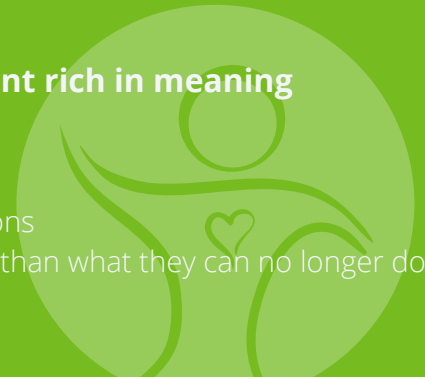


MEANINGFUL LIFE AND DEEP KNOWING

What is "Meaningful Life" and how can you create an environment rich in meaning for the residents?

- A MEANINGFUL LIFE is **determined by each person**
- Residents exercise **choice** and have **autonomy** and **control** in daily decisions
- Focus on the residents **retained abilities** (what the person CAN do, rather than what they can no longer do)
- Strive to create **purposeful living** for each resident
- Residents are **deeply known** and **loved**



3 TAKEAWAYS

1 Deep Knowing

Knowing individuals beyond their care needs is a deeper level of knowing. It includes **identifying one's passions, interests, routines, what gives purpose and meaning**, and how one typically responds in different circumstances. Deep knowing is possible with dedicated, consistent staff creating connections with residents.

2 Easy Access to Outdoors

- No one is meant to live 24/7 in a small, confined space such as one's bedroom. **Residents deserve easy access to outdoors.** Using appropriate precautions, residents can be assisted to a porch, a patio, or go on a walk with staff.
- Leverage the **power of normal**. Consider the health benefits & emotional wellbeing of fresh air for residents, especially during times of social isolation and **MAKE IT HAPPEN!**



3 Adopt a YES, AND...philosophy

A pillar of improv, the "**yes, and**" philosophy builds on reality with a forward, proactive approach. In a COVID era we can say yes to meeting onerous regulations **AND** lead with person-centered approaches.



WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

1. Take a YES, AND... approach to social distancing as you evaluate what you CAN do when it comes to mealtime, meaningful engagements and connections. Stretch beyond the institutionalized approach.
2. Leverage the "little things" that matter. Especially when interacting with residents living with dementia, pay attending to your body language, your own stress levels, and communication techniques. Ask permission. Talk through care tasks when helping residents.
3. Decide to get every resident outside, who wants to go. Make it a regular part of the residents' routines.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions to have conversations at your workplace on how to bring in more MEANINGFUL LIFE to daily practices.

1. Where are we on the continuum of overmedicalizing versus individualizing our environment and approach? In a COVID era, how can we push to balance infection control / quality of life / resident choice?
2. How would we assess meaningful life in our care community? What are the systems we can use to get to deeply know the residents and how can we share the information we learn about the residents with one another?
3. How might we make a resident admission less an institutionalized process and more a welcoming process?



Use the QR code to access short video clips of each of these concepts.

EMPOWERMENT

What is empowerment?

- Empowerment is the transferring of authority and responsibility from one person or group to another.
- It is the responsibility of leaders to create a world where people's voices are heard.
- Empowerment is an active process that prioritizes the business of growing people.

3 TAKEAWAYS

1 Self Care is Self Full

Practice self care. Taking care of yourself is not selfish and it doesn't need to feel like a chore. As a caregiver you are constantly GIVING care to others. Look for simple ways you can **care for yourself**. Ask yourself, "what's one thing I can do today to care for me?" Ask others to share ways they do something for themselves - and try an idea out for yourself. Think of self-care as **SELF-FULL - filling your spirit back up**.

2 Be Thankful and Express Gratitude

Create a process for team members and residents to **express individualized appreciation for one another**. Use large poster board or flip chart paper - one for each person. Pass out post-it notes and encourage others to write one thing they appreciate about each person and place the post-it note on their poster.

3 Burnout and Resilience

Be on the lookout for the following burnout symptoms in yourself and in others. Use the strategies in the Ways to Take Action section to **build your resilience**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Procrastination | 6) Pessimism |
| 2) Chronic fatigue | 7) Sense of a foreshortened future |
| 3) Cynicism | 8) Loss of satisfaction in one's career or life |
| 4) Chronic lateness | 9) Questioning of one's own faith |
| 5) Difficulty experiencing happiness | |

WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

- Don't just DO something...stand there...and listen. *"The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering & loss daily & not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet."* (Rachel Naomi Remen). Take the time to listen, give space for people to share their feelings, without the need to "fix" it.
- Here are actions you can take to build RESILIENCE:
 1. Exercise for 30 minutes a day, 3 times a week.
 2. Strive to get 7 hours of sleep a night.
 3. Stay hydrated. Drink half your body weight, in ounces, of water. (if you weigh 150 lbs, drink 75 oz.)
 4. Don't increase your caffeine intake to increase your energy.
 5. Take a power nap when tired.
 6. Pick a 10-minute timeslot at least 4 times a week to practice some form of relaxation (meditation, prayer, focused breathing, mindfulness).
 7. Adopt a positive attitude of "ACTIVE OPTIMISM".

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions to have conversations at your workplace on how to bring in more EMPOWERMENT and support for one another.

1. Emotion needs motion. How are we creating space for one another to express feelings without judgment? How safe does it feel to express feelings at work?
2. What is our FUN FACTOR? How much is our culture one in which people can laugh, be silly, and have fun amid the chaos?
3. How are we creating a community of belonging? How are we at expressing gratitude to one another? How well do we create a culture in which people can ask for help (emotional support) when they need it?

