

Building Circles of Support (Part 1)

Today's Session

- ✓ Circles Begin With Relationships
- ✓ Relationship Basics
- ✓ Relationship Barriers
- ✓ Enhance Current Relationships
- ✓ Create New Routines and Relationships





Building Circles of Support (Part 1)

Competencies: Circles Begin With Relationships

- ❖ Is able to describe the importance of relationships
- ❖ Respects and honors the individuality of a person
- ❖ During daily routines, encourages people to participate in activities, interact with others, and build relationships
- ❖ Encourages family and friends to be involved with individuals daily lives and special occasions, welcomes family members and visitors into the home
- ❖ Communicates responsibly with family members and friends
- ❖ Flexible in responding to opportunities for spontaneous family and friend contact
- ❖ Demonstrates respect for family, friends, and community members

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The Importance of Relationships

Expanding and deepening relationships is the heart of the work that we do. The wider the network of people who care about an individual, the more likely we are to see the person as a sacred being who is able to make a positive contribution to community life. The quality of personal relationships affects the richness of a personal vision and hope for the future, and the sense that we can really make it happen.

Relationship building is essential because people with disabilities are so at risk of being unseen, segregated, and alone. The more people are isolated, the more likely they will be treated like objects, hurt, neglected and ignored. We have to act vigorously against the prevailing cultural reality that devalues and isolates people from one another.

Beth Mount



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Individuality

A key value in supporting people with disabilities is to think about each person as an individual, not as a group of participants. When people are grouped together for activities it is difficult to see them as individuals. How you are viewed as an individual directly impacts how you feel about yourself (self esteem and self-image).

❖ Each person is unique.

❖ Your challenge is to help people with disabilities to discover their individuality.

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Routines and Relationships

- ❖ Positive Rituals and Quality of Life
- ❖ Routines and rituals ease us through our day
- ❖ Daily Rituals
- ❖ Maintaining and Building Rituals
- ❖ Rituals of Comfort
- ❖ Rituals and Relationships

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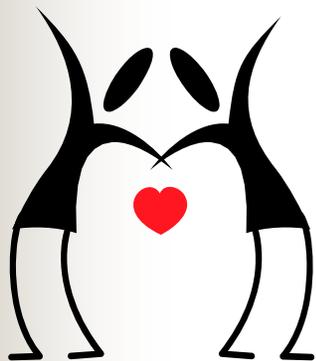


Relationships With Family Members, Friends and Others

What is most important in this world...

‘tis people, ‘tis people, ‘tis people...

Maori song



Summary: Rule #1: Put First Things First

**Honor The Person's Unique Individuality and
Honor Personal Relationships With Family,
Friends and Community Members**

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Competencies: Relationship Basics

- ❖ Knows the person likes, interests, preferences
- ❖ Can identify the person's strengths, capacities and contributions
- ❖ Spends time with the person and acquires information concerning relationships
- ❖ Is able to identify the important, valued relationships and social roles in a person's life
- ❖ Is able to identify other relationships the person may want to have in his or her life

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Know the person



Establish A Positive Relationship

Spend Time With The Person

- ✓ Circle Maps
- ✓ Day in the Life of
- ✓ Profiles
- ✓ Timelines
- ✓ Interests/Preferences
- ✓ Strengths/Capacities



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Circle Maps



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A Day in the Life Of



- ❖ Where does the person typically spend his or her day?
- ❖ Who does she spend her time with?
- ❖ What do they do together?
- ❖ Is this where he wants to spend his time?
- ❖ What would a preferred day look like?

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Profiles



Likes

Dislikes

What Works

What Doesn't Work

Interests

What's Most Important

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Timelines



Important Events In My Life

Born

1975

1980

1987

1990

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Interests/Preferences/Strengths



The positive identities of many people with disabilities are often deeply mired in deficiency descriptions and negative predictions. People with disabilities and their family members are often unaware of their gifts, capacities and preferences. Their potentials and preferences are often misinterpreted, misunderstood, and unseen by others particularly when people do not have the words to express themselves.

Recognizing and Developing Personal Preferences:

Identify and build upon:

1. Interests, skills or potential skills
2. Social identities important to the person and their significant others
3. Environments and settings that resonate with the person
4. Personal habits that can be used to shape participation
5. Personal qualities that can be enhanced



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Strengths/Capacities



Half Full ?



Half Empty ?

