



# Orientation & Mobility as the Foundation of Personal Freedom

Insights from lived experience and  
professional practice

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# From Will to Action

- Will: the decision to engage
  - Belief in possibility
  - Belief it is possible for me (self-efficacy)
  - Action: taking the step
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- Framework for both O&M and broader independence.

# Managing Cognitive Load

- O&M tasks demand attention, memory, decision-making
- Anxiety grows with overload
- Strategy: break down into manageable 'Points of Attention'
  - - Crossings
  - - Turns
  - - Landmarks

# Reward System and Mastery

- Continuous mobility practice = constant training reps
- Each small achievement triggers dopamine reward
- Segmented goals + brain's reward system = durable skills
- Explains resilience and mastery in O&M practice

# Instructor Strategies

- Build will and belief with autonomy support
- Strengthen self-efficacy with achievable segments
- Manage load: preview routes, emphasize points of attention
- Scaffold, then fade to promote independence
- Praise processes, not traits

# Rethinking Our Professional Practice

- Questions to consider:
  - Do we allow learners enough space for self-discovery?
  - Are we calibrating challenge at the right level?
  - How can we better align praise with process?
  - Are we stepping back soon enough to let independence emerge?
- Maximizing efficacy means balancing safety, structure, and autonomy.

# References & Sources

- • Bandura – Self-efficacy theory
- • Mueller & Dweck – Effort vs. ability praise
- • Sweller – Cognitive load theory
- • Ryan & Deci – Self-Determination Theory
- • O&M instructional research (Kuyk et al., Zijlstra et al.)