

Person-Centered Thinking and Practices

2 Community Life for Everyone



Introduction

These slides contain content adapted from the Administration for Community Living's Person Centered Counseling Training Program. The content includes text and narration from online courses. To view original content or for more information, please visit nwd.acl.gov or contact NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov.

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Welcome! (1/2)

This lesson will help you consider the value of community living. It will provide background on the movement toward community living in long-term services and supports. It will explain the difference between a system-focused life and a balanced life in the community. It will use terms and concepts that are part of The Learning Community's (TLC) Person-Centered Thinking (PCT) approach. It will also introduce the Relationship Map, a TLC tool. This tool supports consideration of the person's current connections to community through the lens of relationships.

Welcome! (2/2)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson: You will be able to compare and contrast aspects of a balanced life in the community versus a service-focused life.

The Importance of Supporting Community Living (1/3)

People seeking services and supports have not always been able to have lives that are integrated with community. In the past it was common practice to send people to live in nursing homes or institutions when family or others could not independently support them at home. Institutions sometimes offered meaningful assistance.

However, they were not person-centered or integrated with community life. Over the last five decades, we have learned a lot about what is important to people. The message has been clear and consistent. People want choice, direction, and control in their lives. They want to live, work, learn, and play in their communities just like everyone else.

The Importance of Supporting Community Living (2/3)

Over the years, many laws have been passed to help people gain more access to community life. As a result, there has been some progress on human and civil rights. Quality of life has improved for many.

However, there is still a profound institutional bias in the financing and organization of service delivery systems. As a result even people receiving “home and community based services” may still experience life as if they lived in an institution.

The Importance of Supporting Community Living (3/3)

In 2014, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) settings rule provided its first affirmative statement about the meaning of home and community. It was a profound shift away from an institutional model. Person-Centered Counseling professionals will be in the forefront of supporting this shift as people seek services through No Wrong Door systems.

Community Life – Past, Present, and Future

The changes of today are based on the changes of the past. Many people who will fulfill the role of Person-Centered Counseling professional have been a part of those changes. The move toward support in the community began many years ago. It has been shored up by many laws and initiatives.

Supporting Community Life (1/2)

Person-centered counseling (PCC) is guided by respectful and focused listening. As a PCC professional, you will support people of all ages and abilities in the following:

- Having control over the aspects of their lives that are meaningful to them
- Being recognized and valued for their contributions (past, current, and potential)
- Being provided new and ongoing opportunities to be positively engaged during all phases of their lives
- Being supported through a variety of relationships, both natural and paid, within their communities

These core experiences are fundamental to community living.

Supporting Community Life (2/2)

Person-centered discovery is an essential skill in person-centered counseling (PCC). (Related skills include motivational interviewing and active listening.) People will come with specific needs or requests. In the Learning Community approach, discovery skills are methods of listening to people. They are used to identify a person-directed balance between what is important to a person and important for them. This information makes choosing between options meaningful. The amount of time discovery takes will vary. However, a good understanding of the “to/for balance” for the person and how it applies now, is part of the goal.

— Maintaining a Balanced Life in the Community

When it comes to a balanced life in the community, quality of life is as important as location. It's not enough to live outside an institution or "in a community setting." Specific attention and effort to maintain things important to people is necessary. The "to/for balance" is a way of helping people maintain balanced lives on their own terms.

A Balanced Life

The “to/for balance” will be explored throughout this course. People with ongoing support needs face the risk of people’s concerns for them dominating over their own concerns. People end up with a service-driven life when health and safety dominate decision-making. A right match for community services and support is based on a good “to/for balance” as defined by the person.

An essential concept to make this work is the “dignity of risk.” This is the recognition that people learn, grow, and experience the fullness of life through opportunities to determine their own path, including experiencing failure or poor outcomes.

Relationship Map

A relationship map is one of the Learning Community tools that helps with the skill of understanding the power and importance of social networks. Discovery is a conversation where you learn about a person. Paying attention to their important relationships and their overall social network can be very important. Relationships offer comfort and make life interesting. Having loved ones supports resilience and recovery.

There are other methods of looking at social networks. This tool is explored here because it is part of the toolkit in person-centered thinking. The first step in using a map is learning how to fill one out. This will help you to understand more about how social networks look and to consider a person's unique situation.

Value and Use of a Relationship Map

The relationship map is a great tool for getting a better picture of a person's social support network.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (1/3)

- The history of services includes segregation and exclusion from many of the things that make life our own. Relationships, opportunity, and contribution have rarely been the focus of services. Providing a person with a home in the “community” is not the same thing as helping them be included in community life.
- The more significant or enduring a person’s need for support, the more likely their voice will be diminished and services will become systemcentered. Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals play a role in maintaining the things that are important to the person when seeking services.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (2/3)

- Person-centered thinking and planning helps support a healthy life balance. It starts with what's important to a person and addresses important for in that context. The tools and strategies of person-centered thinking can help support this process. Recognizing the importance of the dignity of risk is key for success.
- A relationship map is a tool that can support your ability, as a PCC professional, to recognize and engage natural support and inclusion. It can help identify gaps in a person's life in the community and natural supporters who are engaged with the person. In formal planning, it can help the person identify people they want to support their planning process.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (3/3)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson, you will be able to compare and contrast aspects of a balanced life in the community versus a service-focused life.

Reflection on Learning Objective

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. Write down your answers to the following questions.

1. What did you learn in this lesson that you felt was important?
2. What will you do differently because of the content in this lesson?