Starbridge
Building Our Community: Principles and Practices of Inclusion & Self Determination

It Its To Be, Its Up To Me:
Our Role in Supporting Meaningful Lives
May 19, 2016
with Tom Pomeranz, Ed.D.

If it’s to be, it’s up to me!

Janteloven
Danish culture holds that “no person is better than another.”
If our culture held this value, would we continue to segregate people with disabilities in housing, employment and leisure?
Listen To Us

“Look, first off, we want to thank everyone who, over the years, helped to build the service system. Thank you. But here’s the thing. Come closer. Listen... A lot of what you built... we don’t want! You know? Institutions, Sheltered workshops, Group homes. We don’t want any of that stuff. We want to live like other people. Real jobs, real apartments and homes of our own. Boyfriends and girlfriends. A real community life. And here’s another thing. We want to be heard! We want to make decisions about our lives!”

From The Riot; January 2007

Life In The Community

Would you like to trade places?

Reprinted from The Arc of Berks County Newsletter (June 1998)
A Place To Avoid
Being part of the community can be a scary place-filled with hurt!
Why would one want to be there?

John O'Brien, Ph.D.
Universal Enhancement

There Is...

...no separate but equal!

Universal Enhancement
Segregated Bathrooms
It is legal in all states to segregate restrooms on the basis of intelligence:

IQs 100 or greater
- Fresh scents & décor
- Stalls for privacy
- Paper towels
- Staff

IQs Less than 70
- Barren
- No stalls
- No paper towels
- Clients

Universal Enhancement

It Speaks For Itself

Universal Enhancement
Which Is Worse?
African-Americans had to sit in the back of the bus.
People with disabilities couldn’t get on the bus.

Now’s The Time!
People with disabilities deserve social justice.
If not now, then when?
What Is Right

What is right is not always popular; what is popular is not always right.

Universal Enhancement

The System: The Community

In a social service system people are known by what’s wrong; by their condition or label
In community people are known as individuals
In a system people are incomplete and need to be changed or “fixed”
In community people are as they are, with opportunities to follow their own dreams
In a system relationships are unequal; service workers do things “for” clients and don’t look for any contribution in return

Universal Enhancement
In community relationships are reciprocal, give and take; and the diverse gifts of many people are recognized.

In a system people are broken into parts and separated into groups.

In community people have the chance to be accepted as whole persons, and viewed as part of the whole society.

In a system problems are solved by consulting authorities, policies, procedures.

In community people can make honest efforts and acknowledge honest mistakes and fears.

In a system all problems have a rational solution.

In community there is room for confusion, and mystery, and recognition that some things are beyond human control.
Inclusive Environments

An inclusive environment:
• Values the “disability” as part of a range of diversity that is fundamental to the human condition – the presence of the disability is not seen as a detriment
• Sees individuals, not stereotypes
• Is more than merely accessible
• Nurtures an environment that promotes effective communication about needs without an assumption of accommodation

Inclusive Environments (cont’d)

• Provides the individual the confidence to request the needed modification/s followed by careful consideration of the request/s
• Provides the individual with accommodation with a goal to enable the individual an opportunity to fully participate and contribute
• Approaches the provision of accommodation as doing all it can to ensure access and inclusion rather than focusing on what regulation requires
Thoughts On Inclusion

Inclusion:
• is not merely overcoming and achieving, but must rise to the status of existing and being.
• often labeled as naive, and reviled by social conservatives, is cast in a similar light as the social movements of gay rights, anti-racism and feminists.

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Thoughts on Inclusion (cont’d)

Inclusion:
• is not provided by the charitable contributors to the lucky recipient
• is not an intervention delivered to support recipients perceived as passive beneficiaries

Universal Enhancement
Inclusionary Trek

To boldly go where everyone else has gone before.

Universal Enhancement

Enough Said

Being a human being is exceptionally difficult!

Being a human being with a significant disability...

Get the point!

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"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do something I can do."

- Helen Keller
Even If I’m Wrong

OK! Let’s say I’m wrong!
Treating people with dignity and respect is not an effective intervention.

