



PROMOTING COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYBODY BELONGS

ChristianHorizons



ONWARD Huddle

By: Sarah Indzeoski

Huddle Topic: Independent Personal Plan Facilitation

We all have goals and plans for our lives. Our own strengths and gifts, our families, friends, community groups, and the services we use, can all play a part in helping us achieve our goals. Choosing and directing the services available to us is an important step in this journey. Through facilitated planning, people are working with a specially trained facilitator to engage those important in their life in planning how they want to live and the services they want to use.

One of the benefits of this new process is that it helps people and their support circles (families, friends, and direct support teams) to think bigger about their goals and the places and spaces people want to contribute to and belong, instead of limiting them to the way their life has always been.

Independent personal plan facilitators bring their specially trained skillset in rallying the strengths, gifts and resources of the person at the centre of the plan, their family and friends, Christian Horizons, and the broader community around the person's goals and choices. They are trained to listen to various viewpoints, while also supporting people to value and respect the person's choices, gifts, and strengths. In this way, they help challenge any limiting beliefs and assumptions that have held people back in the past.

This year, during an Independently Facilitated Personal Planning process, a person using our services invited his mother to his personal plan meeting in his new apartment after moving from a group home. At the end of his personal plan, his mother shared that in the past, she held so many limiting beliefs about her son's abilities and potential. She stated that never in a million years would she believe that he would be where he is today. In fact, she had pushed back firmly when the thought of independent living was even mentioned. She now realized that her love and motherly protection blurred her ability to see his potential and ultimately held him back. The person using services responded that he is more than his disability and thanked his mom for finally letting him take the risk to live on his own and expand his skills. This gave the facilitator the opportunity to share the beautiful dynamic that exists when a support network approaches supports holistically. There is space for the mother to hold her fear of risk, space for service providers to mitigate that risk, space for facilitators and support teams to ensure everyone's voice is heard while amplifying the voice of the person they support, and space for the person using services to advocate for their goals and plans and to take ownership of the steps they need to take to get there.

We all have the opportunity to approach the services we provide and connections we make with people using services from a strengths-based approach. As we respect people's gifts and honour and value their choices and direction, we can work to remove barriers and invest in opportunities that help people to have greater choice, experience new growth, and flourish in the communities that matter to them.

Conversation:

1. Share a time when someone's strengths shined through when it was unexpected. What limiting beliefs were you holding about the person or their situation? What assumptions were you making? What did you learn and how will you apply that going forward?
2. Think of a barrier you have faced where at first you thought there was no way to overcome it. What strengths did you draw on to navigate this situation? What were the creative solutions you came up with to solve your problem? Now that you've seen how you have used a strength-based approach for yourself, how can you apply this to the people who use our services and the services we provide?

Team Challenge:



Central District
Presentation Slides 1

At your team meeting:

What's on your Plate? by Sarah Malott and Angelene Meikle –Personal Plan Facilitators

1. Grab a paper plate and a writing utensil.
2. Think about your favorite buffet, or any general buffet that has any and every food you can think of! On your plate, write or draw the foods you would select at that buffet. (5 min for this)
3. Pass your plate to the person next to you. Now I'm going to tell you that you have to eat what is on that plate instead of the one you created.
4. Keep passing the plates until your plate returns back into your hands. What do you like or not like about other people's plates?

As a group, reflect together on the different choices you each made and why you made them. How did it feel being told you had to take someone else's plate? Now imagine that plate as your life and those foods as things that fill your life up allowing you to be full, nourished, and satisfied. How important would it be to you to have a chance to plan your own goals and services for your life?

This month: Work with people using services to design a meaningful and exciting way to visually track their goal progression. Come up with some creative ways to track progression and get excited about the journey. This could include a thermometer chart, a pie chart, bullet journaling, a photo album...the sky is the limit!

Going Deeper:

Yvonne has held the dream of visiting Miami for years and advocated for herself fiercely along the way. Through her personal planning process, Yvonne led her direct support team and her family to collaboratively tackle any barriers she was facing to make the trip happen, including planning ways she would save the money she needed to go on this trip. Watch Yvonne's video here: [Onward Reel Update: Yvonne is going to Miami - March 2023 - YouTube](#)

Tackling barriers requires strength-based thinking, creative problem-solving and critically examining limiting beliefs and assumptions that may exist. Here are some helpful questions to guide you along the way:

- What assumptions am I making about where people are at currently, where they want to go in life, and how they want to get there?
- Am I reinforcing the barrier or am I challenging it?
- Am I approaching barriers as a boundary or something to overcome?
- How can I creatively support people to overcome technological barriers, financial barriers, and attitudinal barriers?