Talking with Pictures

Using PhotoVoice to Make a Difference for Yourself and Others
Talking with Pictures:
Using PhotoVoice to Make a Difference for Yourself and Others

Presenters:
• Tim Coughlin, Lexington Resident
• Shaun Grady, Lexington Resident
• Julie Miller, Lexington Resident
• Lisa Hemingway, Lexington Resident
• J. Dennis Hogle, Lexington Resident
• Laura Lorenz, PhD, MEd, Supportive Living, Inc.
• Therese O’Neil-Pirozzi, ScD, CCC-SLP, Northeastern University and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
• Ramya Ramakrishna, HSSP major, Brandeis University
• R. Richard Sanders, MS, MS-CCC, MTS, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
• Angela Vianni, OT student, Boston University

This project was supported by a grant from the Dana Home Foundation.
OUTLINE

• Introduction (Rick Sanders) 10 minutes
• This project (Laura Lorenz) 10 minutes
• Our results (Participants) 20 to 25 minutes
• An education process (Interns) 10 minutes
• Enhancing cognitive aspects (Therese O’Neil-Pirozzi) 10 minutes
• Q&A (Audience and panelists) 20 minutes
• Reflect and close (Laura Lorenz) 5 minutes
Now let’s hear from Rick Sanders, who will tell us how PhotoVoice came to Massachusetts...
A picture is worth...
A thousand words
What if...

• The camera was in the hands of a woman who didn’t have the words to tell her story
• Or in the hands of a man whose words weren’t often heard
• Or perhaps the photographs they took helped them to then find the words
And then...

- Others would understand the experiences and perspectives of those who took the pictures.
- And community awareness would lead to changes in:
  - Acceptance
  - Accommodation
  - Value
- And there would be a place, a place of equality, for all in the community.
What is PhotoVoice?

Photovoice uses photographs to show the ideas and experiences of community members whose perspectives are often hidden from view.

PhotoVoice is fun AND educational.
It all started in 2005 when...

• Laura approached Rick about doing a pilot PhotoVoice study
• Purpose: To understand living with a brain injury
• Laura & Rick worked on the protocol for 6 months
• Protocol approved in December 2005
• Rick recruited 6 participants
• The pilot PhotoVoice study became part of Laura’s dissertation
• Later she brought PhotoVoice to the Framingham Amazing Brain Injury support group
Now let’s look at PhotoVoice photos and captions from two people, from 2005 and 2006...
It was supposed to make a point
I keep getting confused and lost
Now everything is disorganized
I feel like I’m living in chaos and it’s hopeless
These are appropriate pictures
I get confused in here
I’ll forget
I just, trying to organize things in my brain
I want to laugh at myself
I was taking pictures of the confusion
My thoughts no longer correspond to action. Thus, putting things in places that have no meaning: like keys in the freezer.
New depth of acceptance. In my 17th year of recovery, I am no longer shamed by lack of hair and scar. It represents a new freedom, pride in what I have overcome.
Now Laura will introduce the PhotoVoice project “Talking with Pictures” that took place last fall in Lexington, Massachusetts...
“Talking with Pictures” – Fall 2015

**Participants**
- 5 Lexington residents aged 53-69
- 3 Student interns
- 1 Facilitator

**Stakeholders**
- Cary Memorial Library
- Lexington Senior Services
- Council on Aging
- Church of Our Redeemer
- Minuteman Senior Services
- Commission on Disability
  - And YOU!

**Sponsors**
- Supportive Living Inc
- SLI Brain Injury Wellness Center
- Dana Home Foundation

Supportive Living, Inc.
Our eighth session: Trial Exhibit

Each flip chart is a theme with several photos and captions
Our final exhibit: Posters with one photo and caption each

Participants voted for their top two favorite photos for the final exhibit
Our PV topic: Community integration

Independence
Having freedom and choices in your life

Meaningful Things to Do
Having a purpose and things you enjoy doing

Relationships
Having people – family, friends, others – in your life
Community integration and our project

Independence

Meaningful Things to Do

Relationships

Supportive Living, Inc.
Now let’s hear from our project’s participants. They will each briefly talk about their photos and project experiences, in conversation with our PhotoVoice interns...

1 - Lisa + Ramya
2 - Tim + Ramya
3 - Julie + Angela
4 - Dennis + Angela
5 - Shaun + Angela
My brother helped me learn better penmanship, because I was the only left-handed person in my class. He made me practice every day. One teacher later thought I must be right-handed because my penmanship was so good.
Lisa

“Building a tree house is fun and climbing makes it more fun. Horseback riding was fun. I enjoy sports.”

Lisa was on two state champion basketball teams in school. She now has an opportunity to be active and fit today, too. She works out 3 times a week at the SLI Wellness Center fitness program at Douglas House in Lexington.

Lisa shows us again that Personal effort + Support = Community integration
Volunteering is important community integration work.

Tim

One of the men I visit at the Douglas House. For two hours each Friday we play games. He is wheelchair bound.
I can’t play hockey now because I can’t afford to get hit in the head. But I can still coach. The girls I help coach won District 9 and are invited to play in the state championship tournament. It’s fun to get on skates even though I can’t play anymore. I might join the coaches for the under 14 girls.
Imagine walking up this sidewalk alone with a walker. I have to push and hold on, so I don’t roll back. Gravity keeps pulling me back. The cement is rough and bumpy. People are helpful when they are around, but I am not always so lucky.
Sometimes when I am in my “mart cart” it’s hard to transfer my groceries from the cart to the car. I am supposed to be independent with the cart – and I want to be more independent – but it can still be a challenge to get my shopping done and loaded in my car.
Dennis

Think “community” before you design and build

You can get in this bathroom at a local medical facility, but you can’t get out. Once you are inside, you are at the mercy of someone else to come let you out. I use paper towels or something as a door jam, but when you have a brain injury, it’s easy to forget. Bathrooms should all have handicapped buttons. Bathrooms are something everyone needs.

