

Person-Centered Thinking and Practices

9 Further Exploration of Discovery Approaches



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)

Discovery is an essential part of person-centered thinking and planning. There are six different approaches discussed in this course that can be used to discover the right “to/for balance” with a person. These approaches provide more options for developing skill in discovery. Four of them are reviewed in this lesson. One was reviewed in the lesson in this course called Community Life for All (relationships map). All of them will be reviewed in more depth during the in-person portion of the blended learning model. These approaches may be used informally and flexibly in practice. They can help professionals learn more about a person. They can help Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals avoid common pitfalls and overcome barriers to discovery.

Welcome! (2/2)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson: You will be able to identify the six discovery approaches shared in this training program and how four of them might be used in practice.

The Value of Person-Centered Thinking

Discovery approaches help Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals understand what is behind a request by finding out what is important to the individual. Discovery starts when a person makes contact. It's always voluntary, and direct information should be shared with people as requested. However, by offering to engage person-centered discovery at each point and with each person, PCC professionals can potentially help more

The Person-Centered Thinking Discovery Approaches (1/2)

Here is a list of approaches introduced in this training program. All of these approaches are supported by use of branching conversations. They also include processes for checking assumptions (guess/ask/write) before taking action or documenting. You learned about branching conversations and guess/ask/write in the lesson on First Impressions and Conversation Skills. Discovery can also be supported by other skills, such as active listening or motivational interviewing skills.

The Person-Centered Thinking Discovery Approaches (2/2)

Approaches reviewed in this lesson:

- Good day/bad day
- Rituals and routines
- Reputation exercise
- Communication chart

Approaches reviewed elsewhere:

- Relationship maps (Reviewed in another lesson)
- 2-minute drill (Covered during in-person training)

Good Day/Bad Day (1/4)

Good day/bad day is about getting down the details of what makes a person tick. Some people like loud, bright environments with lots of stimulation. Some people feel best if they get up early and get going. Others like to sleep in and lounge a bit. Some find cheerful, friendly people enjoyable. Some would like to be around quiet or serious people or no one at all. Some need lots of challenge to make a day worthwhile. Others want things to be consistent, predictable and not too strenuous.

The concept of good day/bad day is to get at those kinds of details. While you would rarely ever walk someone through their whole day in actual discovery, it can be the granular level that makes a difference. The skill can be used in bits and pieces to get at important aspects of what's working for a person and what is not.

Good Day/Bad Day (2/4)

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Good Day/Bad Day (3/4)

During the in-person training, you will get to practice this skill with a partner. The process looks like this:

1. Start from the time you wake up until you go to bed. Choose a day when you work or have your most routine responsibilities.
2. Go through the day moment by moment and describe what makes it a good day (and then repeat and look at what makes it a bad day). For example, what does waking up look like on a good (bad) day? How do you feel? Who are you with? What's happening?

Good Day/Bad Day (4/4)

3. Do not let one event create a good day or bad day. For example, waking up with a headache may make for a bad day. However, as you progress through the day what else is happening besides the headache that makes it good or bad? The day will be a collage of those moments.
4. This is not a “fantasy” day or “best day ever.” This is a real day in which you have responsibilities and your normal limits and expectations.
5. If you want to practice, you can download a good day/bad day form by clicking here.

Rituals and Routines

Rituals and routines guide us through our days and years. They are the things that make our lives our own. There are many different types of rituals and routines that people engage in, including:

- Morning
- Going to bed
- Mealtimes
- Transition
- Birthday
- Cultural/holiday
- Not feeling well
- Spiritual
- Vacation
- Comfort
- Celebration
- Grief/loss

Reflection Activity: Your Rituals and Routines

Write down your answers to the following:

1. List the top 2 to 3 holidays or special occasions you celebrate.
2. Pick one event from your list. What has to happen to make this right for you? What are the things that have to be the same or similar from year to year? For example, seeing certain people, eating certain foods, gift-giving, volunteering, fasting, praying, religious gatherings, or decorating.
3. If all or most of those things were missing, how would you feel about the event? Would you want to celebrate at all? Why or why not?
4. Describe what you do for dinner most nights. Find someone you have never had dinner with and ask them if they will share their dinner routine with you. What is similar? What is different? Would you want their dinner routine? Why or why not?

The Impact and Practice of Reputations (1/2)

System-centered documentation and communication often carry forward the negative reputations of people who seek services. The words on this page are just a small sample of words used that forward negative reputations.

- Homeless
- Aggressive
- Hoarder
- Manipulative
- Incompetent
- Dirty
- Mentally ill and dangerous
- Incontinent
- Sexual predator
- Pedophile
- Frequent flyer
- Fire starter
- Runner
- Wanderer
- Addict
- Non-compliant
- Cutter
- Victim
- Felon

— The Impact and Practice of Reputations (2/2)

Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals must recognize and directly address people's actual needs. This includes behavioral or legal status issues. However, communication about a person should never start with, fixate on, or perpetuate negative reputations. Negative reputations shape what we think about people and cloud our ability to work openly with them. And some traits such as "non-compliant" may contain within them a different "truth." For example, it may be that the person is persistent in the face of not being heard by professionals.

Using Communication Charts

Individuals, cultures, and communities vary in the behaviors they use to show sadness, joy, fear, pain, respect, and the like. A person may use the same or similar behavior to mean different things. A communication chart is a way of organizing and maintaining what you've learned about a person's behavior and what it means.

The purpose is to clarify what the person is communicating. It also helps others know how to respond to the behavior in a person-centered way. The communication chart supports discovery and informs action. It is an essential tool for people who communicate significant needs with behavior and who are not easily understood. However, it can be helpful in clearing up communication with anyone.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (1/3)

- People often contact the No Wrong Door system with an initial purpose in mind. Engaging person-centered discovery right away can ensure they get information that is truly helpful. For some, it may significantly reduce how much time is spent with false starts.
- Not every person needs in-depth discovery. However, having a number of approaches means the professional can feel more confident in a variety of situations.
- Often what is most important to us in our day-to-day lives is difficult to communicate. Flexible use of good day/bad day and routines and rituals can help identify critical but often-overlooked pieces in discovery.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (2/3)

- A negative reputation often accompanies people seeking services. Caregivers and systems alike may begin to focus on “what’s wrong” with the person. Their strengths, their hopes, and their goals may all be diminished. Having skill in using reputations to help you identify strengths, what’s important to a person, and how they can be best supported is something you can explore in the supported learning day.
- People communicate with behavior as much as with language. For some people behavior is the primary form of communication. A communication chart is a way to reflect on what behavior means. It provides others with information on how to respond in a person-centered way.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (3/3)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson, you will be able to identify the six discovery approaches shared in this training program and how four of them might be used in practice.

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?