



**Acquired
Brain Injury
Network**

November 3-4, 2008
Hilton Toronto • Toronto

Conference Presentation Abstract ~ Workshop

Date/Time/Room: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 1:55 pm – 2:40 pm Toronto I / II

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Title:

Moving Forward: Designing a Behavioural Activation Program for People With Brain Injuries

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Summary:

Up to 42% of people with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) can experience significant symptoms of depression post-TBI (Kreutzer, Seel, & Gourley, 2001). If a client with a mild TBI experiences depression, they do not recover from their brain injury as quickly as those who do not experience depression (Mooney & Speed, 2001; Rosenthal, Christensen, & Ross, 1998). Decreasing activity is a common response to depressive symptoms. However, this response perpetuates the symptoms; when a person stops doing activities that bring them a sense of pleasure (i.e. social interaction, hobbies) or accomplishment (i.e., maintaining their home, earning an income) that person does not have the opportunity to experience these positive effects. People who have experienced a brain injury may not be able to engage in the same activities that once gave them a sense of pleasure or mastery. Without these positive effects, people are even less likely to engage in activity. This can create a vicious cycle which is difficult to break. In addition, these clients may have other difficulties with motivation and initiation that are directly related to their brain injury, but can contribute to their depressed mood. Behavioural activation is an empirically supported psychological treatment that works to break this cycle by supporting the client to engage in incrementally increased levels of activity. This workshop will focus on the main components of a behavioural activation program, and the techniques to adapt this treatment specifically to a person with a brain injury.

Outcomes/Objectives:

To provide a brief background of the theory of behavioural activation (BA)

To teach participants the components of a successful BA program that considers the unique needs of people with brain injuries