

An Orientation to a Culture of Gentleness



“I have found that people may not remember what you said, they may not remember what you did, but they will never forget the way you made them feel”

Maya Angelou



Agenda



- Our Mission Statement
- The “Central Purpose”
- How the two relate
- 4 Pillars and Tools
- 6 Key Elements
- Better experience for those served and care givers

Our Vision, Mission, Values

- **Our Vision**

A community of informed, caring people living and working together.

- **Our Mission**

Our mission is to promote the behavioral health of our individuals, families, and communities through programs that promote recovery, build resilience, create opportunity, and improve quality of life.

- **Our Organizational Values**

We shall carry out our responsibilities consistent with our Values:

- 1) In treating all people with compassion, dignity, and respect.
- 2) In respecting diversity and individuality.
- 3) In visionary public leadership, local decision-making, and accountability for our actions and decisions.

The Central Purpose



“The purpose of our presence in the lives of others is to **nurture**, **teach** and **sustain** the experience of **companionship**, **connectedness** and **community**”.

How do the two relate?

Mission

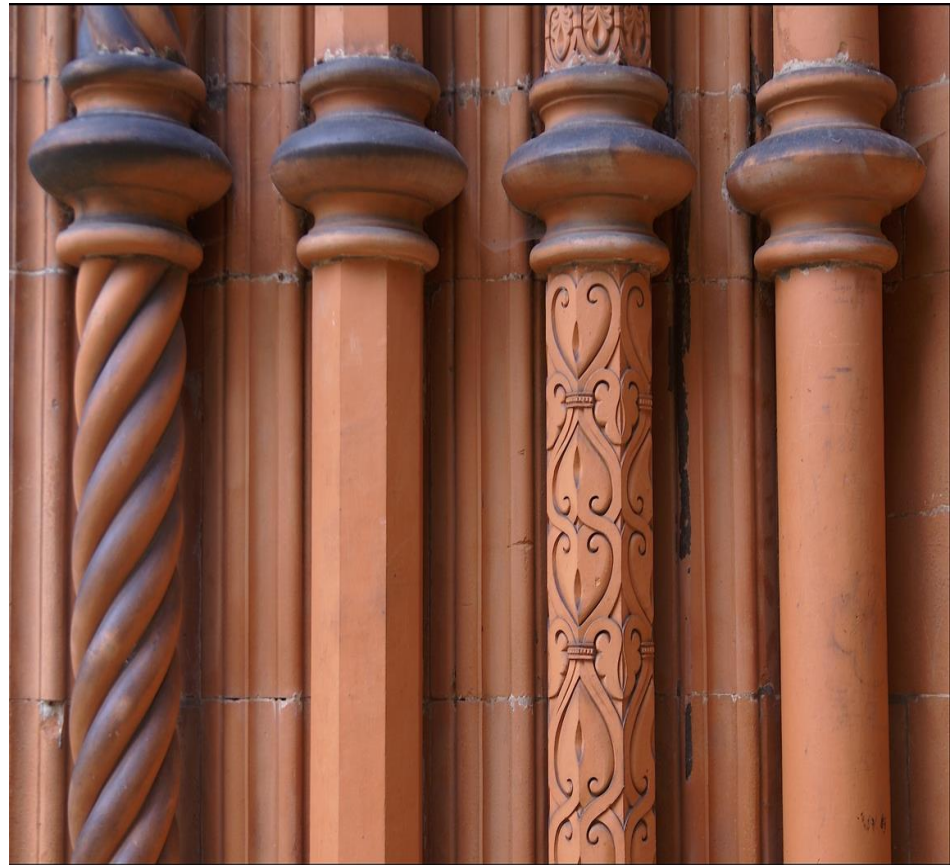
- Our mission is to promote the behavioral health of our individuals, families, and communities through programs that promote recovery, build resilience, create opportunity, and improve quality of life.

Central Purpose

“The purpose of our presence in the lives of others is to **nurture, teach** and **sustain** the experience of **companionship, connectedness** and **community.**”

4 Pillars

- Safe
- Loved/Valued
- Loving/Valuing
- Engaged



4 Tools

- Words
- Eyes
- Hands
- Presence



6 Key Elements?

- Safe
- Loved/Valued
- Positive Interactions
- Demands
- Structure/Schedules
- Transitions



Feeling Safe/Valued



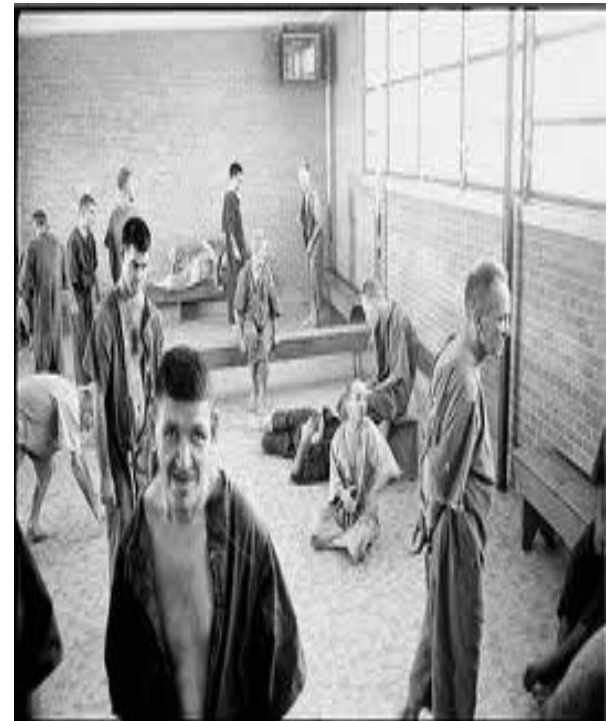
- Emotionally and physically
- Based on the perceptions and feelings of the other person, not our perceptions and feelings
- Histories/Memories
- We may never know what contributes to the other person's feelings of safety.

