and resource attainment relative to ‘doing’, adaptation and quality of life. It does so by sharing some of the participants’ narrative accounts of everyday occupational participation and the influence of *context*, such as the impact of *policy* on occupation, participation and ideologies of inclusion (Gidley et al., 2010).



**Spanish / Español**

## **El *ideal* del equilibrio: Considerando desventajas arraigadas y la política social en contexto**

En el contexto occidental, teniendo una vida con sentido y "equilibrio" parece ser el objetivo final o *fin*es que buscamos como seres ocupacionales. Una revisión de la literatura interdisciplinaria que exploró el concepto del equilibrio, determinó que el equilibrio de la vida podría ser posible a través de la participación regular en diversas ocupaciones para la salud (Wilcock, 1998), la identidad (Matuska y Christiansen, 2009; Phelan y Kinsella, 2009) y sentido (Albrecht y Devlieger, 1999; Matuska y Christiansen). Desde el punto de vista ocupacional, la teoría del equilibrio de la vida de Matuska y de Christiansen (2008, 2009) promovió que tal proposición también se requiere el ser humano de obtener una combinación de habilidades y competencias para utilizar el tiempo eficazmente y administrar recursos para el bienestar y calidad de vida.

Éste discurso presenta una propuesta alternativa del "equilibrio" desde una perspectiva ocupacional por medio de una exploración de los resultados de la investigación doctoral del autor, sobre las realidades existenciales de las vidas de personas con desventajas arraigadas debido a la pobreza, la discapacidad y otros temas sociales en el contexto de la política australiana de la inclusión social. De este modo, cuestiona suposiciones occidentales que son presentadas en forma individualista y reduccionista del equilibrio de la vida, incluyendo ideas en torno a las habilidades, el dominio, la competencia, el uso del tiempo y recursos para 'hacer', la adaptación ocupacional y la calidad de vida. Las críticas son presentadas por medio de unas narrativas de los participantes y la influencia y rol del *contexto*, tales como el impacto de la *política social* en relación a la ocupación, la participación y las ideologías de la inclusión (Gidley et al., 2010).

### **References:**

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