Supportive Living, Inc.
The core of my happiness is my son. Pictures and words could not begin to describe the profound joy that I experienced when he was born. The world became a better planet and I a better man when I helped bring him into the world.
Shaun

We need to have patience with ourselves and others. Stay relaxed!

It is hard to live in a world of time limits and deadlines when I have no real sense of time passing. When time and/or timing is critical to something I am doing or need to do, I have to use alarms or rely on others to remind me.
Like leaves, we are all different. Yet, when viewed together we make a beautiful tapestry!
PhotoVoice Intern Experiences

Now we will hear from two interns who participated in this project:

Angela Vianni, graduate student in Occupational Therapy at Boston University

Ramya Ramakrishna, undergraduate student at Brandeis University
Intern Training

- Took pictures to represent aspects of our everyday life we wanted to share
- Gave us a chance to experience part of the photovoice process
Photovoice Process

- Using photos was a different way of communicating important issues
- Photos encouraged the group to talk about things that might not have come up
- Photos brought up issues for discussion from the survivors’ perspective
Learning Through Personal Experiences

- Photos and captions showed personal aspects about community integration
- Got to spend one-on-one time with participants to write captions
- Learning about these issues through personal experience is more meaningful than just through coursework
Learning About Group Dynamics

- Opportunity to learn about how to lead a group effectively

- Photovoice was a unique group experience since it was mostly directed by participant input
Assisting with Picture Taking

- Learned about the picture taking process through the perspective of the participants
- Eye-opening opportunity to learn about supports and barriers in the community
Discussion Of Metaphors

- Discussion about difficulty of taking pictures showing some aspects of community integration
- Interns led one group about taking metaphorical pictures
Reciprocal Learning

- Interns and participants learning equally from each other

- Interns had the opportunity to learn just as much from participants about community integration issues
Interns’ Next steps

- Angela: Intensive aphasia treatment program at Boston University
- Ramya: Community engagement work for a non-profit health advocacy organization in DC
Now Therese O’Neil-Pirozzi will present about ways to enhance the cognitive benefits of participating in a PhotoVoice project...
PhotoVoice and Cognition

Cognitive-Communication

Psycho-Social

Physical
PhotoVoice and Cognition

...illustrate thoughts, ideas, & experience
...ask permission before taking someone’s photo
...meet with facilitator to discuss photos
...select photos to share outside the group
...write captions to convey what photo means & why important
...id common themes across photos & group photos
...prepare trial exhibit together & invite guests
PhotoVoice and Cognition

Community Integration:
- opportunities for human interaction
  (relationships)
- a place to live that provides freedom & choice (independence)
- opportunities for meaningful things to do (fulfillment)
PhotoVoice and Cognition

Use participant photos & captions/themes to determine awareness of difficulties and motivation to address them
It was supposed to make a point
I keep getting confused and lost
Now everything is disorganized
I feel like I’m living in chaos and it’s hopeless
These are appropriate pictures
I get confused in here
I’ll forget
I just, trying to organize things in my brain
I want to laugh at myself
I was taking pictures of the confusion
My thoughts no longer correspond to action. Thus, putting things in places that have no meaning: like keys in the freezer.
PhotoVoice and Cognition

Community Integration:
- opportunities for human interaction
  (relationships)
- a place to live that provides freedom & choice (independence)
- opportunities for meaningful things to do (fulfillment)
My brother helped me learn better penmanship, because I was the only left-handed person in my class. He made me practice every day. One teacher later thought I must be right-handed because my penmanship was so good.
Volunteering is important community integration work. One of the men I visit at the Douglas House. For two hours each Friday we play games. He is wheelchair bound.
You can get in this bathroom at a local medical facility, but you can’t get out. Once you are inside, you are at the mercy of someone else to come let you out. I use paper towels or something as a door jam, but when you have a brain injury, it’s easy to forget. Bathrooms should all have handicapped buttons. Bathrooms are something everyone needs.
Sometimes when I am in my “mart cart” it’s hard to transfer my groceries from the cart to the car. I am supposed to be independent with the cart – and I want to be more independent – but it can still be a challenge to get my shopping done and loaded in my car.
Shaun

We need to have patience with ourselves and others. Stay relaxed!

It is hard to live in a world of time limits and deadlines when I have no real sense of time passing. When time and/or timing is critical to something I am doing or need to do, I have to use alarms or rely on others to remind me.
PhotoVoice and Cognition

Use participant photos & captions/themes to facilitate community integration
Now we welcome back Laura Lorenz, who will facilitate a Question and Answer session...
Q & A

- What PhotoVoice or Community Integration questions do you have for:
  - Participants
  - Interns
  - Facilitator
  - Cognitive rehabilitation providers?

Raise your hand if you have a question. Laura will call on you and facilitate panel participation.
Reflection and Next Steps

• A brief summary of our workshop today, and the next steps for our project and for PhotoVoice in Massachusetts.

For more information on Supportive Living’s Brain Injury Wellness Center and this project, contact:

Laura Lorenz
SLI Research & Education Director
Office phone: 508-485-3868
Email: llorenz@brandeis.edu
URL: www.supportivelivinginc.org