Indicators of Feeling Safe/Valued

- Stays with others
- Expresses joy
- Relaxed
- Contented appearance
- Well-cared for
- Respects self
- Respects others
- Sleeps well
- Expresses love
- Enjoys participating
- Eats well
- Enjoys hobbies
- Uplifts others
- Shares
- Flexible

Causes of Feeling Unsafe/Unloved

- Physical Illness or Disability
- Mental Illness
- Developmental Disability
- History
- Losses



Causes of Feeling Unsafe/Unloved

- Environment
- Lack of Meaning in One's Life
- Labels
- Poverty

How do we recognize that someone does not feel safe/valued?



Indicators of Feeling Unsafe/Unloved

- Runs away
- Cries a lot
- Expressionless
- Sad appearance
- Slovenly
- Hits self
- Hits others
- Sleeps poorly



Indicators of Feeling Unsafe/Unloved

- Complains
- Refuses to participate
- Eats poorly
- Self-stimulates
- Curses
- Hoards
- Flinches



What we do that makes others feel unsafe?



Demands



- Based on the perception of the other person
- Can be subtle
- Can be words, a look, a touch, the presence or lack of presence of someone, environmental issues, memories

Lessen Demands

- Reduce verbal interactions
- Make presence welcoming and non-threatening
- Soften our gaze
- Speak kindly
- Speak softly
- Speak calmly
- Ask permission
- Sweeten and lower our voice
- Talk at eye level
- Respect the person's sense of space
- Wait for the person on their time schedule

Lessen Demands

- Don't ask questions
- Make statements
- Invite
- Do with
- Do for
- Offer to help
- Provide a consistent approach
- Use gestures or visual cues
- Slow down verbally
- Slow down physically
- Don't insist on compliance

Lessen Demands

- Quiet the environment
- Turn off TV / Radio
- Remove clutter
- Use lamps (vs. overhead lights)
- Go to another space

What we can do to make others
feel safe?



Positive Interactions

- Positive interaction on a regular basis @ 15 minutes
- Feedback-“great job with the dishes”
- Sharing how the other makes you feel
- Eye contact, touch, soft voice
- Being with someone without demands

Positive Interactions

- A wink, thumbs up or smile
- Sharing a positive quality about the person
- Listening without judgment

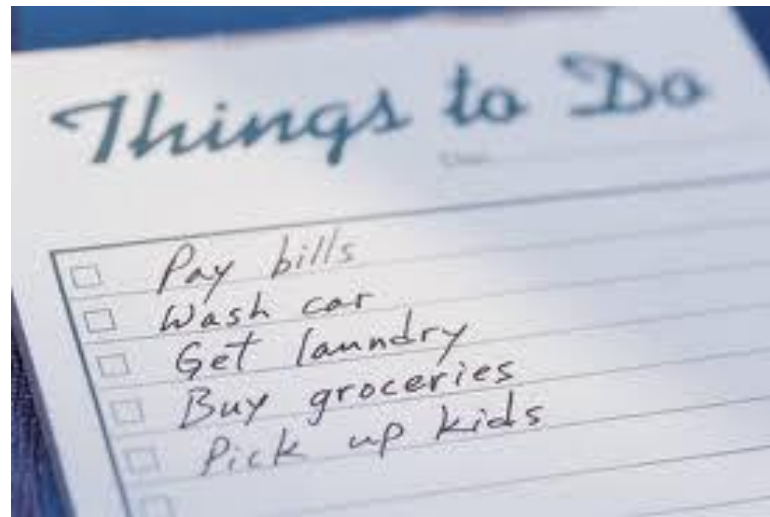
Making others feel safe/valued

- Greet respectfully
- Speak kindly
- Use a calm tone of voice
- Speak softly
- Look warmly
- Move slowly
- Talk slowly

Making other feel safe/valued

- Reach out your hand
- Touch slowly and softly
- Use valuing, loving words
- Be with the person
- Do for the person
- Do together with the person

Structure and Schedules



How Structure makes us feel safe

- What tools do we use to structure and schedule our days
- What happens when we lose or do not have access to those tools?
- How do we feel when our routine is interrupted, changed or unknown to us?

Use of Schedules

- Individualized
- Empowers
- Provides visual cue
- Reduces demands
- Predictable
- Provides consistent approach for caregivers
- Can be flexible
- Keeps us focused on the Central Purpose

Transitions

Periods throughout our day, week, life where we may struggle and need extra assistance and nurturing to get through them.



Transitions

Large

- Moving
- Health issues
- Loss of someone close
- New people in your life
- New job
- Loss of job
- Graduating from School

Small

- Getting up
- Going to work
- Shift change
- Visitors
- Meeting new caregivers
- Changing activities
- Environmental issues
- Medication times
- Meal times

How can we help during Transitions?

- Identifying transition times
- Discuss plan to get through the transition
- Reduce demands
- Increase Positive support
- Utilize schedule to let person know what is coming next

- Follow difficult transition with easy-preferred activity or interaction
- Adjust the use of your tools
- Debrief difficult transitions
- Make adjustments for future
- Share lessons learned with others

“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive”.



"The true expression of non-violence is *compassion*".

Dalai Lama