

An Inside View: An SLP's Personal Journey after a TBI
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Do:

Have more patience than you ever dreamed you could have

Listen, truly listen

Look at the whole person when determining your plan for intervention

Pay attention to the small signs your client may be showing you

Involve family and/or friends with the goals

Question yourself...am I taking the correct approach?

Sessions should remain diagnostic in nature so to speak

Treat your client as you would wish to be treated

Brainstorm compensatory strategies with your client instead of "assigning" strategies to use

Don't:

Show frustration and/or impatience

Retrieve words for your client (S/he may be on the brink of retrieving the word; your interruption can be crushing.)

Assume one approach fits all

Rush your session

Be patronizing

Proceed with therapy if your client is exhausted from other therapies

Following my TBI, it took me well over a year to be able to read for pleasure, One of the first books I was able to not only complete but also comprehend was the book **Wish You Were Here** by Jodi Picoult. Following are quotes from her book that I find to be so important to think about when working with individuals having TBIs. I didn't have the words to express these emotions but since Ms. Picoult did it so eloquently, I am including them below. Definitely food for thought when working with clients.

"Trauma is trauma. Just because someone else hasn't experienced it themselves, doesn't make it any less real to you."

"I feel a crushing sense that if I am here, there must be an explanation."

"If I was so sick that it nearly cost my life..if I was one of only a handful to survive ventilation...if I returned to this world instead of the one embedded in my mind...I would like to believe there is an explanation. That it isn't random or the luck of the draw. That this was a lesson for me, or a wake-up call."

Following this presentation if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at ann_o_neil@hotmail.com.

