
In Memory of Gary Kielhofner - A Gentleman and a Scholar

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Source: *IJOT: The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy* / כתב עת ישראלי לריפוי גיליון מיוחד בנושא מודל העיסוק / גיליון מיוחד בנושא מודל העיסוק, 20, חוברת 3, אוגוסט 2011, כרך 20, חוברת 3, Special Issue on the Model of Human Occupation: In memory of Prof. Gary Kielhofner / גיליון מיוחד בנושא מודל העיסוק (אוגוסט 2011), pp. E65-E66

Published by: Israeli Society of Occupational Therapy / העמותה הישראלית לריפוי בעיסוק

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23469926>

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In memory of Professor Gary Kielhofner

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In the spring of 2004, just before the MOHO Clearinghouse website was launched, two faculty members of the School of Occupational Therapy of Hadassah and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Naomi Weintraub and Shula Parush, traveled to Chicago, looking forward to learn more about MOHO from its source.

This was the first time that we met Gary and it only took a short while to become aware of his special characteristics. It's rare to meet someone so open and friendly, who allows "strangers" to feel at home immediately. Within hours, it felt like we were old friends. Gary showed us a warm hospitality, and made a personal effort to ensure that we learned as much as we could from our visit.

Gary, a true gentleman and scholar, was willing to share his expertise and knowledge openly and freely, from a belief in the importance of spreading the valuable ideas he contributed to the knowledge base of occupational therapy. He provided us with insight about his model, shared information about the assessment instruments and intervention he developed, and the occupational therapy curriculum at the University of Illinois.

As foreign visitors, one of Gary's most striking characteristics, blatant throughout our visit and in all of our ensuing encounters, was his awareness of the need to adapt the principles and instruments of MOHO to the needs of foreign cultures. Moreover, he also understood the importance of achieving high quality of research evidence for practice, and strove to bridge this gap in all that he did. This broad-minded, inclusive approach was even more apparent when he assisted us in designing a multi-site research model based on theoretical MOHO principles, combined with the clinical needs of various cultures.

We were delighted when Gary expressed willingness to come to Israel and share his expertise with the occupational therapy clinical and academic community. He presented the keynote presentation at the 2005 National Israeli Occupational Therapy Association Conference, a particularly memorable occasion since a quarter of all the occupational therapists in Israel were present! Gary made an additional contribution to the Israeli clinical community, together with Renee Taylor, when he shared a two-day workshop

The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy, August 2011, 20(3)

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on the Model of Human Occupation combined with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, elaborating on the relevant theories and instruments. His belief in the importance of bridging the gap between the clinic and academia was made apparent, once again, in the way in which he always combined theory with case studies, enabling the optimal understanding of the principles he taught. The feedback about Gary's keynote presentation and workshop was overwhelming with repeated mentions of his humbleness given his exceptional teaching talent and his in-depth knowledge.

Our familiarity with Gary's unusual qualities, both as a person and as an academician, who made unusual contributions to the occupational therapy profession, makes our parting from him all the more painful. Our feeling of losing a friend, a mentor and a highest-rate professional will remain with us for many years to come.

The Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy, August 2011, 20(3)