

IDENTIFYING STRENGTHS AND SUPPORTING NEEDS

COMPETENCIES: PERSON-CENTERED CULTURE, EMPOWERMENT & ADVOCACY

INTRODUCTION



One of the crucial roles you can play in the lives of those you support is to assist them in identifying and developing their strengths. Sometimes, when you are working in a supportive role, it's easy to overlook a person's strengths. Likewise, it can be difficult for them to identify their own talents and abilities. This places you in a unique position to open doors to growth and self-esteem, making your work more meaningful and rewarding.

Consider the following methods of identifying and supporting strengths in others:

COMPLETE THE PICTURE

Too often, all we really know about a person is what we read in reports or paperwork.

Consider the unique things you know about someone you support that aren't necessarily documented in your daily work routine.



PRESUME COMPETENCE



Just because a person cannot perform a task at one moment, does not mean he will never be capable of doing so.

Similarly, someone you support might be excellent at something one day yet struggle with it the next.

EMBRACE THE UNIQUE

Some individuals may have interests or strengths that are very singular or unusual. Don't be afraid to explore these gifts. It could open new doors to learning and fulfillment. Consider how a person's strengths might be tapped in order to work toward a new goal or to redirect challenging behavior.



WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW!

- 1 Observe someone you support and spend time with him to learn about his strengths, interests and needs.
- 2 Ask her what she likes and what she is good at. Find out how she would like to improve at or learn something new and presume competence.
- 3 Read reports or supports plans, ask family members and other staff about strengths and needs of someone you support.
- 4 Discover the times when she seems happy or peaceful and note her activities at the time.



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