

Person Centred Thinking Tool 3

What is important to and for people?

The fundamental person centred thinking skill is to be able to separate what is important to someone, from what is important for them. Important to is about what really matters to the person, from their perspective. Important for is about the help or support that they need to stay healthy, safe and well.

In using this tool people need to be able to separate what is important to and what is important for the older person, and to find a balance between the two.

Services are usually very good at describing and delivering what is important for someone - for example what medication the person needs, how they must be positioned, how to make sure they are clean. If the older person needs a lot of support, especially on a daily basis, their nurse or carer may record this. Alternatively, it may just be passed from carer to carer. What is usually missing in exchanges like this, is what matters to the person, how they want their support provided, and the balance between the two.

Arthur Jones

Arthur is a charming man, a real gent. People describe him as the salt of the earth, a real character. He is 86 years old and lives in his own flat in Moss Side, Manchester. This area has featured on the national news due to the number of drug related shootings, which is an issue for Arthur's family and carers, as, if he becomes confused, he tends to go outside in the middle of the night.

Arthur is terrified of being put in a home. His family and carers are doing their best to help him stay in his own home. He has support from home care workers four times a day to prepare his meals for him.

Stephen and Sally (Arthur's nephew and wife) talked with Arthur and his carers and recorded what they know is important to and for him. They captured this on one page

to share with everyone who supports Arthur. In this way, they hoped that his care workers could get to know Arthur and what matters to him, and therefore be able to provide support in a way that really worked for Arthur.

What is important to Arthur

They thought that it was important that the care workers know that Arthur sometimes likes to talk about his time driving tanks in the war, but only when he is in the mood. He also likes to talk about the old boxers especially Cassius Clay but he doesn't relate to the name Muhammad Ali. Arthur loves talking to people and is an amazing storyteller. He has lived in his flat for 35 years. His wife, Madge, died 20 years ago and he treasures her wedding ring, which he wears on his little finger.

What is important for Arthur

Arthur has very poor vision and

“They used to leave a butty in the fridge for lunch. I hate butties. Anyway, I get a nice bit of soup or a hot pot now, something warm you know. You can’t beat it. It’s tons better now. They sit and have a cuppa while I eat my meals – it’s miserable eating on your own, day in, day out you know.” Arthur Jones

hearing, and his walking stick must always be to hand as he has quite an unsteady gait. He finds his way around his flat quite easily but should never go out alone.

Arthur’s carers have a key to get in his flat. If he is in bed, they must never approach him, as he would think it was a burglar and hit out with his walking stick. They find calling his name from the bedroom door works best. Arthur always wears his wool bob hat and will tell you he is sick and tired of people telling him to take it off - he will say, ‘This is my flat and if I want to wear my hat I’ll wear it’.

Arthur makes sense of his days by sticking to his routines. Anything out of the ordinary will totally disorientate him, leaving him confused and likely to go outdoors in search of help. He always has a £10 note in his top pocket ‘in case he needs it’. If he loses it he will struggle on his hands and

knees for hours looking for it. If something out of the ordinary is happening - such as a hospital appointment - carers need to explain this clearly to him about a week beforehand and remind him daily. Arthur goes through phases of believing he is really ill and you are keeping it from him. Carers need to reassure him; joking that it’s old age catching up with him will make him have a good old laugh with you.

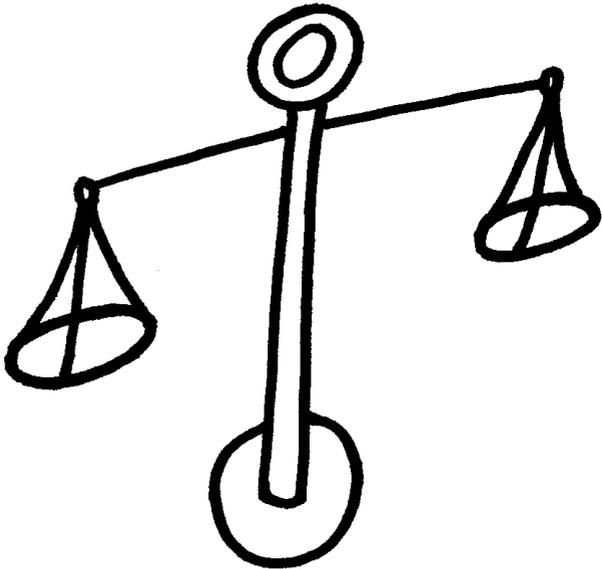
Balancing what is important to with what is important for Arthur

What is important to Arthur is to have hot meals and not to eat alone. What is important for him is that he does not go out alone, and has his food brought to him.

