

Ep #1: How to Create a Bigger Impact as a Therapist



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Heather Branscombe

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Welcome to *Clinicians Creating Impact*, a show for physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists looking to take the next step in their careers and make a real difference in the lives of their clients. If you're looking to improve the lives of neurodiverse children and families with neurological-based challenges, grow your own business, or simply show up to help clients, this is the show for you.

I'm Heather Branscombe, Therapist, Certified Coach, Clinical Director, and Owner of Abilities Neurological Rehabilitation. I have over 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, and I'm here to help you become the therapist you want to be, supporting people to work towards their dreams and live their best lives. You ready to dive in? Let's go.

Welcome to the first episode of the podcast. I am so glad that you joined me. Let me introduce myself, I've been a therapist for over 25 years now, and for the last 15 of those years, I've been working as the clinical director and owner of a clinic where I've been primarily hiring and supporting therapists in creating their own dreams. I love it. It's my favorite job ever.

What I've really noticed in my role at Abilities is many therapists want to improve and get more clinical skills, which is amazing. And I also noticed the problems that I was supporting, and the main problems in their lives were rarely just clinical issues. So I'm wondering if that might be true for you.

I wonder if you're a therapist who's looking to create a bigger impact for the people you serve and for yourself. And you want to do that without burnout. You want to do that without feeling awful and without working a ton of extra hours in the day. Maybe you think you should be happier than you are at work, and then you get unhappy about your unhappiness at work.

Or you think you have something at work that you want to accomplish, and you can't make it happen. Or maybe you want to be just a better version of you. Maybe you want to achieve something, create a goal or a certain result, but you really don't know how. I get it; we work so hard to get into therapy school and even just to qualify as a therapist.

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So what I notice is the results of that is therapists are very goal-orientated people. We are that for ourselves, and we really use that for the people that we serve. And there are real challenges to being a therapist, even with it being the most amazing job, that's my thought, and even if you have total control over your job.

There are regulatory issues. There are scope of practice issues. There's managing other people's expectations as well as our own expectations. So it's easy to think that wanting more in your job and in your career may not be sustainable if you think you have to be more, do more, and learn more to do that.

So I'm recording this in January of 2023, and for many people, we associate this as a new start. It's kind of like a new year, new goals. But for me, this actually started in November of last year.

In November of last year, I decided that this year I am all in on therapists. This is my theme. Instead of a goal specifically, I have a theme for my goals and the results that I want to create. I'm all in on therapists, and this podcast is a direct result of that decision. So this is where I'm here to help you.

So when I noticed the problems that I was helping to support in the therapists that I was working with weren't just clinical, I decided I wanted to improve my coaching skills to help therapists. So, like any good therapist, I decided to see what courses or certifications I could do to help with that skill set and where I could get the best certification I could in coaching.

So, I went and got certified at where I think is the best place ever. I don't know about you, but for me, some courses sound better in theory than in person. Maybe they're heavy in theory or lack application or vice versa; lots of tips and tricks without the actual theoretical framework for you to understand the why. The reason that I like this certification is that this has both.

So, I want to start today to share some of this with you. I want to start with a quick exercise today for you to start feeling better at work today. So, what I want

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to ask first is, what is your biggest work challenge right now, today? What feels the hardest at work?

Is it a specific client? Maybe a specific co-worker. Is it your compensation? Is it getting documentation or reports down? So I want you to pick something and ask yourself what isn't working at work and why do you think that is. Take a minute to think about it or write down notes. Free flow is amazing. There is really no right or wrong way to answer this, so do it in the way that feels best for you.

Once you've done that, next, we're going to sort the notes or sentences you've created, kind of like a scientist. We're going to separate them from thoughts versus facts. So let's talk a little bit and make sure that we're on the same page of what is a thought and what is a fact.

So my definition of a fact is something that could be proven, for example, in a court of law. That if you were to put that against ten people, 30 people, 50 people, they would all agree that it is an objective fact. Versus a thought is a sentence in our brain that is our perspective. That other people, if you were to bring that to 10 people, or 20 people, or 30 people, there may be one or two people in that group that might think something different.