So what’s the downside?

An Enviable Life

Is.....
• being missed when away
• being loved and having others to love
• believing that you are making a difference
• being respected
• having a passion
• being excited that this is a new day
An Enviable Life (cont’d)

• making a last will and testament
• having your family and friends around you when you pass away
• being remembered for your contributions
• having people donate to a charity in your memory
• living to an old age and not looking back with regret

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More Life

It is equally important that we fill years with more life as it is to fill life with more years!

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The Purpose

The purpose of Life is a Life of purpose.  
Robert Byrne

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Precious Time

“Until we realize that adults with intellectual disabilities do, in fact, have real adult needs, interests and concerns, we will continue to treat them as if they are children and waste their precious time.”
Sarah E. Eastes
Agenda for Real Life

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Getting a life for people and coaching them into it – is the intervention.

-- Todd Risley, Ph.D.

Altering behavior is never a prerequisite to getting promoted into a reasonable life.

-- Rob Horner, Ph.D.
Diagnostic Living

How people live should be determined by how they wish to live; not by their diagnosis.

Thomas E. Pomeranz Ed.D.

Today

Today is a gift..... that is why it is called the PRESENT.
An Obvious Correlation

“What you do today will determine tomorrow.”

Mahatma Gandhi

The Flower

When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower.

Alexander Den Heijer

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Fatalism...
... a doctrine that events are fixed in advance so that human beings are powerless to fix them
(Webster Dictionary)

There is a prevailing belief that individuals with significant disabilities cannot have a quality life!

The Law of Leaking
When benchmarks are achieved and goals are realized to improve quality of life, beware of ‘leaking and straying.’

This law states: Improvements in quality of life revert to their original status unless vigilance and directed efforts are exercised.
Guardian’s Expectations

...can serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy either negative or positive! Their expectations should not be determined by a diagnosis!

It is essential that guardians dream about opportunities for their charge’s enhanced quality of life.

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Childhood Experiences

Rights of passage for all children:

• Selling Girl Scout cookies
• Taking music lessons
• Running through the sprinkler
• Receiving an allowance
• Roller skating
• Packing a school lunch
• Making things for grandma
• Learning to whistle
• Riding your bike
• Pulling a wagon

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Childhood Experiences (cont’d)

• Playing Hide and Seek
• Listening to bedtime stories
• Attending a story hour
• Blowing bubbles
• Taking a bubble bath
• Riding a pony
• Having a sleep-over
• Staying up really late
• Eating Count Chocula
• Flying a kite

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Childhood Experiences (cont’d)

• Having a squirt gun fight
• Baking cookies
• Playing croquet
• Playing in a sandbox
• Trick or Treating
• Playing in Little League
• Dance recitals
• Playing Hopscotch
• Selling lemonade
• Making mud pies

Universal Enhancement
The Future
“Plan for the future because that’s where you are going to spend the rest of your life.”
Mark Twain

You’re the Author
When writing the story of your life, don’t let anyone else hold the pen.

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The Future Is Now
How can people have a future - when they don’t have a “present”? Being an active participant in all aspects of one’s life - Forming valued relationships Having things of value

A Change Of Focus
Futures Planning is bankrupt when it focuses on what you want in your future versus what contributions you wish to make… Why are you on this earth?

John O’Brien, PhD.
Liberty and Responsibility

One can only gain liberty when one is willing to be responsible for their actions.

No Free Pass

As an adult, one’s responsibilities are neither eliminated nor minimized as a consequence of their disability. One’s disability serves as the imperative for others to provide training, support, adaptive devices, environmental engineering; whatever accommodations may be necessary to assure individuals their right to fulfill their adult responsibilities.

With rare exception, there is no free pass!
Their Rights!

Don’t just emphasize their rights;
Focus on what you can do to support individuals in being responsible adults!

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Work

“Work is the great equalizer - it promotes dignity & respect for disenfranchised people.”

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Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile!

Albert Einstein

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Get The Drift?
My individualized tailored supports help me attain my personal outcomes:
• Going on vacation to Disney Land
• Having my own cell phone
• Spending more time with my girlfriend
• Getting a tattoo

I do not wish to be employed or volunteer. My support staff cook my meals, clean my home, do my grocery shopping and laundry.