Arthur’s carers were bringing sandwiches and leaving them in the fridge for him. Arthur hated this, and would throw the sandwiches into his back

yard, which encouraged rats, and created a pest problem for Arthur and the local residents. The balance between important to and important for here was for the carers to bring Arthur hot food, and to stay and chat while he ate this.

Arthur pays for this himself, and it costs an additional £37 per week. Well worth it, from Arthur's point of view, as he now gets hot meals and someone to talk to at lunchtime everyday.



What is important to Arthur

Always have his walking stick within reach.

That people sit and talk with him, and listen to him too – he loves company and is an amazing storyteller.

That people sit with him when they call to serve his breakfast, dinner and tea – he dislikes eating alone. He loves his meals to be piping hot.

Seeing Sally and Stephen every other day.

That you listen to his stories, especially about the war, but never instigate a conversation around the war – he only talks about it when he is in the mood.

That you can talk about all the old boxers with him – Cassius Clay is favourite but he will not refer to him as Muhammed Ali.

Knowing if anything is happening that is different from the normal routine.

Must always have at least £10 in his pocket.

Must wear his wool bob hat when he wants and not be encouraged to take it off – he likes wearing it and becomes agitated when people suggest he takes it off in the flat.



How best to support Arthur

Arthur worries that he is very ill and people are keeping it from him – give him lots of reassurance that it is just old age – he will have a good laugh with you then.

Always explain very clearly to him about any upcoming appointments usually at the hospital – do not tell him at the last minute.

Arthur has very little vision and is hard of hearing, when you enter his flat via the keypad code you will need to call out to Arthur that you are there, if Arthur is in bed never approach him, he will think you are a burglar and will hit out with his walking stick.

Arthur is frightened of being 'put in a home' – tell him that we are all doing our best to help him stay at home, but when he goes outside in the middle of the night we are frightened he will get hurt.

What those who know Arthur say they like and admire about him

Charming.

Salt of the earth.

A real character.

Full of humour.

A real gent.

Just the most gorgeous gentle man.

Arthur



Nora Hughes

You can also use person centred thinking skills for specific areas of people's lives.

Nora lives in Oakwood House, a residential home with seventeen other people.

Nora is 87 years of age, and is a real character, full of chuckles and fun. She has a beautiful dress sense. She loves to see her sons and daughters Tony, Jim, Margaret and Irene.

The managers of Oakwood house wanted to continue to improve the service that they offer people. They thought that one thing that they could change that would improve the quality of everyone's life, would be to look at the evening routine at the home. They worked with all the staff at the home to give them an understanding of and confidence in person centred thinking skills. The staff worked

with a person centred planning co-ordinator and developed, with each individual in the home, a description of what was important to each person about their night time routine, and what support each person needed (what was important for them). The managers then worked at making sure that what was important to each individual was happening so that people were getting support in the way that they wanted it.

What is important to Nora

Nora needs her routines to run like clockwork, everything has to happen at a certain time, otherwise this will develop into a bad evening and night for Nora.

It is really important to Nora that other people living at Oakwood House do not go into her bedroom, although she is happy for staff to enter her bedroom. Nora must begin getting ready for bed at 7.30pm. As soon as the music comes on at the end



of Emmerdale, Nora's favourite soap opera, she will take her feet off her footstool, remove the rug from her knee and look in an obvious way at the clock.

Nora washes her face herself using Dove soap, she loves to wear clean clothes each night for bed and must choose which nightie to wear. Nora also chooses the clothes she will wear the following day whilst getting ready for bed. Nora must have a body wash each evening in order to feel comfortable and clean for bed, she has talc on after her wash, no particular favourite but usually scented. Nora loves her four pillows to be arranged comfortably once in bed, she is only comfy with lightweight covers and must have cotton sheets and a bedspread. She must not have a duvet! Nora loves her small lamp by the bed to stay on all night and the bedroom door to remain open.

What is important for Nora

Staff should acknowledge Nora's wishes around other people living at Oakwood House not going into her bedroom and support her with this respectfully, by speaking to the other people living there when necessary.

Nora's reliance on routine are central to her happiness and staff need to be aware of Nora's cues when she is ready to go to bed and respond - this will invariably be at 7.30pm. Two staff should support Nora from her armchair into her wheelchair to go to get ready for bed in her room. Nora needs support to use the commode in her room, she will then have a wash. Nora needs support in filling the sink with warm water, Nora's flannel then needs to be soaped up with her Dove soap so as she can wash her face, the cloth then needs to be rinsed and handed back to Nora so as she can rinse

her face, she will then dry her face herself. Nora chooses from 3 nightdresses, which staff hold up, Nora will fix her eyes and say yes to the one she wishes to wear for bed. Nora always has clean underwear and pad for bed. Two staff should support Nora into bed and then arrange her 4 pillows comfortably around her. Nora's bedroom should always be warm enough for her to sleep comfortably, with just a cotton sheet and bedspread, if it is very cold Nora may like a blanket. Nora's small lamp must be left on and her door open.

