

Dr. Balabhaskar Kuppuswamy



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Life Skills Module for Person with Developmental Disabilities.

As defined by World Health Organization WHO-1999 Life Skills are abilities for adaptation and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands & challenges of everyday life. 'Adaptive' means a person is flexible in approach and is able to adjust in different circumstance. Positive behaviour implies that a person in forward looking and even in difficult situation, can find a ray of hope & opportunities to find situations.

Life skills include elements that making an individual person aware of potentially dangerous situations, build their self-confidence, to manage time and improved communication skills. These sets of skills required for all individuals including person which disabilities (PwD's) in the context of promoting positive health of the individuals with Developmental Disabilities.

These Life Skills are a set of psychosocial competence and personal skills that build individuals to make decisions, effective communications, coping skills with surrounding circumstances. Together these three competencies form a key aspect of human development which prepares PwD's for independent living, community integration and quality living.

Among PwD's Life skills for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (IwDD's) relates to a broad group of Psychosocial and Interpersonal skills which are said to be beyond the generic academic skills and prepares them to deal effectively with future demands. This set of Life Skill includes Self-awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Decision making, Problem Solving, Effective communication, Interpersonal Relationship, Coping with stress & Coping with emotions.

The Objectives of the research work are to develop:

- Life Skills Module for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities.

The need of the research work:

As few scientific tools for life skills assessment have been devised for Person with Disabilities. Further, for successful intervention purpose, the necessity for a multi-dimensional life skills assessment tool & module was raised especially for IwDD's.

Further due to COVID – 19 Pandemic health catastrophes for IwDD's was an unprecedented shock that has made an impact on themselves and their families especially finding a meaningful jobs and during their participation in the community. Keeping the need a Life Skill Module was undertaken for their independent living.

The construction of Module includes:

A descriptive research and the variables include life skills & vocational skills needed for IwDD's that includes person with Intellectual Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder and

Multiple Disabilities. The other key informant includes Parents, Professionals, Employer, Co-worker and Peers.

The life skills indicated for successful integration were measured by the questionnaire schedule in terms of opinion expressed by the key informant working with adults in skill / vocational set –up. Similarly the life skill module contains 10 domains as recommended by WHO with a set of 3 activities along with pictorial work sheet in sequential manner. In this research frame work part – A comprises of Life Skills module and part – B Life Skill assessment tool.

Part – A: Life Skill Module.

Life Skill Module for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (IwDD's) compresses of 10 Life Skills. In each category activities schedule and work sheet were designed for inclusion in work place and living environment. These activities in the modules assist individuals with developmental Disabilities to deal with the challenges they encounter on a regular basis. These activities are inter connected to each other. The glimpse of each category as follows:

Domain 1: Self-Awareness:

The ability to recognise oneself is known as self-awareness (self-consciousness). This helps an individuals with developmental disabilities to see his or her own worth and have the confidence to address the obstacles that occurs in work place.

Activities 1:

1a. Mindful breathing

Sitting up straight, breath through nose into stomach, exhaling slightly longer than you inhale. By practicing this activity IwDD's experience entire body relaxation and thoughts.

1b. Eye gazing

Make an effort to look people in the eyes and avoid being the first to look away. Eye gazing helps IwDD's to experience present moment while boosting their confidence.

1c. Meditation

Self-awareness exercises are the ultimate discipline. Sit up straight close your eyes and experiment with various breathing patterns.

Domain 2: Empathy:

Empathy nurtures IwDD's ability to understand and accept person who are different in many ways from oneself. Empathy is our mental capacity to accept individuals in distress without emotional disruptions, as if we were in the same crisis situation.

Activities:

2a. Identifying and Modelling Emotions

Invite IwDD's to point to the face that expresses happiness, sadness, or other emotions in work place, cafeteria, public places.

2b. Guessing Emotions

Request that each IwDD's select an emotion from the choices provided above. Allow them to practise the body language that conveys the emotion one by one.

2c. Empathy Busters

IwDD's will learn about common empathy busters in this project so that they can avoid them in the future.