These are my entitlements as detailed in my Person Center Plan.

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Get The Drift? (cont’d)

OH, BY THE WAY...

- I have no control with whom I reside.
- I have no input as to where I reside.
- I attend a day program where coloring, peg boards and mall herding comprise my day.
- I am told what to eat by a dietician.
- I am treated like a child by my staff.

I have attained my Personal Outcomes!

The Foundation of Happiness

Happiness is the foundation in realizing a preferred future. Support people in realizing happiness through Universal strategies:
- Altruism
Altruism
Selflessness is the principle or practice of concern for the welfare of others. It is a traditional virtue in many cultures and a core aspect of various traditions and secular worldviews.

The belief in or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others.

When one acts to promote someone else’s welfare, even at risk or cost to themselves.

We must promote altruism in the individuals we support!

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Altruism (cont’d)

PEANUTS by Charles M. Schulz

Universal Enhancement
The Foundation of Happiness

Happiness is the foundation in realizing a preferred future. Support people in realizing happiness through Universal strategies:
- Altruism
- Relationships
- Exercises
- Pets

Unfortunately these life experiences are lacking in the lives of many whom we support!

Supporting Choices

We do not want to live in poverty.
We want the right to a job in the community.
We want to work regardless of ability.
We want to work for fair wages.
We want to be respected on the job.

(from The Bill of Rights, People First of Oregon, 1993)
If We Had Our Way…

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) has specifically called for the closure of sheltered workshops. They state clearly and unequivocally “We have been prepared enough. Get us real jobs! Close sheltered workshops!”

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Hobbies

FIND THREE HOBBIES YOU LOVE:
ONE TO MAKE YOU MONEY.
ONE TO KEEP YOU IN SHAPE.
AND ONE TO BE CREATIVE.

Universal Enhancement
**Relationship vs Friendship**

**Relationship:** a connection, association, or involvement. The way in which two or more people, groups, countries, etc., talk to, behave toward and deal with each other, the way in which two or more people are connected.  
Merriam-Webster

**Friendship:** is a relationship of mutual affection between two or more people. Friendship is a stronger form of interpersonal bond than an association. Characteristics of friendship include: sympathy, empathy, honesty, altruism, compassion and understanding.  
Wikipedia

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**Intimacy**

What would your life be like without an intimate relationship?  
**Intimate:** marked by close acquaintance, cherished, dearest, devoted, warm friendship, relating to or indicative of one’s deepest nature.  
Wikipedia
Let’s Celebrate
The spirit of a Person Centered Plan is more fully realized when celebration is pervasive throughout the process.
Unlike the ISP of IPP process where:
• horns don’t honk and bubbly doesn’t flow when the person meets their tooth brushing objectives
• rounds of applause are not given for achieving the objectives in bed making and hair combing
• there is no celebratory dinner when the last two steps in a ten-step task analysis is achieved for vacuuming.

Let’s Celebrate (cont’d)
Celebration is inspired in the PCP process when the focus person:
• saved enough money from their job to go on a 4 day vacation
• invited their family over for dinner and prepared the meal
• completed 100 hours of volunteer service for three organizations
• lost those last 25 pounds
• used the public bus to visit friends
These are cause for celebration!
Person Centered Planning…

…is a counteraction to cultural forces; those institutionalized systems and bureaucratic structures which deter inclusion

…promotes a shift in power and influence directed away from those who are providers of service and redirects the control and influence toward the recipient of service

…recognizes that the support recipient, if not shielded by the advocacy of the counter culture movement, would ultimately be a victim of an inadequate service system
Person Centered Defined

Person Centered Planning (PCP) is a set of approaches designed to assist to plan their life and supports. It is used most often as a life planning model to enable individuals with disabilities or otherwise requiring support to increase their personal self-determination and improve their own independence.

Person Centered Defined (cont’d)

Person Centered Planning is an accepted evidence based practice in many countries and throughout the world.