Unlimited Opportunities

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Know what is most important to the person



**Spend time with people
who are important to the person**

- ✓ **Person-Centered Planning**
- ✓ **Joy/life is worth living activities**
- ✓ **Values Clarification**
- ✓ **Prioritization activities**



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Person-Centered Planning

**It is so easy to change our language
without changing
our structure or our culture.**

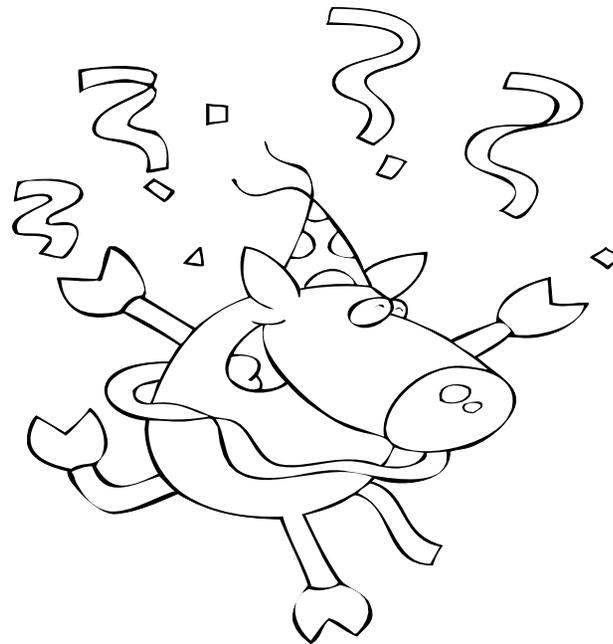
John O'Brien

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Joy/life is worth living activities



FUN!!!



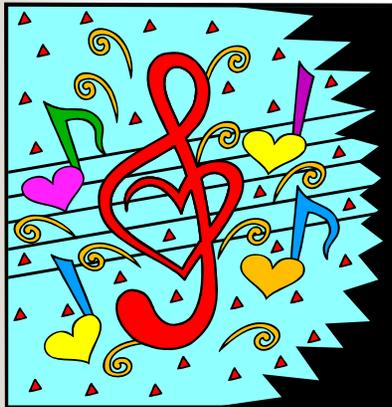
FUN!!!

FUN!!!

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Values Clarification



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Prioritization activities

Ideal



Baseline

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Competencies: Relationship Barriers

- ❖ Can identify the barriers preventing the enhancement of relationships with others
- ❖ Assists the person to make a good 1st impression on others
- ❖ Is able to describe an individual's social competencies & identify steps towards broadening them
- ❖ Models appropriate actions & appearance that promote positive social interactions and community involvement
- ❖ Uses tools to teach people how to have good relationships (circles, Strangers game, etc.)
- ❖ Assist individuals to learn safe locations and situations in the community from those that present hazards or risks
- ❖ Assists individuals to understand and express empathy for the feelings of others

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Competencies: Relationship Barriers

- ❖ Supports staff efforts to accomplish community inclusion goals
- ❖ Works to eliminate barriers to community access (e.g., \$, transportation, time, support flexibility, etc.)
- ❖ Ensures necessary information is communicated to and from friends and family
- ❖ Provide opportunities for people to practice skills, learn new skills, and experience new situations and relationships
- ❖ Assists individuals to discern friendship from exploitation & to be appropriately assertive
- ❖ Brings concerns about relationships to appropriate persons
- ❖ Exercises good judgment in responding to requests and concerns from family and friends

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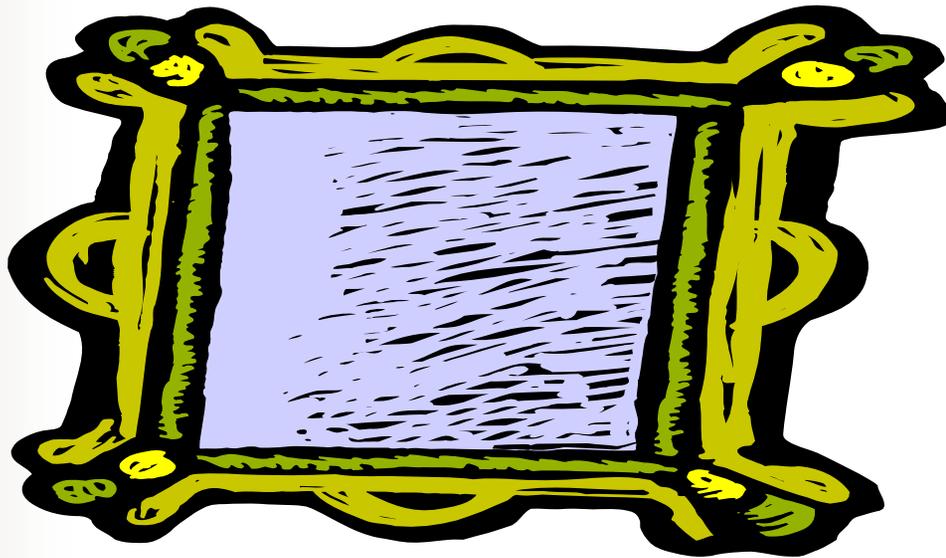
Remove Relationship Barriers

