




# Empowering Recovery

**Understanding the Collaborative Role of  
Occupational Therapist and Substance Use  
Counselors**

# PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES



01. EXPLAIN THE ROLE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT) AND ADDICTION THERAPY IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS.
  02. HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND ADDICTION THERAPISTS.
  03. EXPLORE PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING OT INTERVENTIONS INTO ADDICTION TREATMENT PLANS.
  04. PROVIDE CASE STUDIES THAT DEMONSTRATE SUCCESSFUL INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES.
  05. EMPHASIZE THE IMPACT OF MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES AND FUNCTIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT ON LONG-TERM SOBRIETY.
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01.

UNDERSTANDING SUBSTANCE USE RECOVERY AND  
OCCUPATIONAL CHALLENGES

02.

HOW SUBSTANCE USE IMPACTS LIFE SKILLS

03.

ROLE OF AN OT IN RECOVERY

04.

ROLE OF SUBSTANCE USE COUNSELORS IN  
RECOVERY

05.

HOW COUNSELORS AND OTS CAN  
COLLABORATE

06.

INTERSECTIONALITY OF OT AND  
SUBSTANCE USE COUNSELORS



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06.

INTERSECTIONALITY OF OT AND  
SUBSTANCE USE COUNSELORS

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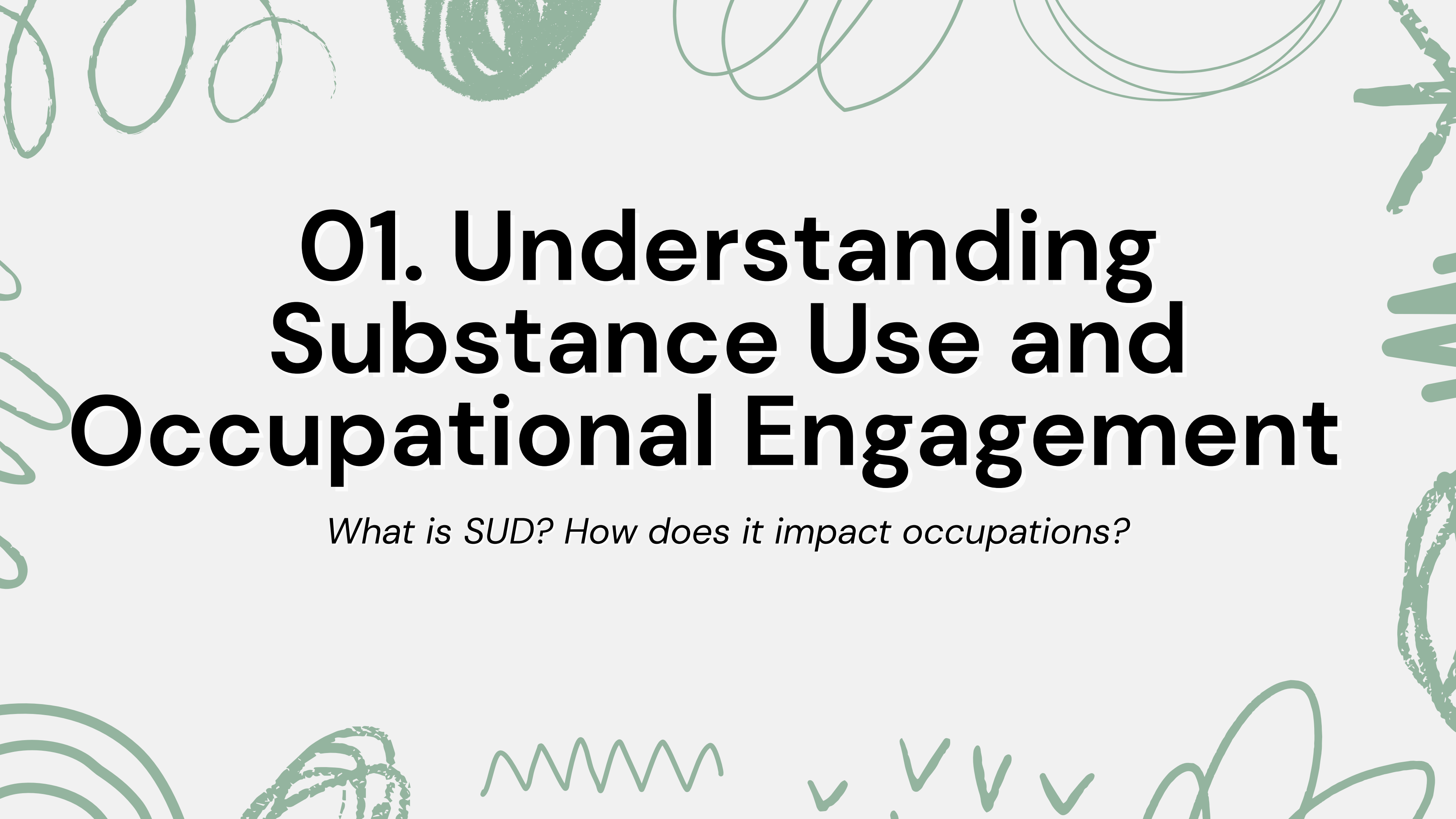
BENEFITS OF COLLABORATIVE TREATMENT