So using that kind of definition of what is a thought and what is a fact, I want you to take your notes and separate your thoughts or facts like a good scientist would. Now, if you don't know or are questioning if it's a thought or a fact, just take your best guess.

What you're doing here is taking some time to really look at what you think the thoughts versus the facts are in your own story. The reason that we do this, and the reason that it's so important, is that it is our thinking that is what drives our feelings, actions, and ultimately the results we do in our work as a therapist.

So the first part of the model, or the framework that we are using, is distinguishing between the circumstance or the facts and the thoughts and the feelings. So circumstance is a fact, and when your brain becomes aware of that fact, it makes meaning of it through thoughts and feelings. Our thoughts generate our feelings.

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What you're also doing in this exercise is starting to create your own simple model of what your brain makes the facts of your challenge mean to you. While it may not be obvious, there is an amazing power in separating the facts of your story and the thoughts of your story. And the power comes from you then get to decide if you like how you're thinking and you're feeling about anything.

The difference between how you currently think and feel about facts and how you may want to think, and feel is something that I like to call the river of misery. And that's what we're going to dive into as therapists in this podcast in the future.

Now, you may be thinking, "Hmm, that river of misery sounds awful. Why would I want to do this?" So I'll give you a couple of reasons why. First, I want to offer you are already experiencing a level of misery in your current work challenge. If you weren't, you wouldn't even have brought it up as a challenge. There are certain work challenges that can seem almost insurmountable, but I just want to offer you that they aren't.

So secondly, these tools and this podcast is an option for you to help you to understand that you actually have more power than you're currently thinking to create the career you've always wanted. And through understanding where you are in this river of misery, it's really a much more empowering kind of discomfort than the discomfort that you have of just knowing that you have this certain work challenge.

Now, like in therapy, discomfort itself isn't the goal. But it is focused and sustainable and goal-orientated discomfort. We know that intuitively as therapists, that's what serves you. And that's the kind of discomfort I want to offer you. It's the discomfort with a payoff.

So I've seen how this kind of brain-based coaching has changed. It's changed myself. It's changed the company that I lead. It's changed the lives of the therapists that I've worked with. And now I want to help you. So this is why the podcast is here, it's to give you the tools to empower you as a therapist to create your dream career.

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I want to use this framework that we call the model to show you your brain to develop greater awareness so that you can make more empowered decisions for yourself. What I want to really offer you here is real-world help from a therapist and a clinic owner who's also a certified coach.

So I'm certified to use this model to help you. I also have the expertise and the experience to help you create the work life that you want. So, in future episodes of this podcast, we're going to be talking about the model as the tool. And we're going to be using it and getting into how I use this tool in many areas of my work life. Again, this has changed everything for me, and I know it can do the same for you.

We're going to use this model as a framework to look at challenges, such as how to get your documentation done, how to have hard conversations with clients, with co-workers, with outside providers, how to make more money and do all of this, and more without feeling icky or without burning yourself out. So do you like what you hear? If you do, you are in exactly the right place.

I also know that there are amazing therapists out there doing inspiring things, and it is my intention to bring them to you. And maybe that's even you. I would love to share some of you on the show and talk about your projects, your struggles, and your triumphs. Let's create a community together where we can learn from each other and use that to create a bigger impact.

So my challenge for you is to do a download, a thought download on your most pressing work challenge as a therapist, and separate the thoughts from the facts. When you do that, what do you notice? And how does that help you with your challenge? Give it a try, and let me know how it goes. I can't wait to see what you create.

To celebrate the launch of the show, I'm going to be giving away a \$100 gift card and two \$50 gift cards to Amazon. I'm going to be giving them away to three lucky listeners who follow, rate, and review the show.

Now, it doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope that you love the show. I really want your honest feedback, so I can create an awesome show

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that provides tons of value for you. So visit abilitiesrehabilitation.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how to enter. And I'll be announcing the winners on the show in episode ten. Thanks so much.

Thanks for joining me this week on the *Clinicians Creating Impact* podcast. Want to learn more about the work I'm doing with Abilities Rehabilitation? Head on over to abilitiesrehabilitation.com. See you next week.