

STUDY GROUP GUIDE

A “study group” is defined as a collection of individuals, in our case OT, PT and Speech therapists, who gather together regularly as determined by the group, to improve their understanding of a subject, in our case NDT theory, principles and practice, by participating in a focused discussion or hands-on facilitation sessions.

Benefits of a study group include:

- Active learning instead of passive learning
- Sharing of ideas that may not have been considered
- By either, speaking to others and/or listening to others, these skills can improve on recall ability
- Explaining information to other members can reinforce your mastery of concepts
- Groups provide a venue for sharing information and knowledge
- Groups provide a venue for practicing facilitation techniques, building self-confidence and learning valuable handling skills and techniques
- A source of encouragement from other members can increase your motivation of study

Guidelines to establish a study Group:

- Each group is unique and draws on the backgrounds and abilities of its members to determine the material, focus and format that will be established.
- First meeting should be a time to meet the members of the group, share expertise’s’ and establish the study group goals, format to be used and organize subsequent meeting ideas and agenda. This can help all members to prepare ahead of time (reading materials, bringing ideas, research on certain subjects, etc.).
Establish how the members of the group will communicate, via e-mail or phone calls.
- Establish a “coordinator” of the group. This individual acts as the moderator by guiding and focusing the group in the established plans of the meeting. They are not the teacher, but act as the facilitator of the group’s goals, format and focus. Take turns acting as the moderator.
- Try and establish a *regular* meeting place and time to keep the enthusiasm going.
Establish a meeting place and space. The area will depend on the focus of the group. If you choose to practice facilitation techniques, then an area would be needed to accommodate mats or floor space for hands-on work. If the meeting is a peer review then chairs and a table may be desired.
Establish a meeting time that is conducive to the member’s schedules. Also decide how long each study group meeting will run, setting both a starting and ending time. This can keep the group focused on the goals established
- Group size can vary dependent on format. Most recommend from 3-6 people for best results. These numbers can allow all to participate without too many “cooks in the

kitchen”. Sometimes too many voices add confusion. Group size may also be limited by the space available. If there are 8-10 people interested, sometimes it is best to split the groups and have two separate study groups going on.

- There are different formats in which a study group can be organized. A group can decide to practice specific facilitation techniques (trunk rotation with flexion) or decide to discuss different treatment ideas for a specific impairment (decreased weight shift in gait). They may want to present a patient and discuss evaluation or treatment techniques. Using the new NDTA study guide that is now available, can assist a group in learning the theoretical foundations and principles of clinical practice.
- Utilize your NDTA region chair persons:
 - To get more members in your group (emails and member lists in your area)
 - To advertise on the regions website page
 - Answer questions and help establish group format and focus

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