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CONCLUSION



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# 01. Understanding Substance Use and Occupational Engagement

*What is SUD? How does it impact occupations?*

# Understanding Substance Use and Occupational Engagement

- *What is Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?*
  - Substance Use Disorder is a chronic condition affecting cognitive, emotional, and social skills.
- *Impact on Occupations and Life Skills:*
  - Cognitive decline affecting concentration and memory
  - Emotional difficulties impacting relationships
  - Social consequences including isolation and impulsive behavior
  - Difficulty with roles, habits, routines, and meaningful engagement



# The Importance of Life Skills in Recovery

- *What are Life Skills?*
  - Communication, time management, self-care, budgeting, decision making skills.
- *Life Skills and Recovery:*
  - Rebuilding independence and self-esteem
  - Prepare for future employment or education opportunities







## Occupational Therapy Screening Tool

Occupational Therapists (OT) are experts in the analysis and modification of daily activities to meet the client's current level of ability. OTs are also experts in environmental modification and can help a client be more successful in life by changing different aspects of their environment to help them engage in meaningful daily activities. This OT screening tool is designed to help you identify whether or not your client would benefit from occupational therapy services.

Please **circle** yes or no beside each question below.

1. Does your client have difficulty with personal hygiene?	Yes	No
2. Does your client have difficulty successfully managing their home? (i.e. cleaning the dishes regularly, doing laundry, cleaning surfaces in their home)	Yes	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does your client exhibit difficulty with managing their finances?	Yes	No
4. Does your client exhibit difficulty managing their medication properly?	Yes	No
5. Does your client exhibit difficulty regulating their own emotions? (i.e. He/she goes into crisis every time something difficult happens in life or seems to exhibit extreme emotional highs and lows)	Yes	No
6. Does your client exhibit difficulty maintaining successful employment?	Yes	No
7. Does your client exhibit difficulty maintaining meaningful relationships, family, friends, or <u>other</u> ?	Yes	No
8. Does your client exhibit difficulty maintaining attention during group or individual sessions?	Yes	No
9. Does your client exhibit difficulty with short-term and long-term memory?	Yes	No
10. Does your client exhibit difficulty realizing or understanding what is happening around them?	Yes	No

11. Does your client know when he/she is in an unsafe situation?	Yes	No
12. Does your client exhibit difficulty with time management?	Yes	No
13. Does your client exhibit difficulty initiating or completing tasks? If so, which one?  Initiating      Completing      Both	Yes	No
14. Does your client avoid social <u>situation</u> due to the requirement of interacting with others?	Yes	No
15. Does your client exhibit difficulty sitting still during group or individual sessions?	Yes	No
16. Does your client exhibit a lack of satisfying leisure activities?	Yes	No
17. Has your client exhibited difficulty engaging in sober leisure activities?	Yes	No
18. Does your client struggle with a consistent sleep routine?	Yes	No
19. Does your client exhibit decreased motivation?	Yes	No
20. Has your client ever stated or inferred that they have no purpose in life?	Yes	No

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Client's Name: \_\_\_\_\_





# 02. How Substance Use Impacts Life Skills

*What is the cognitive impact? How about the social, emotional, and behavioral?*

# How Substance Use Impacts Life Skills

- *Cognitive Decline:*
  - Difficulty concentrating, learning, and decision-making
- *Emotional and Social Impact:*
  - Impulsivity, mood swings, and social isolation.
  - Difficulty managing relationships and communicating effectively.
- *Behavioral Consequences:*
  - Neglect of personal hygiene and disorganized living spaces.



