



FLOW STATE AS OCCUPATION: APPLYING AND MEASURING FLOW STATE FOR INTERVENTIONS IN ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

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AGENDA

Introduction

What is Flow State?

Characteristics Case Study 1

Case Study 2

Implications for Practice

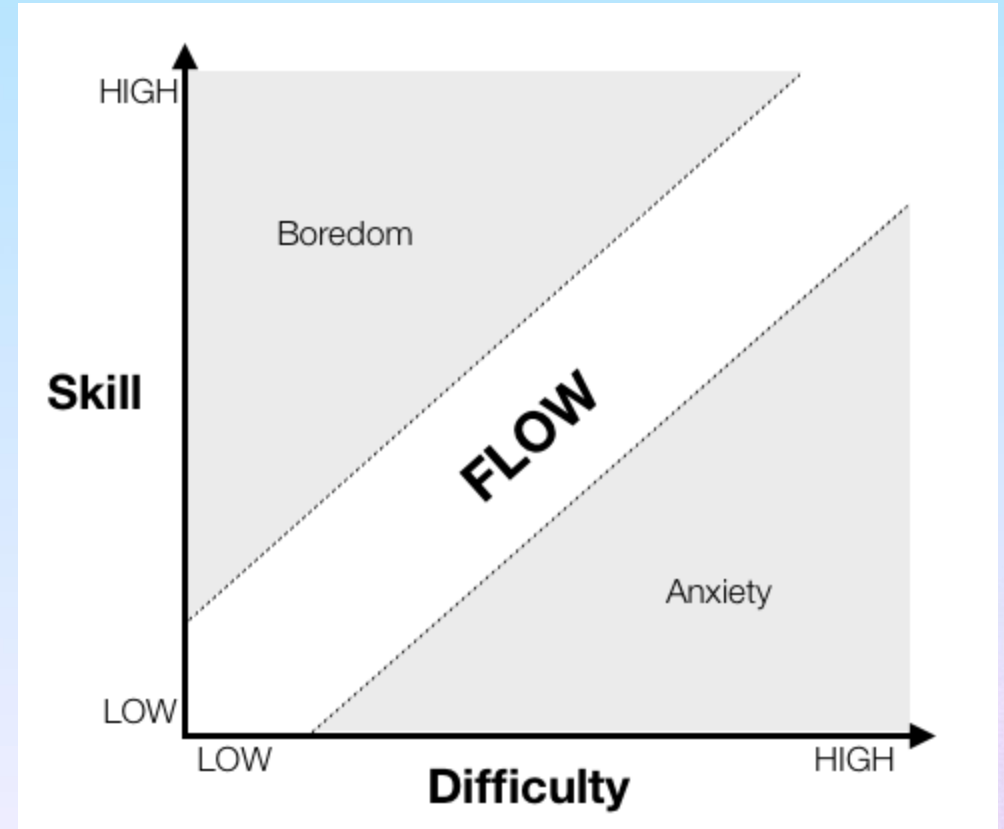
References



FLOW STATE

Developed in 1990 by Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, who was a prisoner in World War 2. He became a psychologist initially inspired by Carl Jung. Flow state came about after Csikszentmihalyi researched happiness and created the term flow state, defined in the next slide with several characteristics.

SIMPLE GRAPH EXPLAINING FLOW STATE



CHARACTERISTICS AND OUTCOMES

CHARACTERISTICS

- Ease and Effortlessness
- Balance
- Reward
- Transformation of time
- Action-awareness merging
- Goal-oriented
- Concentration
- Control

OUTCOMES

- People generally report feeling calm after engaging in flow state
- FMRI tests have demonstrated decreased blood flow to the regions of self-referential thinking
- Decreased blood flow to the pre-frontal cortex while in flow state
- Flow state is something that we may be able to build over time and which becomes easier with practice

CASE STUDY: PEDIATRIC INPATIENT

- Teenager admitted to hospital for inpatient management of eating disorder.
- Generally for concerns for refeeding disorder which requires bed rest until heart rate stabilizes/improves
- Pt enjoys sewing, crochet, knitting and other crafts at baseline
- Discussed with medical team and was cleared to bring in valued occupations
- Flow state can be valuable while in times of acute stress



<https://stock.adobe.com/search/images?k=crochet>

CASE STUDY: RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTER

PT/SETTING INFO

- Residential Treatment Center with average LOS of 12-18mos
- 10 Adolescents with hx of trauma, suicide attempts, diagnoses of MDD, GAD, PTSD

FLOW STATE MODULE

- Developed as a module for a weekly group, providing education and offering flow state activities
- Goal of each group is to assess the state of the self, investigate environmental modifications, determine options for future

OUTCOMES

- Patients demonstrate good ability to engage in reflection, advocate for environmental modification, and endorse finding this peaceful/helpful
- Over the year patients show great recall on education in flow state and report being in flow throughout their stay

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

INPATIENT/ACUTE

- Flow state is typically very individualized so requires investigation
- Engaging in flow state activities while hospitalized may be helpful for patients with long stays or traumatic events

OUTPATIENT

- In mental health outpatient flow state education is important to provide
- Outpatient sessions can allow for exploration and prolonged education

SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Group-based education to educate on benefits of flow state and activities which can help
- Goal of these would be to improve emotional regulation and increase pt's self-satisfaction

CONCLUSION

Flow state as an intervention can:

- Benefit patient's emotional regulation
- Act as a tool for improving meta-cognition
- Improve patient's self-satisfaction
- Potential to improve emotional state during/after traumatic events

THANK YOU!

Reference and Suggested Review!

What is Flow in Positive Psychology? Moore, Catherine. Positive Psychology. 2019.

[https://positivepsychology.com/mihaly-csikszentmihalyi-father-of-flow/#:~:text=In%20Csikszentmihalyi's%20words%2C%20flow%20is,doing%20it%E2%80%9D%20\(1990\).](https://positivepsychology.com/mihaly-csikszentmihalyi-father-of-flow/#:~:text=In%20Csikszentmihalyi's%20words%2C%20flow%20is,doing%20it%E2%80%9D%20(1990).)