PCP discovers and acts on what is important to a person. It is a process for continual listening and learning, focusing on what is important to someone now and in the future and acting on this in alliance with family and friends.
The Mission

A Person Centered focus in realizing a Preferred Future necessitates the following:

• Nurturing the individual to discover and develop their individuality
• Enabling the individual to become unique and multifaceted
• Instructing the individual in being an effective self-advocate
• Celebrating and acknowledging the individual to enhance their self-esteem and self-worth.
• Supporting the individual in always looking good in the eyes of others
• Promoting the individual’s full participation in all aspects of their life
• Instructing the individual to effectively self-determine

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Person Centered: Consider This

• The title “person-centered” is used because those who developed it and used it shared a belief that services tend to work in a “service-centered” way.
• The person-centered concept grew out of the critique of the “facility-based services” approach in the US which was central to the development of “support approaches” in the US.
• Person-centered planning is designed specifically to “empower” people, to directly support their social inclusion, and to directly challenge their devaluation.
• PCP isn’t one clearly defined process, but a range of processes having a general philosophical background, and aiming at similar outcomes.

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Person Centered: Consider This (cont'd)

- In contrast, traditional models of planning have focused on the person’s deficits and negative behaviors labeling the person and creating a disempowering mindset from the start.
- The process focuses on discovering the person’s gifts, skills and capacities, and on listening for what is really important to the person (e.g. Snow, O’Brien, Mount).
- PCP pursues social inclusion through means such as community participation, employment and recreation.

Driven vs. Centered

A debate, if not a controversy, exists as to whether the plans developed for people should be person driven or person centered.
**Centered**: An ongoing problem-solving process used to help people with disabilities plan for their future. In person centered planning, groups of people focus on an individual and his/her vision of what they would like to do in their future.

**Driven**: An ongoing problem-solving process used to help people with disabilities plan for their future. In person driven planning, groups of people focus on an individual while proactively guiding them in making decisions regarding their future. The group supports him/her to make informed consent decisions that either realize the person's vision and what they wish to do in the future or provide options that assure their overall well being.
Covenant

When we commit to provide supports, a covenant is formed. Though not in writing, a contract is consummated:

DO NO HARM

The imposition of restrictions arises not from the individual’s diagnosis, but from our covenant.

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Whose Plan Is It?

A Person Centered Plan (PCP), that the focus person is neither able to read or comprehend, serves to defile the meaning and spirit of the PCP process.

It is vital that every effort be taken to utilize media and craft the language so the document speaks to the focus person.

The PCP outcomes can be commutated through:

- Videos
- Photos
- Audio recording
- Pictographs (drawings)
- Pictures from magazines
- Simplified vocabulary
- Slides

Use your imagination!

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Person Centered Challenges

A key obstacle to people achieving better lives has been the risk of an averse culture that has been prevalent in human services for a variety of reasons.

By changing PCP to fit existing practices rather than using it in its original form, most or all of its effects are lost.

These principles are reliant on mechanisms such as individualized funding packages and the organizational capacity to design and deliver “support services”.

Unless what is learned about how the person wishes to live, and where they wish to go in their lives is RECORDED and ACTED UPON, any planning will have been a waste of time and more importantly a betrayal of the person.

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PCP Tasks & Tools

Task 1: Getting to Know People
Tool: The relationship

Task 2: Finding Capacities in People
Tool: The personal profile

Task 3: Finding Opportunities in Community Life
Tool: The community building map

Task 4: Creating a Vision for the Future
Tool: The future’s plan

Task 5: Supporting People Over Time to Take Action & Try Things
Tool: Follow along meetings & action plans

Task 6: Organizational Change: Constructive System Support
Tool: designing platforms for change

VALUES
Relationships
Places
Valued roles
Choice
Contribution

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Who Makes The Decisions?

Person-centered change challenges us to learn together with people.