The background of the slide is decorated with various hand-drawn green doodles. These include several overlapping circles and loops at the top, a series of small 'v' shapes at the bottom, and some abstract scribbles on the left and right sides. The central text is prominently displayed in a large, bold, black font with a white drop shadow.

# 03. The Role of an Occupational Therapist in Recovery

*What do we do? How do we help?*

# Role of the Occupational Therapist

- *Role of Occupational Therapists:*
  - Address functional deficits in daily activities
  - Enhance healthy routines and habits for a sober lifestyle
  - Utilize therapeutic use of self to build trust, motivation, and engagement
  - Cognitive and physical rehabilitation for alcohol-related impairments
  - Support vocational and leisure exploration, social participation, and community reintegration



The background features various green hand-drawn patterns, including loops, swirls, and zig-zags, scattered across the light gray background.

# 04. The Role of Substance Use Counselors in Recovery

*What do they do? How do they help?*

# Role of the Substance Use Counselors

- *Role of Substance Use Counselors:*
  - Assessment and diagnosis of alcohol and drug use disorders
  - Provide psychotherapy and counseling
  - Develop relapse prevention strategies
  - Emotional, mental health support, and trauma-informed care







# 05. How Counselors and OTs Can Collaborate

*How can we make the best team?*

# How Counselors and OTs Can Collaborate

- *Holistic Assessment:*
  - Counselor: Addresses emotional and physiological issues
  - OT: Focuses on functional abilities and life skills
- Co-Developing Interventions
  - Joint planning for addressing recovery and life skills
- Goal Setting and Joint Sessions:
  - Set short and long term goals for both sobriety and functional independence





# **06. Intersectionality of OTs and Substance Use Counselors**

# Intersectionality of OTs and Substance Use Counselors

- *Addiction as both a medical and functional issue*
- *OT addresses behavioral, cognitive, and social aspects of recovery*
- *Meaningful activities prevent relapse and rebuild identity*
- *Promote occupational justice and social participation*
- *Bridge psychological therapy and daily life functionality*

