Motivation Of Mortimer Essay, Research Paper

Introduction

This report is on a project undertaken to help an older gentleman named Mortimer who is seventy-seven years old. This project is intended to get Mortimer to develop a different behavior than what he has been displaying in recent times. He recalls his life story in the following way. As a young man, Mortimer enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp. He was stationed in Australia and met his beautiful bride, Rosie. They have six great children, now in their forties and fifties. Mortimer worked for an advertising agency after he got out of the service. He was in very good physical shape. Tennis and track were his two sports of choice. As a matter of fact, Mortimer was a runner in the 1956 Olympics. At the age of thirty-eight, Mortimer became very ill and was left totally disabled for the rest of his life. However, he was determined to overcome many obstacles that may have otherwise interfered with him living a normal life.

Mortimer set some goals that he wanted to accomplish. He wanted to

utilize the knowledge that he had from working at the advertising agency.

Getting a Bachelors Degree in Journalism was his first goal. Secondly, he wanted to write short stories and books. His third goal was to be independent and do some freelance work in journalism. Mortimer obtained these goals by writing many newspaper columns, short stories, and books. This is how he earned his living. He was very successful in the Journalism field. He still has one book that he has started, but never finished.

Relationship Between Project and Motivation Theory

Knowing that motivation is something internal and that people have different things that motivate them, we will describe the relationship between our project and Motivation Theory. Motivation is a feeling that comes from within that drives us forward towards a goal-oriented behavior. We believe that changing Mortimer’s environment will enable him to reach within himself to become motivated once again. Motivation explains why people behave as they do. Motivation determines behavior and thus said all behavior is motivated.

Furthermore, human instincts are more flexible and more open to learning experiences than those of other species no matter what a person’s physical age. An example of instinctual behavior is that all ants build anthills in the same way, even when they are not raised together, this actually means that the anthill building behavior is instinctual, and not a learned response. Even though we might not know what to do, it is instinctual. However, instincts only describe behavior, they do not explain why a person engages in that particular behavior.

Mortimer’s behavior also stems from his prolonged illness. Mortimer’s instinct now is that he cannot do anything useful since he has experienced a long-term illness and is fighting the most basic of human instincts, to live. He has found it easier to do what has become natural to him throughout his illness. We know that Mortimer was at one time driven to accomplish many goals that he set for himself. With the motivation theory mentioned above, it is our intention to get Mortimer to set goals that will increase his motivation level. With new life goals set for Mortimer to help bring forth his motivation from within that he displayed as a younger man.

The Problem

Within the past year, Mortimer has basically lost his will to live. Mortimer has fallen into a severe depression. The physical problems include, weakness, difficulty walking, standing and eating. His desire to get out of bed everyday is decreasing as each day passes. It is difficult to offer a conversation with him, because he only speaks when spoken to. For example, his wife Rosie tries to talk to him but he barely responds and won’t engage in a conversation. Dressing him is also difficult because he rather not make the effort. To him there is no since of getting out of bed and getting dressed. The depression that Mortimer is in has totally left him unmotivated and he has given up on life. This has had a devastating effect of his family and everyone close to him. Rosie has done everything a person could possibly do for someone in this position.

Rosie attends to his daily needs. She tries to get him interested in things she knows he likes. She tries to get Mortimer up each morning, dressed, and motivated enough to go on a daily walk with her. Their children and grandchildren visit as much as possible, although some live out-of-town and don’t get to visit as often as they’d like. They would all like to see Mortimer get his old spirit back and they would like to see Rosie get a break from the daily grind of caring for someone who lacks the motivation and desire to live. It is both physically and emotionally draining for Rosie. Rosie and the rest of the family wonder how they can help Mortimer to motivate himself, so that he realizes that there is still meaning to his life.

