

Transition from Traditional to Person-Centered Supports

Themes and Lessons

How to Promote Authentic Change?

- Much change in language, use of “individualized,” “person-centered”
- Much downsizing, smaller group homes
- Many organizations have small programs that provide individualized supports
- But, still, don’t really commit to changing the organizational culture

- “Offering individualized supports calls for transformational change. It is not simply a matter of attracting additional money and solving technical problems.” (O’Brien, 2009)
- Failure to do the developmental work necessary to make this transformation will result in a great deal of activity that renames usual practices and makes small improvements within the boundaries of current structures.” (O’Brien, 2009)

Generating Commitment to Common Values and Mission

- “Know what your compass direction is; otherwise it’s easy to get blown off course.” (Pat Fratangelo, Onondaga Community Living)
- “Many leaders have visions that never get translated into shared visions.” (Senge, 1990)

Promoting Individual Change: A turn or return to authentic person-centered planning

- “We always said we did person-centered planning, but we realized it had become routinized.” (Arc of Howard County)
- Planning without preconceived answers in mind.
- Drawing in community members

Shifting Power and Control: Not Simply Smaller Settings

- Individual budgets
- Own homes vs. agency owned or controlled
- Support staff chosen by the individual
- Guardianship
- “What we were doing became unsustainable; we kept all the power; so we’d say we were all about individualized support, but we were far from it.” (Tim Quinn, ArcNCR)

Cultivating Community Supports, Relationships, and Collaborations

- New collaborations with individuals, families, and Circles of Support
- New collaborations across departments within agencies, including HR/finance
- New collaborations with community organizations (housing, etc.)

Moving Away from Facility-Based Settings: Multi-Pronged Approach

- Closure of facilities
- Downsizing facilities
- Commitment to not creating new facilities
- Facility closure is not an end, but a new beginning. “Closing the group home was the easy part of the process, in retrospect.”

Beyond Staff Training: Nurturing Staff Engagement

- Opportunities for staff involvement in work on personal level and organizational level change
- Opportunities for leadership development, mentorship
- Promoting ownership, investment – listening, valuing, including, etc.

Organizational Transformation = Long-Haul Work

- “You don’t have to know all the answers, you just have to be willing to be in the process.”
(Tim Quinn, ArcNCR)