1. First Impressions
2. Resource Imbalances
3. Differences in Power

What barriers currently impede the person's ability to develop relationships with others?

What can I do to help the person minimize or overcome these barriers?

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Help Create A Positive First Impression

Help the person be attractive to others

Emphasize capacities

Overcome myths

Personal self confidence

Know thyself/enjoy thyself

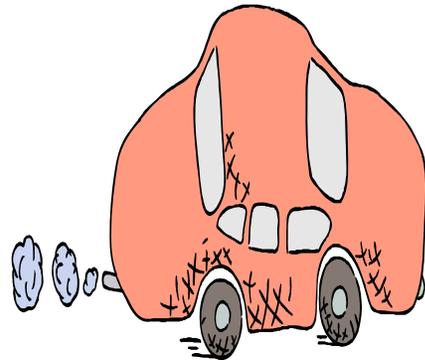
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Resource Imbalances



Money



Transportation



Support

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Competencies: Enhance Current Relationships

- ❖ Assists people to reconnect and maintain reciprocal relationships
- ❖ Utilizes information about people's relationships to support and assist to foster these relationships
- ❖ Provides regular opportunities to involve individual's in their relationships
- ❖ Supports the frequency & direction of interaction as identified by the individual
- ❖ Supports the person through life's ups and downs (celebrations/deaths, etc.)
- ❖ Assists individuals to make their own contributions to others in the community

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Relationship Maps

Reciprocal Relationships

Know routines

and understand the give and take
of current relationships

What relationships currently exist with the person and others?

How can I assist the person to enhance his reciprocal contributions in these relationships?

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Competencies: Create New Routines and Relationships

- ❖ Knows how to assist individuals in broadening relationships
- ❖ Assists the person to meet neighbors
- ❖ Facilitates the development of new relationships
- ❖ Provides opportunities to develop meaningful relationships
- ❖ Demonstrates knowledge of local community
- ❖ Acquires information and training which assists people in expanding presence and participation in town life-Researches community resources and events
- ❖ Uses information about the community to support presence and participation for people
- ❖ Creates opportunities and assists individuals with community involvement
- ❖ Makes community activities pleasant, meaningful, and opportunities for social contacts

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Create New Relationships

1. **Develop New Routines**
2. **Find Opportunities for Friendships**
3. **Strengthen Associational Life**
4. **Make Neighborhood Connections**
5. **Build Home, School, Community Roles**

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New Routines



Ask and Action Plan

What places and activities would be of most interest to the person?

How can I assist the person to increase reciprocity during these relationship opportunities?

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Find Opportunities for Friendships Through New Rituals

Assisting an individual to participate in the many rituals of community life such as: being a regular in stores and restaurants, saying hello and goodbye to others, exchanging favors and common courtesies, and just encouraging the sense that people are looking out for one another helps individuals build neighbor connections simply through implementation of daily routines.



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Strengthen Associational Life

Community building also includes a growing investment in helping people with disabilities to be part of the associational life of their communities-the many formal and informal networks in community that form around a specific interest, cause, event, or desire for affiliation. Belonging to associations provides additional ways for people with disabilities to assume citizenship, leadership, and friendship roles within the life of their community.

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Increasing Probabilities

“We cannot control relationships or force love and concern between people. We can only increase the probabilities that people will meet, get to know each other, and begin the mutual exchange that strengthens the fabric of relationships. Therefore, this is mysterious work, rather than a science. We must try to find ways to assist people with disabilities to deepen a wide variety of their relationships with others.”

Beth Mount