The Current Situation

Rosie and Mortimer have been married for fifty-eight years. Until approximately one year ago, Mortimer had lived a full life. Rosie continues to take care of his daily needs, however, in the past year, she has seen Mortimer slowly failing. Rosie acknowledges the fact that Mortimer is failing and does not like seeing him with no motivation to go on. She says Mortimer has told her that he feels like his life is coming to an end. It is likely that Mortimer is in a state of depression that may be treated with professional help.

Goals

The goal is to help motivate Mortimer to live the rest of his days to fullest.

This includes, helping him become involved with his family again, caring about himself, not focusing on the hopelessness of his current situation and renew his appreciation for living. In order to achieve the goal, his physiological needs that include, food, shelter, clothing and other basics, will have to become important to him again. He must be reminded that he is in a safe and loving environment. His social contact with family and close friends must also become something that he values. Restoring his ego through recognition of any positive efforts he makes is a key ingredient. Everyone must help him remember that he has talents, gifts and potential regardless of how much time he has left to live. The road to achievement starts with a goal. Mortimer must take small steps each day in order to achieve the motivation he needs to live a full life with the time he has left.

Action Steps

In order to achieve our stated goals and to help Mortimer understand that the behavior he has developed is not normal or healthy we are going to have a meeting with him and talk about options. The first order of business is to get Mortimer to a trained professional to have him evaluated for clinical depression. At the time of the evaluation we will ask the professional doing the evaluation on Mortimer their opinion of this plan. Rosie’s involvement with Mortimer needs to be curtailed in order to help change the environment in which Mortimer is living. As we stated earlier Mortimer has found it easier to do what has become natural to him throughout his illness and we believe that reducing his dependence upon Rosie will change his environment. With the help of a home health care professional they are going to help Mortimer with his basic physical needs and help Rosie with not doing everything for Mortimer. The home health care professional will have a background in psychology and physical therapy to help facilitate the change in the environment. Establishing a daily routine can help Mortimer care about these basic needs again. The nurse will also help reinforce his need for safety. The professional instruction can help him safely stand and walk again. Hopefully this will lead to more self-confidence. The most important part of this process will be the role his family and friends play. Having more interaction with as many different members of his family as possible should be helpful. There are soon to be new additions to the family. They must continuously remind him that he will soon be a grandfather and great grandfather. He needs to know how important this is to him, the new infants and the rest of the family. Anything he does positive in one of these areas must be rewarded. Rewarding even the smallest achievements such as getting dressed may help rebuild his ego.

He is a man of many talents. Mortimer was a track in field athlete in the 1956 Olympics. They should remind him of those achievements and show an interest in learning more about them. Writing is one of his passions and is how he made his living. It is important that they help him feel that passion again. One way to do this is to buy him a lab top computer so he can write again. This may help him become interested in writing. He may even finish a novel he has been working on for years. Setting the goal is only the beginning.

There are many steps to accomplish this goal. Each step will help Mortimer find the motivation he needs to live again. Know matter what help he is given, in the end it is all up to him. It is their job to give the tools to succeed but he must find it within himself to pursue the goal of becoming part of the family again. His destiny is not a matter of the diagnosis he received from a doctor, it is how he chooses to live the rest of his life

Possible Problems/Setbacks

Mortimer may not feel as though it is necessary for him to set goals at this stage of his life. He may refuse to do this. In this case, just talking with him may increase his motivation to do so and may get him started in thinking that there is more of his life to live. He has to be receptive to the idea of being motivated. When someone responds negatively, there really isn’t much that can be done. It’s a matter of personal perception. Mortimer may truly feel that he has lived a very long and productive life and may not be willing to compromise his opinion on this.

Mortimer may also give the nurse/social worker a difficult time about getting up each morning, getting dressed, and attending to his daily needs. He gives Rosie a very hard time with this until she refuses to deal with him and allows him to stay in bed and remain idle for the day. She then caters to his every need, which is really not a good thing to do. We can compare it to allowing an alcoholic to drink and then enabling him to cover up for his abusive behavior. If something were to happen to Rosie, Mortimer would be completely devastated. He has depended on her being there for him for the past fifty-eight years and she has always been there.

