

# Chapter 9

## Ingrid: Traumatic Brain Injury—Rancho Level V

Ingrid is a 45-year-old Caucasian woman who suffered a traumatic brain injury from a skiing accident. She had been on a skiing vacation in the northwest with her husband and two children: a son, age 15, and a daughter, age 8. She lost control and tumbled several hundred feet down the mountain before hitting a tree and coming to a stop. During the tumble, her head hit the ground several times. She was not wearing a helmet. The ski patrol got to the scene within 10 minutes and found Ingrid unconscious. She was transported to the local hospital where she was stabilized and then taken by helicopter to a large hospital that could deal with her head trauma. She spent several weeks in the acute-care hospital, which was near the ski resort, several hundred miles from her home. She was discharged to a rehabilitation hospital near her home in the city for further therapy and so that her family could visit and be an active part of her rehabilitation.

Prior to the accident, Ingrid was a social worker in a skilled nursing facility. She had no deficits in any occupational performance area. She was active in her daughter's school, volunteering to help out with reading in the classroom and on other school committees. She and her family live in a two-story colonial home in a suburban neighborhood. Her husband, Tom, works as an accountant for a small accounting firm. He took a lot of time off immediately after the accident to stay near Ingrid's hospital, which was far from the family's home. Their two children returned home and Tom's parents stayed with them. Tom is afraid to take more time off from work. The family needs the income and health benefits, and the tax season is approaching. Their financial situation will be tight without Ingrid's income. She has no disability insurance.

The plan is that Ingrid will be discharged to her home in 6 weeks. She is being seen by occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, social work, nursing, and various physician specialties.

### Occupational Therapy Evaluation

OT evaluation reveals Ingrid to be at Rancho Level V—confused inappropriate. She responds to simple directions, but is highly distractible, has poor short-term memory, and has little carryover for new learning from one session to the next. She has intact sensation, vision, and hearing. Perceptual processing is impaired for spatial relations, categorization, and position in space.

Her physical status presents with mild to moderate increased tone (proximal to distal) in her UEs, with the left side worse than the right. She has PROM in her left shoulder of 0–85° flexion, 0–50° external rotation, 0–80° internal rotation. Her UE PROM in the right shoulder is 0–105° flexion, 0–70° external rotation, 0–80° internal rotation, 0–40° horizontal abduction, 0–90° horizontal adduction. PROM in remainder is WFL. AROM is less than 1/2 normal AROM in both shoulders. She also has mild increased tone in her trunk and moderate tone in her LEs. She continues to demonstrate some primitive reflexes, especially ATNR, and she has decreased equilibrium and righting reactions. Her coordination is impaired due to the tone in her UEs. Ingrid is right-handed.

Ingrid requires minimum physical assistance and frequent verbal cues for all transfers and wheelchair mobility. She is currently non-ambulatory. She requires moderate assistance with all ADL tasks due to her physical and cognitive deficits. Ingrid currently has little insight into her deficits. She talks about her family and her children and misses them a lot. She brightens up when they visit and returns to her room and lies on her bed once they leave. She has expressed anger at the staff and feels she is being kept a prisoner against her wishes. She lacks initiation and when in group situations says whatever is on her mind, even if it is a criticism of another patient or staff member. She has alienated a few staff and patients by calling them "fat," "stupid," or "ugly," among other things.