From **System-Centered**  
Professional control-Professionals know best  
Delegate work to support staff

Toward **Person-Centered**

Shared decisions with person, family and friends  
Empower support staff to make own decisions

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**Who Makes The Decisions?** (contd)

Rely on standardized inter-disciplinary teams to generate plans  
Organize efforts in conference rooms for the convenience of professionals  
Take action to follow rules and regulations

Create person-centered teams to solve problems over time  
Organize efforts in the community to include the person, family and support staff  
Reflect together as basis for setting priorities
Who Makes The Decisions? (contd)

- Spend lots of time planning with little time to take action
- Respond to need based on job descriptions
- Create distance through process

Who Is In Control?

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Q of L & Self-Determination

Quality of Life relates to choices/decisions made by an individual with intellectual or other developmental disabilities and, with assistance as needed,
- has the ability and opportunity to exercise control over services, supports and other assistance
- has the authority to control resources and obtain needed services
- has the opportunity to participate in and contribute to their communities
- has the support including financial, to advocate, develop leadership skills, become trained as a self-advocate, and participate in coalitions and policy-making

Acceptance of the right to self-determination on the part of individuals has major implications for self-image, self-expression, physical and mental health.

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Taken in part from Paul Wehmeyer, Ph.D, NGSD & University of MN Institute in Discovery
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It Comes Together…

- Importance
- Desired Degree of Control
- Exercise of Control

…and changes over time!

Person Centered Focus

Happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue. It is the very pursuit of happiness that thwarts happiness.

Victor Frankl, MD

Happiness is an emotion felt in the here and now; it ultimately fades away. Meaning is enduring. It connects the past to the present to the future.

Having purpose and meaning in life increases overall well being and life satisfaction, improves mental and physical health, enhances resilience and self-esteem, and decreases the chances of depression.

Leading a happy life is associated with being a “taker” while leading a meaningful life corresponds with being a “giver”.

Journal of Positive Psychology 2013

Universal Enhancement
Your Futures Plan
As you dream about your future, what outcomes do you hope to realize in the next 5 years?
Check all that apply
- Find a mate
- Get a degree
- Have a child
- Lose weight
- Quit smoking
- Exercise daily
- Buy a home
- Get out of debt
- Get a divorce
- Move to______
- Rehab my home
- Quit drinking

Their Futures Plan
What outcomes do those we support hope to realize in the next 5 years?
Check all that apply:
- Have my own bedroom
- Choose my housemate
- Choose where I live
- Have a mate
- Get a power chair
- Make friends
- Choose my support staff
- Seizures controlled
- Engage in consensual sex
- Have a real job
- Spend time with family
- Control my behavior

If this were your life, would you want this future?
**Invest Wisely**

Dollars spent on services and supports for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities should not be viewed as an expenditure but rather an investment. This investment must have a good rate of return.

Will this investment result in the individual being:

- Employed?
- Healthy?
- Safe?
- Productive?
- A contributor?
- A friend?

Dollars being paid to an agency that is unable or unwilling to obtain a good return on investment should be deemed not worthy of the investor's money.

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**Meeting Needs**

When people ask for things that are not available, “professionals” determine the request inappropriate.

I would love to have a bird. I’m sorry but that’s not possible.
Not expected to live, she (Wilma) was placed in the oven to keep warm until the priest arrived.

Even as a newborn, she showed a determination which would become a hallmark of her life.

Her parents moved to Alliance in 1933 and divorced soon after.

…she took part in school plays and sang despite suffering long periods of weakness, a result of polio as a toddler.

After school, she and her friends would walk down Box Butte Blvd to Thielle’s for cherry Cokes and potato chips.

…while a sophomore, she had her first date with Dean Kuhns, the man she would marry.
Married life was full of friends…

Wilma hosted card parties and bridal showers for her friends and was a member of the Beta Sigma Phi sorority.

… a mother of four children, active leader in Blue Birds and 4-H.

She was a very thoughtful and patient mother who believed there was no greater calling than raising her children.

…many happy Thanksgiving dinners, 4th of July fireworks…

1967, her husband became paralyzed in a car accident.

With her trademark determination… they became partners with their sons in Kuhns Wholesale.

She also cared for other children in her home and worked in the nursery at [church].
Wilma Darlene Kuhns

She knitted, sewed, crocheted, canned, baked, gardened and always had a book nearby.