We feel that Mortimer should increase his activity level. He may not be willing to take a daily walk. However, the nurse should explain all the benefits of being physical. Not only will this increase his physical being, but his mental being will also benefit. We don’t feel that a daily walk would be too much activity for him to handle.

Mortimer may not be willing to learn the computer. It is extremely hard for older individuals to learn and accept the concepts of a computer. Mortimer may be afraid of it since he has never learned anything like this in the past and the unknown may be very scary for him. His instructor will have to take it very slowly, one day at a time. The first lesson may be just teaching him how to manipulate the mouse. The second day may be opening the computer and shutting it down. Adding just one task each day and then repeating what he has learned on a daily basis would build upon the previous lesson.

Mortimer may never finish that last book that he started. However, by providing the right skills and tools might make him a little more proactive about finishing it. He may find himself feeling motivated and really wanting to finish it.

Socially, Rosie and Mortimer are deficient. Mortimer stays home all day, either watching television or laying in bed. Rosie is still very active, however, most of her day is spent catering to Mortimer. If they were to join some type of social group, this would provide them both with other interests and may even promote a hobby to each of them.

Their grandson may not have the time to bring the great-grandchild over to their house. One possible solution is that they could actually go over to their grandson’s house to see the baby. Babies and children have a way of motivating older people. We think it makes them realize that the world will go on.

Conclusion, Evaluation, and Suggestions for Next Step

Mortimer is in a stage in his life were he does not see any reason to go on. It is important to this group that Mortimer regains a desire to live, and that this desire evokes in him an ability to create and pursue new goals. It is also, however, unrealistic for us to believe that the new goals created are going to solve all of Mortimer’s problems.

In order for us to be able to evaluate Mortimer’s progress, it is important to remember that any improvement is considered positive. This previous statement means that our aim is not necessarily just to get Mortimer to comply with our goals. As was discussed in earlier sections, motivation comes from within, and is used to generate goal driven behavior. In this particular case, it is the creation of the behavior we are evaluating, not the goals themselves.

The next step in this process depends on Mortimer. We acknowledge that Mortimer may, and based on past experience probably will, react to our attempts in ways outlined in our possible problems section. Through our persistence, coupled with the learned help of a home health care professional, we must not give in to Mortimer’s attempts to revert.

This project may change Mortimer and Rosie’s lives forever. A new outlook could motivate Mortimer to complete unfinished works, create new work, and renew his relationships with his wife and children. This project may also, however, drive Mortimer into a deeper depression, and make his life, as well as Rosie’s life, miserable for the remainder of their days.

Bernhardt, Paul C. “Being human, A Regular Column, by Paul C. Bernhardt M.S.” Perspectives, A Mental Health Magazine (12 Oct. 1998). Online. xoom.com. Available http://anxiety.cmhc.com/perspectives/columns/be0596.htm

(27 Sep. 2000).

Buller, David J. “DeFreuding Evolutionary Psychology: Adaptation and Human Motivation.” Cognitive Sciences Eprint Archive (30 Aug. 2000). Online. uswest.net. Available http://cogprints.soton.ac.uk/documents/disk0/00/00/03/26/

(12 Oct. 2000).

Geen, Russell G. Human Motivation, A Social Psychological Approach. Ed. Lauri Banks Ataide. Pcific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1995.

Kohn, Alfie. Punished by Rewards. Ed. Education, Inc.:Turning Learning into a Business. Boston , New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

Staff Writer. “Motivation.” Encyclopedia Britannica (UNKNOWN). Online. xoom.com. Available http://www.britannica.com/seo/m/motivation-1/

(27 Sep. 2000).

UNKNOWN. “MOTIVATION.” The University of Texas at Austin (29 Mar. 1999). Online. aol.com. Available http://www.utexas.edu/student/lsc/handouts/1903.html

(8 Oct. 2000).