

Person Centred Thinking Tool 8

Working/not working

For each of us, there are areas of our life that are working well and areas that are not working, that we would like to change. Simply asking an older person what is working and not working in their life tells us so much. This information may be used to change what can be changed and to help us understand what really matters to people.

Beatrice Kelly

Beatrice broke her hip in a fall on some ice 15 years ago. This forced her to leave her home and she now lives at Tree Lodge.

She is dignified and elegant. She was a successful career woman. A former headteacher, she later worked within Salford's education department, overseeing standards in all secondary schools in the authority.

Beatrice will talk about the great sense of loss she feels at no longer being involved with community and how she misses having her own front door. She hates the locked doors at Tree Lodge, which stop her getting out. She finds the temperature in the home too high, which makes her feel uncomfortable. She also struggles with having to eat at set times and feels this inflexibility is unjust.

Beatrice talks of her frustration at not being able to get around easily. She hates the zimmer frame and, due to health and safety

regulations, staff are not allowed to let Beatrice link arms with them for support. She would love to walk down to the library, a short walk from the home, but has to rely on the mobile service - which she occasionally misses if she is having an afternoon nap when they call. She spends a lot of time knitting. She has always enjoyed knitting her own clothes but rarely has the opportunity to get out shopping for patterns. Beatrice says;

"I was one hell of a shopper in my day, but don't get chance anymore. I miss my country walks, too. I was a great rambler."

Although Beatrice says she has come to terms with having to move out of her own beautiful house to live in Tree Lodge, she says,

"After all these years, I still really miss being able to shut my front door, close the curtains and settle down for the evening to do as I please."

She does, however, have things she enjoys at Tree Lodge. She enjoys sitting in her room at the home in the evenings and reading her newspaper or watching TV

- especially Coronation Street and Emmerdale. Beatrice enjoys reading. Bernard Cornwell is her favourite author, although she says, "I'll read just about any fiction."

A great frustration for Beatrice is that she is unable to wash her own clothes and, in her view, the home's laundry service leaves a lot to be desired. She also struggles with the amount of support she requires to look after herself physically. Beatrice feels terribly undermined when staff she doesn't know turn up on shift and support her to the toilet, with bathing, dressing and undressing.

"I feel defeated, it feels like nobody's listening when I tell staff how unhappy I am about this." Beatrice asks herself, "What have I come to when a stranger is putting me on the toilet?"

Even worse for Beatrice is when some staff do not wait at the door while she uses the toilet, but go away and do something else.

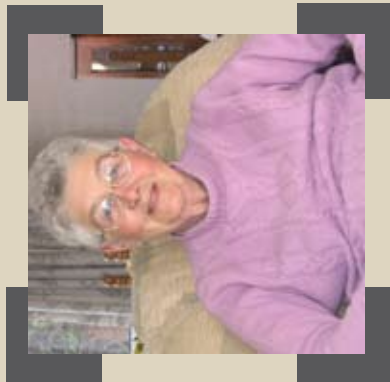
"Then they come back to take me off the toilet when they it suits them."

Important To Beatrice

- To be called Beatrice, not Beattie.
- To choose when I eat. I like my tea around 6pm, not 4.30 pm, and that I watch TV whilst I eat.
- To read in bed for an hour before sleeping
 - any crime fiction is my favourite.
- To have my cotton blouses starched and ironed.
- Watching my soap operas. Coronation Street and Emmerdale are my favourites.
- I love knitting my own clothes.
- My photograph albums of my son George growing up and late husband Ben.
- To chat with people about my life, especially my last job before retiring, when I was an Education Inspector.
- I must go out once a week shopping. I especially enjoy choosing my own knitting patterns.
- To have my morning newspaper every day, the Mail and Mail on Sunday are my favourites.
- I love walking – anywhere these days, but where there are fields is my favourite.
- To feel fresh and not over heated.
- To wear my own clothes. I must not be dressed in other people's clothes. I hate this!

What those who know Beatrice say they like and admire about her

- Always has a kind word for everybody.
- A strong and gentle woman.
- Great integrity.
- The gentle way she sits and talks with me.
- Her determination.



How best to support Beatrice

- That only people I know well help me in the toilet and bathroom.
- Recognise my embarrassment at needing help in the bathroom and toilet; be sensitive & kind with me.
- Don't leave me on the toilet a long time.
- Wait at the door so I can call you when I am ready.
- Let me link you when I walk; I hate the zimmer.
- Heat my meals when I want them; don't tell me when I must eat.
- I like lots of cups of tea – not just at set times. Please make me one when I ask.
- Let me know if the mobile library service calls. If I am having a snooze, I miss them.

Beatrice

Sally, a new senior staff member, helped Beatrice to summarise what was working and not working for her. Sally also talked with staff, and captured what was working and not working from their perspectives. This is what she found:

What is working for Beatrice

- Reading her books at bedtime and having a variety to choose from.
- Watching the TV and never missing her soaps.
- Knitting.
- Having a daily newspaper delivered.

