Scholarly Assignment: I Am Sam

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Sam Dawson is an employed adult who has a developmental disability that limits his cognition to the level of a seven year old. On a regular basis Sam gets overwhelmed with scenarios where his knowledge, attention, and judgment are constantly challenged, where people who interact with him start to behave differently towards him when they notice his disability. In addition to those challenges, Sam has a daughter by the name of Lucy Diamond, and is raising her on his own since the mother abandoned them shortly after she was born. Despite his limitations, he makes way to take care of Lucy, either by himself, or with support from his friends, or assistance from his neighbor. When Lucy turns seven years old and surpasses the intellect of her father, his limitations become a concern, and child services take her away because of it. Afterwards, Sam gets a lawyer to regain custody of Lucy, and in the process Sam questions whether he is fit to raise her. In the end, he reassures himself that he is, and love is all he needs to care for his child.

One of the development disabilities a client like Sam may initially display is the inefficiency of hygiene maintenance, and personal care. This includes daily morning care such as brushing teeth, which Sam did show signs of difficulty, but also performing hand hygiene, and changing linen or clothes when they are soiled. This simple physical effect becomes an increasingly concerning issue for the well being of the client’s health because it can be the root of, as well as increase the susceptibility of, viral or bacterial infection. Loved ones and friends of the client may also be at risk of acquiring the sickness through cross or indirect contamination.

Dyspraxia is the compromise of one’s coordination, and balance, which is also a physical effect that can manifest into something severe. Signs that may appear are difficulties brushing teeth,
difficulty counting, show obsessive behavior, which was also displayed in the film with Sam’s obsession of organizing sugar and salt packets at diner tables, and clumsiness. (Levy, J. 2014). With Sam working at the café plenty of dangerous outcomes can occur due to his lack of control such as spilling hot coffee on himself, or on a customer, like he did in the film. Function limitations such as Sam’s may be extremely difficult to uphold his required daily nourishment needs. His diet of high calorie foods lacks the essential nutrients due to his habit of constantly eating fast food meals, but the underline cause is his inability to prepare food on his own.

The incompetence to appropriate behavior and norms is a psychosocial effect that is damaging to build a social connect and engagement among those with social expectations. (Anderson, K. 2012). A very common reaction is rejection, and can cause the client to have low self-esteem, hesitation to approach or be approached, and if not very well managed be lead to social isolation. In the movie Sam displayed some signs of low self-esteem because he felt that since he could not read well he was not intelligent, and would isolate himself at times.

Inadequate communication is also prevalent with Sam and anyone new that he interacts with, due to his very limited vocabulary and poor syntax, which can be very dangerous to his health because people around his can take advantage of his disadvantage. For instance, in the movie Sam was approached by a fine looking lady who at the beginning seemed to be very nice, but shortly afterwards police interrupt them and arrest Sam and the lady because she was a prostitute. If the police did not intervene Sam could have possibly had unprotected sex with the prostitute and possibly acquire an STI, or HIV.

Another compromising psychosocial factor to health is noncompliance, and refusing to follow agreed upon care. The neglect of self-care usually occurs with an arising incident, such as not
receiving things expecting to attain, or a loss, which Sam endured when the social worker take his daughter away from him. Afterwards, Sam did not personally care for himself or anything, isolated himself, and showed signs of hopelessness.

Self-neglect is the priority in this situation for further investigation and holistic health for the client. It is a constellation of culturally framed behaviors involving one or more self-care activities necessary to maintain a socially accepted standard of health and well-being. With an in-depth interview by the care providing nurse, they would discover that Sam has more than a few related factors that associate with negligence. First, is the primary diagnosis of a learning disability, second, is the mild functional impairment, and third, is the newly acquired life stressor of having his daughter removed from his care. According to Gibbons’ research it's confirmed that coping difficulties should be addressed with vulnerable and challenging patients so that interventions can be instituted early. (Gibbons, 2009). In other words the quicker the problem is discovered then the success rate to overcome the issue would increase substantially. The plan of care would be to reduce comorbidity, assist client to adopt a positive health behaviour to maintain a healthy status, assess for adequate coping abilities, monitor clients functional impairment for adequate safety, and assist client with mental health need to maintain their health and well-being in the community. (Ackley and Ladwig, 2011).

Another specific intervention is for the nurse to assist with impaired active daily living tasks. Spending time to teach a mnemonic method for the client to execute competent hygiene and personal care, and monitor if the method taught is effective, or needs further training. If not, then the nurse would involve the care of an inter-professional to continue the care of the client to reach the expected
outcome of optimal health and wellness.

A nurse must be aware of the sensitivity to the client’s philosophy of self-care. This is where the client’s situation adjustment is assessed for impairment, and if so, then the nurse attempts to find any possible external causes, because it will alter the direction of treatment. A mental health nurse would then give psychoanalysis to understand what state the client is at mentally and emotionally, and evaluate if there is any altered mental status, or depression. Having the client address life experiences that they went through, and their coping method, with the evidence provided the correct professional called to provide their concrete support. (Potter et al., 2009)

Social work is an inter-professional care that is common for this situation, where their focus is similar to the nurse by promoting the well-being of the client. They address the social change through economics, which is the behavioral interaction between the client and the formation of social norms. Thus making an analysis for dysfunctional social relationships, and improving the quality of life. The aid of a qualified psychotherapist is necessary because it is within their scope of practice to assess the client’s psychological constraints, and how they are dealing with their stress. Sam would get counseling on how is coping living without his daughter, what fears may he exhibit due to the recent event, and supportive reminders that he may need reassurance for. (Anderson, K. 2012).

The referral of an occupational therapist is essential to aid the maintenance or improvement of Sam’s active daily living, his coordination to increase his productivity at work, as well as help him not bump into things that may cause him harm. Sam was promoted to make coffee after earning the opportunity, so this form of therapy would definitely be to his advantage. Moreover, help with his slurred speech and tone correction to speak at an appropriate volume.
A community resource where Sam can receive additional support if needed is Developmental Service Ontario, an agency that can help adults with developmental disabilities find services and supports in their community. They provide funding, an adult protective service worker, residence, and a person-directed planner. (Dsonario.ca, 2014).

Another helpful source is The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, which is a client centred organization that cares for people who have problems with mental illness or addiction, with services that include assessment, brief early intervention, residential programs, day treatment, continuing upkeep and family support. (Camh.ca, 2014). These two communal support organizations extend the care needed outside of the hospital setting for clients like Sam to have a public space to comfortably attend to their ongoing concerns, and plan for the future to maintain a higher quality of life.
Reference:


Gibbons, S. (2009). Theory Synthesis for Self-neglect: A Health and Social Phenomenon. [online] Ovidsp.tx.ovid.com.rap.ocls.ca. Available at: http://ovidsp.tx.ovid.com.rap.ocls.ca/sp-3.13.1a/ovidweb.cgi?QS2=434f4e1a73d37e8cc218cd1e8907e4d41bd8b24ebae680a7cf995c8f158fe5391082be47a5511efaf1a049b90e34ae20b987ad8986c05233b1c8a242d8a5face43d361adf987ff2c1b936a3268900cc2c3917f65c1ee8184c0ff56d27893ca2b903771688ea2647c1805ce8245770fb872ec7bc35e918d5c0c3eaff9d405d8b0309aceb21b2a5abf1620b3f9bec49fed288f3589babc8346f85aac4db3b27052ae7766b9d0f5f23b567ceb3204a04092920b034c6f2f5ec7e5242ed3927028c855568f2af49b5305dbfefa2e831405283 [Accessed 15 Nov. 2014].