

Ep #87: Use This to Help Clients Find Their Goals



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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.

Hi there, friends, I hope you're doing well. If you're listening to this when the initial episode comes out, we're here and summer is slowly ending. And I don't know about you, but I definitely feel the transition into fall. Now, I say that, I actually love fall because fall feels almost like that new year. It's that back to school time and back to routine that can really feel so fun and full of promise. I know it does for me.

And I know that I'm excited this fall to start some new projects and I know that many of you will maybe have new projects, but definitely have some new clients on your caseload as well. Since this is a great time for goal-setting, both for ourselves and our clients, I thought I'd share a tool that I use personally to help find out what kind of goal would be more powerful. The best part about this tool is you can actually use it for yourself, and then as you play with it I guarantee you will feel much more comfortable to use it with your current or your future clients.

Before I share this tool, I know so many of you already know this but this podcast is really a passion project of mine because I really want all clinicians to have the ability to use this kind of tool set and tips as a way to magnify their impact, even if they never work either alongside us or directly with us at Abilities. I just love sharing these kinds of tools and information that ultimately will make

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your job easier because I know that as you do that you will create a bigger impact for yourself and for your clients.

So you can help me to make this podcast more meaningful and to spread its reach by helping to spread the message. And you can do that in a couple of ways. First, if you can follow, rate, and review this podcast wherever you're listening to it, that helps feed the algorithm so when there is a clinician just like you searching for something just like this, this podcast will more likely come up.

And then secondly, if you could share this podcast personally, or better yet if you could personally share a favorite episode with a colleague. I don't know about you, but that's my best way of finding new and interesting podcasts. If you've heard this before, maybe you've meant to do it, you haven't done it yet, it's okay. It's totally fine. Think about today being the day that you can help other clinicians just like you.

And if this is your first episode, maybe you're lucky enough to have had this shared by someone else, I just want to say first, welcome. Thank you so much for listening. And hopefully as you listen you can decide who of your clinical friends would love to hear more of this kind of information to help them at work as well. So again, thank you so much in advance for your action and your help here. And with that, let's get back to the episode.

So, often when we're thinking about goal setting, either for ourselves or for our clients, we often start with simple questions, like what are your goals? And ultimately that makes sense, doesn't it? Because so many of us are naturally goal-orientated and so setting goals can feel as easy as breathing for us. But I just want to say that that's not actually true for everyone, and it might not even be true for yourself right now.

That's okay, but goal setting just for the sake of setting a goal isn't really fun and it generally isn't that motivating. So if we want to be the most impactful, we can use different tools rather than just asking, "what's your goal" to get a much more powerful answer. I love the idea of goal setting as just this time to kind of play and imagine and dream.

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This is why so often as clinicians, we break down goals into smart goals, being achievable or manageable as part of goal setting. And I want to say, you don't even have to give that up. But before we get there, there really is an opportunity to really dream and imagine the improbable. This is why I like the idea, I actually love the idea of wildly improbable goals.

So wildly improbable goals are a tool that you can play with. Again, you can play with it on your own and or with your clients to imagine and dream your way into a future of what you really actually want.

So we can do that pretty simply by asking a different set of questions and just noticing what the brain comes up with when we ask it. So here's a set of questions that comes from a book, Find Your Own North Star by Martha Beck. I highly recommend it if this feels in alignment with you. I really love it as well. So just take a moment as I list some of these questions and notice for yourself what your brain comes up with.

So here are some questions I'd love for you to consider. First question, if I didn't care what people thought I would, and then fill in that blank. If I was sure that I'd succeed I would, and then fill in that blank. If I had the nerve, I would, and then fill in that blank. If I could be certain it was the right choice, I would, and fill in that blank. If I weren't worried about the future, I would, and then fill in that blank. If I had the freedom, I would, and fill in that blank.

Just notice how open-ended and imaginative these questions are, so much more so than what are your goals. That feels really closed and like very certain. These questions are very open, imaginative, and really offer your brain that opportunity to imagine, dream, and think about the improbable.

So imagine how much information you can get about your client and their family if you ask these kinds of questions with your clients and their caregivers. How would that change the goals that you work towards in your work with them, and how could that change the motivation level of your clients as they work towards the goals?

It doesn't mean that the things that are coming up and the goals that they might have are even achievable, but I would make a guess that you would understand

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your client so much better by hearing the answers to those kinds of questions. And then, as a clinician, I know that you could tailor those goals and those sessions in a much more client-centered way.

I know for myself, when I ask myself these kinds of questions, some of the answers really actually surprised me. It really allowed me, for example, to think about how I want to grow Abilities in a way that actually works for me and the people that I'm serving, rather than what might look like from the outside as progress to the outside world.

It really opened up my own creativity to see how I could work on goals that align with how I want to be as a clinician and a leader in this area of practice. And from this, I can say I actually have a lot more confidence because it tapped into areas of my brain that I don't always access when I go instantly to the smart goal route first.

Imagination and creativity are some of the things that I love most about my work. It's one of the things that I love most about working in this area itself. So it definitely fits super well with how I like to work. So I wonder if it will work for you and maybe some of your clients as well. So give it a try and let me know how it goes.

Now, obviously, yes, I'm busy, but I'm never too busy for you. Please feel free to email heather@abilitiesrehabilitation.com, and let's continue the conversation on a more personal basis. With that, I hope you have an amazing week and I will talk to you soon.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could leave a rating and review to let me know what you think and to help others find *Clinicians Creating Impact*.

It doesn't have to be a five-star rating, although I sure hope you love the show. I'd really want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value. To learn more about me and the work that I do, visit my website at www.abilitiesrehabilitation.com/clinicianscorner to download your free getting it all done at work process and to see what I'm up to. Thanks so much.

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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.