She brought beauty and wonder into her children’s lives…

Wilma was compassionate, generous, and never gave up on anyone, especially herself.

In her last years, she continued to show her determination as she struggled with the loss of her independence due to crippling osteoporosis.

Destiny

Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice.

William Jennings Bryan
Generic Supports

Generic: Relating to or descriptive of an entire group or class; general.

The role of support staff is not to provide support, but to help people obtain it.
Valued Relationships that go beyond:

Family
Other Support recipients
Paid Support staff

Things of Value:
Job
Volunteering
Religion/Faith
Computer games
Cooking
Music
Reading

Exercise
Gardening
Decorating
Fishing
Sports
Dating
Pets

What relationships and things of value do those you support have?
Quality of Life Profile

Activities of Value:
1. Classical Music
2. Gardening
3. Dining Out
4. Fishing
5. Camping
6. Baseball
7. Antiqueing
8. Action/ Mystery Videos
9. Public Speaking
10. Shopping
11. Writing
12. Travel
13. Walking

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Quality of Life Profile (Now)

Activities of Value:
1. Classical Music
2. Gardening
3. Dining Out
4. Fishing
5. Camping
6. Baseball
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Universal Enhancement
Quality of Life Profile (Now)

Activities of Value:
1. Classical Music
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9. Public Speaking
10. Shopping
11. Writing
12. Travel
13. Walking

Value of Relationship(s) In the Activity

Universal Enhancement
Quality of Life Profile (Before)

Activities of Value:
1. Classical Music
2. Gardening
3. Dining Out
4. Fishing
5. Camping
6. Baseball
7. Antiqueing
8. Action/Mystery Videos
9. Public Speaking
10. Shopping
11. Writing
12. Travel
13. Walking

Value of Relationship(s) In the Activity

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Quality of life should not be diminished as a result of required support.

Level of Support

Quality of life is diminished, NOT because of the level of support required by the individual, but because Best Practice support is frequently NOT provided for these individuals.

A Do For vs. a Do With approach

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Universal Strategies

There are no “special” techniques or strategies to enhance the quality of life of people with disabilities. The strategies to enhance quality of life transcend gender, age, religion, race, ethnicity, sect, sexual orientation, nationality or disability. They are Universal to all!

Community Integration

Integration (noun) 1: The act or process or an instance of integrating: As an incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals or different groups (as races)

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, Inc., Publishers
Does drive through integration promote valued experiences and facilitate relationships?

Universal Enhancement

Integration: (noun) 1. The act of process or an instance of integrating; as incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups (as races)
Community Participation

Participation (noun) 1: The act of participating 2: The state of being related to a larger whole

Integration: (noun) 1. The act of process or an instance of integrating; as incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups (as races)

Universal Enhancement

Participation: (noun) 1: the act of participating 2: the state of being related to a larger whole

Integration: (noun) 1. The act of process or an instance of integrating; as incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups (as races)
**Community Relationship**

**Relationship (noun)**
1: a connection, association, or involvement
2: an emotional or other connection between people

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**Participation:** (noun) 1: the act of participating 2: the state of being related to a larger whole

**Integration:** (noun) 1. The act of process or an instance of integrating; as incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups (as races)

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**Relationship:** (noun) 1: a connection, association, or involvement 2: an emotional or other connection between people
Having relationships - and being part of your community means being missed by others when absent.
A Good Community

A good community insures itself by trust, by good faith and good will, by mutual help. It depends on itself for many of its essential needs and is shaped from the inside. When a community loses its memory, its members no longer know one another. How can people know each other if they never know one another's stories? If people don't know the story, how do they know whether to trust? People who don't trust one another do not help one another. Jack Pealer, Jr., "The Community Living Paper"

Universal Enhancement

Images of Life In The Community

Being 3-1/2 years old and having your pre-school teacher think you're absolutely irreplaceable; and being the one child in the class who has a severe disability.

Getting to ride the same bus to school with your brother now that there is a lift on the bus.

