Boredom
more than
“Nothing to do”
What we’ll cover...

Boring Boredom
5 types of Boredom
Predicting Boredom
Tools for you!
What is boredom?
What is the opposite of Boredom?
A Boring definition…

A mismatch between desired arousal-producing characteristics of leisure experiences, and perceptual or actual availability of such leisure experiences (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990)
What we know about Boredom

- can negatively influence human growth and development
- have 3-4 more hours per day of free time than non-disabled
- psychological construct closest to boredom is depression

Patrick, 1982
Optimal Level of Arousal

Challenge Difficulty

Skill

Anxiety

OLA

Boredom
Types of Boredom

- Response
- Chronic
Response Boredom

- reaction to a routine, “same old”, or un-stimulating environment
- response boredom is a normal part of being in a hospital

- However, habits to cope with boredom are learned!
Chronically Bored Personality

- locus of cause is internal
- Independent of the stimulus quality of the environment
- Needs things to be “just right”
- May become a help-rejecting complainer
- Feels interest in nothing because they can sustain no interest
Types of Boredom: Perceptual Based

- Narrow Tolerance
- Collapsed
- Novice Phobic
Collapsed OLA

- Challenge Difficulty
- Skill

- Refuse to Try
- Boredom

low

high
Novice “Phobic”

Challenge Difficulty

Refuse to Try

OLA

Skill
Predicting Boredom after SCI

1999

- Perceived freedom in leisure
- Leisure identity
- Life view
- Watching TV
- Perception of health
- Recreation participation
- Income
- Length of time since injury
Predicting Boredom after SCI

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Predicting Boredom after SCI  
Lee, Mittelstardt and Askins 1999

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Tools for You

- Back to the basics:
  - Education
  - Perceptions
  - Freedom in Leisure
  - Life View
Tools for you

- Tell their Recreation Therapist
- Frame conversations to focus on things to look forward or that challenge perceptions
- Recommend a TV diet
Tools for you

• Avoid the “try it, you’ll like it” cardboard cut out response
• Hear the issues – rarely “nothing to do”
• Encourage personal responsibility for boredom - “Free Time Planning” leisure education – Thursdays at 1pm in room 250
Summary

- So what?
- Now what?

Boredom is a Pattern, not a Reality.