Domain 3: Effective communication:

IwDD's needs effective communication as a powerful tool for establishing and maintaining positive social and professional connection that are culturally & situationally suitable. It teaches them to seek advice and assistance from others when they are in need to convey their thoughts, desires, and fears through both verbal and nonverbal communication.

Activities:

3a. Card Pieces

This mind tools support or train IwDD's to develop greater empathy, explore alternative points of view to improve their communication and negotiation abilities.

3b. Guess the Emotion

This activities allows IwDD's to learn empathy and have a better understanding of the co-workers reactions in their work place and home environment.

3c. Clap and Follow

Mastering nonverbal communication by IwDD's to enhance communication in a group.

Domain 4: Inter Personal Relationship:

Interpersonal relations are referred as survival skills that are critical to form and maintain social relationships for IwDD's. Relating to others is an important life skills for IwDD's. It gives them warmth, care and support in a positive way.

Activities:

4a. Conversation around the circle

Assemble IwDD's in a circle and whenever they ask a question, advance them to discourse in a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction.

4b. Student-generated survey

Short, organised responses are encountered in this survey activity for IwDD's. By adjusting to any level it provides them with disciplined two-way conversation practise.

4c. Random Object Improve

This activity provide capacity for the IwDD's and helps them to get out of their shell.

Domain 5: Creative Thinking.

Creativity is defined as the ability to come up with novel ideas and turn them into reality. This method entails creative thoughts among IwDD's by producing new ideas, approaches, or behaviours. It enables them to adapt in a flexible manner to daily life's situation.

Activities:

5a. Creative role play

5b. Sketch & Create

5c. Name Game

Domain VI: Critical Thinking.

Critical thinking is characterized as logical reasoning and thinking, which includes comparison and classification skills. It is a way of thinking about any subject, substance or problem in which the IwDD's by skilfully takes control there action.

Activities:

6a. Particular Virtues

They deemed to be morally good, with high moral standards by practicing particular virtues. Doing right and avoids wrong.

6b. Perspicacious Perspectives

It improves one's abilities to see things effectively and comprehend them.

6c. Select from Alternative

When given a choice select a suitable option.

Domain 6: Decision Making.

In many life situations, decision making refers to the capacity to select the best option among a variety of alternatives. It enables IwDD's to make positive life decisions such as choosing a career and quality of food consumed. It trains them to make decisions by weighing the pros of many possibilities.

Activities:

7a. Musical chairs.

7b. Memory Game.

7c. Role play

Domain 8: Problem Solving.

Problem-solving ability among IwDD's in settling a dispute, addressing a problem, or resolving a conflict. It allows them to get out of a difficult circumstance and fulfil a demand without resorting to rage, compulsion, disobedience, aggressive behaviour, or force. It aids them in problem-solving through creative and critical thinking.

Activities:

8a. Picture Pieces Puzzle Game

8b. Playing Card Mix-Up

8c. Personalized Crossword

Domain 9: Coping with Emotions.

Coping with emotions promotes the IwDD's to comprehend their own and other's feelings. This skill is a first step towards learning to control themselves more effectively. IwDD's can discover healthy, positive and safe ways to communicate their feelings.

Activities:

9a. Concept Draw

9b. Expression of emotions

9c. Exercise

Domain X: Coping with Stress.

Coping skills gives IwDD's the ability to deal with positive and negative situations, as well as the emotions that come with them and withdraws the most beneficial conclusions. It trains them to recognise sources of stress and their effects, as well as to control and overcome stress.

Activities:

10a. Brisk walking

10b. Jogging or running

Part – B: Life skill Assessment Tool.

As part of this fellowship a Life Skill Assessment Tool was also developed to assess the levels of IwDD's in 10 domains of Life skills. In each category items were formulated to assess all the areas. These items are specific to the module and related to the work place and home environment. There are no correct or incorrect replies. Based on the score, levels of Life skills were measured for training IwDD's.

Outcome:

Although there are sufficient theoretical framework for life skills, only a few scientific instruments for life skills were available. Working with large number of IwDD's and their families necessitated the need for the researcher to develop a Life skill module with the support of ***Reeta Peshawaria Fellowship (RPF)***. This module facilitate parents, trainers, teachers, job coach and student trainees to develop Life skills among IwDD's suiting to work place and home environment for successful inclusion.