

Creating places for doing being becoming and belonging: environment focused practice in service and community environments

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Introduction: Environment is a familiar focus for assessment and intervention in occupational therapy practice, supported by frameworks and evidence that emphasize the contextual nature of occupational participation. In mental health care, often the focus is on individuals, but what of environment level practices to enable participation and recovery?

Objectives: To introduce the essential role of place in mental health recovery and wellbeing, and to inspire occupational therapists to consider opportunities in services and communities for place focused practices.

Approach: Using the doing being becoming belonging framework, this presentation will describe how place, participation and recovery interconnect. It will share practical examples of how occupational therapists can expand collaborative and environment level practices in mental health service and community settings.

Practice Implications: A focus on place extends the opportunities for occupational therapists to use their knowledge and tools to address barriers to occupational engagement, participation and mental health recovery through collaborative and culturally safe practices.

Conclusion: The dimensions of being, doing, becoming and belonging are useful for appreciating how place influences occupational engagement and recovery as perceived by people experiencing mental health issues. Environment level practices focused on place offer expanded possibilities for collaborative practice to improve people's lives, and increasing the impact of occupational therapy in mental health care.