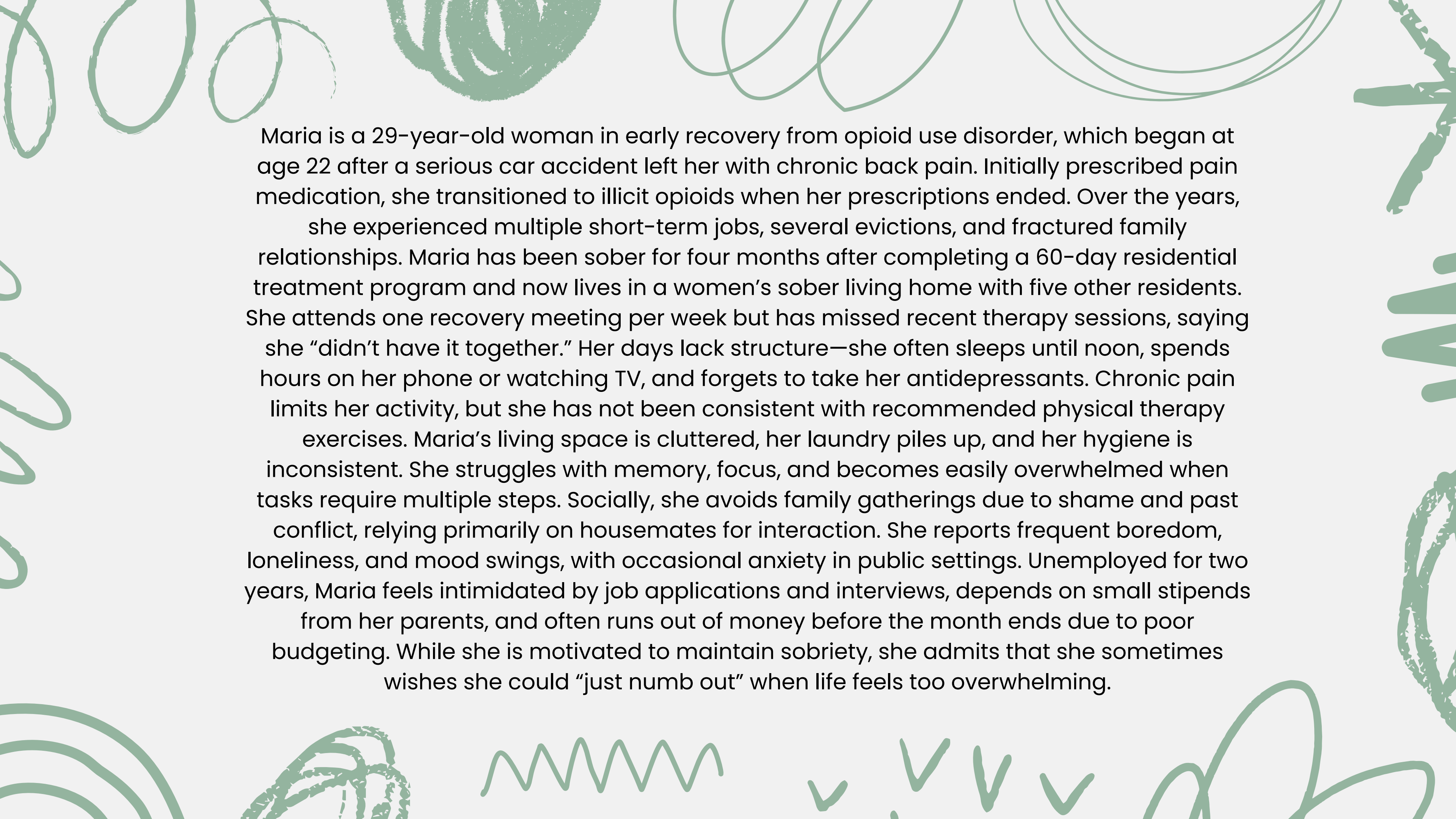




# 07. Case Study

*Maria*





Maria is a 29-year-old woman in early recovery from opioid use disorder, which began at age 22 after a serious car accident left her with chronic back pain. Initially prescribed pain medication, she transitioned to illicit opioids when her prescriptions ended. Over the years, she experienced multiple short-term jobs, several evictions, and fractured family relationships. Maria has been sober for four months after completing a 60-day residential treatment program and now lives in a women's sober living home with five other residents. She attends one recovery meeting per week but has missed recent therapy sessions, saying she "didn't have it together." Her days lack structure—she often sleeps until noon, spends hours on her phone or watching TV, and forgets to take her antidepressants. Chronic pain limits her activity, but she has not been consistent with recommended physical therapy exercises. Maria's living space is cluttered, her laundry piles up, and her hygiene is inconsistent. She struggles with memory, focus, and becomes easily overwhelmed when tasks require multiple steps. Socially, she avoids family gatherings due to shame and past conflict, relying primarily on housemates for interaction. She reports frequent boredom, loneliness, and mood swings, with occasional anxiety in public settings. Unemployed for two years, Maria feels intimidated by job applications and interviews, depends on small stipends from her parents, and often runs out of money before the month ends due to poor budgeting. While she is motivated to maintain sobriety, she admits that she sometimes wishes she could "just numb out" when life feels too overwhelming.





# Maria's Hidden Issues

01. Daily Functioning and Routine

03. Social and Emotional Health

02. Physical and Cognitive Health

04. Employment and Financial Stability





# 07. Case Study: Role Breakdown

*Addiction Counselor & OT*

# Role Breakdown for Maria

- *Occupational Therapist (OT)*
  - *Develop routines and habits*
  - *Medication management strategies*
  - *Household management strategies*
  - *Adapt activities to manage pain*
  - *Executive functioning strategies for focus and memory*
  - *Job Readiness and financial planning*
- *Addiction Counselor*
  - *Relapse prevention planning*
  - *Trauma informed therapy to address shame*
  - *CBT or DBT for emotional regulation*
  - *Motivational interviewing for engagement*
  - *Support for building sober networks*



# Role Breakdown for Maria Cont.

- Joint Collaboration
  - Gradual exposure plan for public and social situations
  - Role play job interviews with stress management strategies
  - Integrate emotional coping skills into daily routines
  - Co-create balanced weekly schedules with both therapy and functional activities



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# 08. Benefits of Collaborative Treatment


*Work smarter not harder.*

# Benefits of Collaborative Treatment

- Improved treatment adherence
- Enhanced coping mechanisms and occupational performance
- Greater success in long-term sobriety
- Greater self-identity and role fulfillment







# Conclusions

*For SUD Counseling and OT*





# Final Thoughts:

Recovery is a multifaceted process that includes life skills restoration.

A holistic, collaborative approach improves recovery outcomes.

Recovery requires both personal growth and practical skills.



# Thank you very much!

CEU Survery



**Any Questions?**

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