What is not working for Beatrice

- Not being able to go out for walks (has only been out twice in the last three months to buy her patterns).
- Not having someone to link her arm to support her for the 10 minute walk up to the library.
- Using the zimmer frame to walk.
- Having to eat meals at set times, with no flexibility each day.
- Staff calling her Beattie.

- That her family do not visit her.
- Her blouses not being starched.
- Always being too hot.
- Not being able to open windows.
- Having other people's clothes put on her and other people wearing her clothes.
- Having name tags on her clothes.
- Clothes being spoiled in the laundry.

What is working for the staff Team

- People's clothes being clearly name tagged.
- Beatrice eating at the same time as everybody else.
- Beatrice walking with her zimmer frame for support.
- Beatrice enjoying her books and TV programmes.
- Beatrice fitting in most of the time by eating her meals with other residents.
- The mobile library service
- Catching up on other jobs once Beatrice has been positioned on the toilet.
- Keeping the home warm for all the residents.

- Keeping windows closed so that nobody is caught in a draught.
- The laundry service coming in and taking the home's laundry each week.

What is not working for the staff team

- Her family not visiting.
- Beatrice asking for drinks and meals outside of regular times they are served.
- Having to go to the newsagents to pay for Beatrice's daily papers.
- Beatrice linking on to them for support when walking.
- Beatrice not liking new or agency staff members helping with her personal care.

Sally decided to explore what could be changed from the not working lists. Some things were easy - for example, making sure all staff called her Beatrice, not Beattie. She took the information and developed it into a one-page profile about what is important to Beatrice and the best ways to support her. It begins with what people like and admire about Beatrice.

Perspective	What's working	What's not working
people who live at the care home	Drinks at 7.00pm. Having a choice of drinks- coffee made with milk or water, tea, peppermint tea, a tot of whisky, hot chocolate, Horlicks. Having own cup-china, pint mug. Occasionally having cake, toast, jam sandwiches, hot cross buns or fruit cake.	No choice of snack- plain biscuit.
staff team	Drinks at 7.00pm	People not drinking, which may adversely affect their health. Limited snacks at suppertime. Nothing to offer people with diabetes at suppertime. Having to bring cakes, snacks in themselves to give people choice at supper.
Managers	Cook does not need more hours to provide extra food at supper-time.	Staff and people who live there are unhappy with choice of snack at supper.

Using working/not working at Oakwood House

We have also been using working not working at another care home. Steve Mycroft and Shelia Mannion own Oakwood House, a small care home in Tameside. They believe that there has long been a need for a change in cultural practices in many care homes for older people. Historically, there is a great emphasis on operational routines, rigid systems and care within restrictive boundaries. They think that the traditional and somewhat negative views and public portrayal of care homes for older people will become a thing of the past if people start to work in a person centred way .

“At Oakwood House we want to help break down traditional cultures of residential and nursing care settings. We want to use person centred approaches to look closely at the individual wants, needs and wishes of the people using our service, and ultimately, to find out what’s really important to them.”

Steve Mycroft and Shelia Mannion

Like other care homes, Oakwood House encourages people living there to create their own lifestyles and have a strong voice in how their services are provided in the future.

“We don’t want people living here to have to fit in with organisational routines, and person centred thinking is helping us to scrutinise our own practices by listening to people’s real experiences of living at Oakwood House”

They decided to start this process by looking at what is working and not working around supper time, from different perspectives. They had already looked at the drinks that people had available at supper time, and provide a wide selection, including tots of whisky. Now they wanted to see what else they could do to improve supper time.

Sheila and Steve are now working to extend the range of snacks at supper time on a daily basis. Their first action is to find out exactly what people would like, or find other creative ways to make this happen - including some people cooking the snacks themselves.

How can this tool be useful?

You can use this approach to:

- Help people step back and look at a situation – to see it and understand it from different perspectives, especially the older person's.
- Learn how a person wants their life to look and feel in comparison to what life is actually like right now.
- Help staff teams think about how to provide better support by seeing what is working and not working about their support now.
- Clarify what to build on and identify areas requiring action to change.
- Contribute to reviews - both to understand how things are going since changes have been made; but also to pick up issues and problems in the first place.
- Engage people (e.g. family members, neighbours etc) who are important to the older person in understanding what their life is like, and how they can contribute to making a difference to that person's life - often in very small and simple ways.
- Understand the impact of changes in someone's life, on that person's quality of

life and overall wellbeing.

For example changes in their health, sudden onset of a disability or impairment, bereavement or other loss (e.g. moving house, and people moving away).

- Help resolve problems and concerns to help reduce isolation and depression.
- Help people manage bouts of ill health and/or depression by developing their own personal tools and techniques for self reflection and problem solving.