Listening to a friend tell her favorite story over and over again, and hearing something each time; knowing that for her to risk asking you to listen again is a sign of her capacity to trust in you.

Universal Enhancement
Watching your son walk across the high school stage on graduation night, just as all the other graduates have done, knowing that his "autism" hasn't gone away, but celebrating the fine young man he is becoming.

Getting your first apartment at 21 with a kid you went to high school with - you were the kid in the "multiply handicapped" class; he was the volunteer from the honors program.

Using your electric wheelchair to be an usher at church on Sundays.

Being forgiven for failing a friend because you forgot a promise you had made and intended to keep.

Having a laugh with friends in an up-scale restaurant when you're served red skin potatoes that have been sculpted to look like giant mushrooms.

Taking your turn at the microphone during the annual community concert in the park; having the children gather around you afterwards to show them how you play the spoons.
Images Of Life In The Community (cont’d.)

Treating a friend to lunch because you want to share some of your winnings from the raffle you won at the local high school football game last week.

Helping put a roof on your neighbor's house even though you've never done anything like that before.

Keeping in touch with a friend who is away.

Knowing your newspaper carrier by name, and having him know yours.

Universal Enhancement

Images Of Life In The Community (cont’d.)

Having your friends from the church and your family organize a schedule so you can recover from surgery at home, not in the nursing home.

Sharing your home with a friend for six years now after living in institutional places for more than 20 years.

Sitting around looking at photos with a few friends, and telling, listening to and remembering the stories.

Having a couple of friends volunteer to help take the old wallpaper off and put up new.

Universal Enhancement
Living in your own home even though the seizures haven't stopped; getting the help you want and need from people you select and who come when you decide they should.

Feeling confident enough about yourself and your parents to let them know, at age 22 (and having a developmental disability), that home would be a little better if it were your home; having them take you seriously and begin to plan with you to make that possible.

Having your co-workers throw a surprise birthday party for you after you all "clock out" for the night.

Delivering the eulogy at the funeral of a young man who died before his dreams came true.

Always having the coffee pot on because people stop in often to visit.

Going to the local tavern on St. Patrick's Day to enjoy the music and the celebration.

Sharing dinner together and making a party out of washing the dishes.
Sitting on a front porch on a street full of front porches, chatting softly with your neighbor on a summer night.

Writing letters to the editor and articles for the local newspaper.

Looking up a phone number and calling a friend with the good news that you've moved into your own place, after never "succeeding" in the telephone program you worked on for years in the group; finally having something worth using the phone for.

Being a teenager who has four high school band "letters" and President's physical fitness medal, is elected to the homecoming court, and has Down Syndrome.

Visiting the same campground on the same weekend every summer so that you can visit with the family you befriended on your first trip there five years ago.

Being patiently tutored in gardening by your 76-year-old neighbor, hoping the lessons will continue for years because some things, happily, take a long time to learn.
Being invited to share a favorite story with the children in the first grade class and being asked back on a regular basis.

Taking supper to the neighbors who have just lost their grandfather.

Looking for work; managing a challenging insulin injection procedure for yourself pretty much on your own; taking care of the house when your family is away and having an intellectual disability.

Having your neighbor stop over because he missed seeing you out this morning.

Remembering the person you credit with first teaching you to play basketball; being friends with that person long enough that you're taller than him now; knowing that when you first met and he gave you those first lessons he lived in an institution.

Having Sunday brunch at a friend's house nearly every Sunday for a couple of years so you can visit, have someone else do the cooking, play with the kids, and do your laundry without spending any money.
Images of Life In The Community (cont'd.)

Hosting the annual Christmas party for the Housing Association you belong to; being a part of creating and keeping traditions.

Getting to hold and rock to sleep your neighbor’s grandchildren when they come to visit, even though some people still treat you as a dangerous person.

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Universal Enhancement

When Life Has Changed

When life has changed in desirable ways for people with disabilities, their allies, and others involved with them, strategies of collaboration and trust most often prevail. People invest in knowing one another well—in knowing the stories of others and in sharing their own.

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Universal Enhancement

Jack Pealer, Jr., “The Community Living Paper”