

Name of Professional: Jean Loar

Profession: Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Company: Assist Group Counseling Associates

Date of Interview: November 16, 2017

Assessment:

### Distinguishing Factors

When I initially walked into this experience, I thought that I would find practically endless similarities between Occupational Therapy and many other psychiatric-related fields. Whenever a professional would explain the differences between OT and their respective field, I would become worried that my area of study would not entail all of the aspects that I had been excited about. However, especially after my interview with Jean Loar, a Counselor at Assist Group Counseling Associates, I realized that each and every field along this spectrum of professions has its unique aspects that make it preferable to people of different interests. Occupational Therapy combines the social elements of Counseling, the physical elements of Physical Therapy, and the mental health-related aspects of Psychiatry or Psychology.

I originally developed a passion for this area of study when I realized that my calling in a career is something that combines social interaction with the constant act of helping others through their struggles so that they can become happier and more independent individuals. Based on Loar's description of Counseling, it has many things in common with Occupational Therapy that I am passionate about. For instance, she recalls that her favorite thing about her daily work is being able to give people the tools to become more independent and successful. She also explains that she mainly works with people

ages 18-50. In Occupational Therapy, I am more interested in working with younger children, but the fact that she says these things about working with older people gives me hope that these elements of her profession and related professions are universal and will be present in any age group.

Another aspect of her profession that she explained that stood out to me was how the level of independence and privacy changes as a patient transitions from childhood to adulthood. When patients are younger, their parents will often come into the counseling room, especially in order for the counselor to ask them historical questions specifically regarding the child's past. However, as the child grows older, their parents are gradually involved less and less in the therapy process. From my understanding, this will still be the case even in other related fields, like Occupational Therapy. In fact, this factor will be especially prevalent in OT because the point of OT is to help people to develop skills to increase their independence, and therefore their level of independence will increase even more as they grow older and gain more skills both in and out of therapy.

This information has impacted my studies of OT by encouraging me to discover the defining factors that separate OT from other related professions, and to embrace them rather than deny them. In future interviews, I would eventually learn that OT has more of the human connection combined with emotional and physical guidance that I have developed a passion for. Therefore, even though Jean Lear's profession is probably the most different from my area of study out of anyone I have interviewed so far, the contrasting effect of our conversation gave me great insight into what I appreciate about our spectrum of career fields overall. I look forward to further researching the specific distinguishing factors that give Occupational Therapy its unique aspects.

Notes:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5rBr8Aw6vI0RU9Hcno1ZGpFbG9jR0NnOG5yWmVqMUpvbjBB/view?usp=sharing>