Balancing what is important to, with what is important for Nora

It is important to Nora that when she goes to bed, she can look through the long mirror on her wardrobe. She could then see whether there were people in the corridor. This helped Nora feel safe and secure. Nora would become upset and anxious when the night staff shut the door. The door was a fire door and regulations dictated that it had to be closed. Nora would sometimes struggle to get out of bed to open the door again, only for night staff to close it again as they did their round.

Although what was important

for Nora was being met, as she was safer from fire by having a fire door, this was not in balance with what is important to her. It is important to her to look through the mirror out into the corridor.

Steve and Sheila had a magnetic smoke detector fitted to the bottom of the door. This means that Nora is still safe from fire (important for her) and has what is important to her, as the door stays open and she can look through the mirror into the corridor. This cost £200, but means that Nora can now sleep through the night, rather than being anxious that somebody may be out on the corridor, her door can remain open which means she can go to sleep relaxed in the knowledge that if she wakes in the night she can look through her long mirror out onto the corridor.

How can this tool be useful?

Assessments

Knowing what is important to and important for an older person can be instrumental in enabling an accurate and sensitive assessment to be carried out of someone's personal needs and circumstances. Balancing the

Important to Nora about going to bed

As soon as the music at the end of Emmerdale comes on Nora likes to go to bed. Nora will take her feet off her footstool, remove the rug from her knee and look in an obvious way at the clock.

Nora washes her face herself, she uses her Dove soap.

Nora loves to wear clean clothes each night for bed, she chooses which nightie she will wear.

Nora must choose the clothes she will wear each evening for the following day.

Nora has talc on after her wash, she has no particular favourite, but usually uses the talcs she has received in gift sets over the year.

Once in bed Nora must have her four pillows arranging comfortably.

Nora must not use a duvet, she prefers cotton sheets and a bedspread – she is only comfortable with lightweight covers.

That her small lamp by the bed stays on all night.

To support Nora in her evening routine

At 7:30pm two staff need to support Nora from her armchair into her wheelchair to go to get ready for bed in her bedroom.

Support Nora to use the commode in her room.

Fill the sink with warm water and soap Nora's flannel up with her Dove soap so that she can wash her face. Rinse the flannel for Nora to rinse her face. Nora then dries her face herself.

Nora always has a body wash which she needs staff to carry out for her.

Nora doesn't use any creams unless prescribed by the doctor but she likes a fine layer of talc sprinkled over her body before putting her nightie on.

Hold three clean nighties up for Nora to choose the one she would like to wear.

Nora always has clean underwear and pad for bed.

Two staff need to support Nora into bed. Nora has four pillows as she sleeps in an upright position.

Nora's bedroom should always be warm enough for her to sleep comfortably with just a cotton sheet and a bedspread – if it is bitterly cold out ask if she would like a blanket.

Ensure Nora's small lamp is left on.

Nora's evening routine

important to, with important for (where assessments tend to be pitched) can help to keep an assessment focused on the person, their story, their view of their needs and what will help to meet them. Person centred assessments are a key part of national policy as well as person centred practices for individuals. Finding out about and recording what is important to and important for someone helps to keep assessments truly person focused.

Planning support and care arrangements

Having a record of what is important to and important for someone makes the process of translating the outcomes of an assessment into clear and personalised support plans and for organising other care arrangements much easier. It can also be a good way of checking back with the person that what is recorded and what is set out in a plan makes sense to them, and matches their understanding of what has been agreed or identified in a plan.

Reviews

Taking stock of what is important to and for someone, can help in reviews, to check that their support is working well for them, and to identify

where things can be improved. It can also help to pinpoint important changes in someone's situations or support needs.

Dementia care mapping

There are many synergies with these person centred tools and approaches and the practice of dementia care mapping (DCM), which was developed by the late Professor Tom Kitwood and Kathleen Bredin in the later 1980s. It is designed to assess the quality of care experienced and delivered to people with dementia from the perspective of the person with dementia. It is used most often in formal care settings such as hospitals, care homes and day centres. It is based on the philosophy of person centred care, promoting an holistic approach to care that upholds the personhood of the person with dementia. Knowing what is important to, and what is important for someone, is a fundamental concept within dementia care mapping. Even without the more specialist aspects of DCM, knowing what is important to and for someone with dementia is a crucial part of getting to know that person and how to best support them to live the life they want to lead. More information about dementia care mapping can be found on the website of the Bradford Dementia Group www.bradford.dementia.org.uk.