

Person-Centered Thinking

LEARNING LOG

Beginning March 2013 a group of agencies started a long journey to improve service delivery through a process called “Person Centered Thinking Coaches”. Michael Smull, a pioneer in Person Centered Thinking and Planning facilitated the Coaches and Leaders meetings.

Amy Norman, Day Program Manager with RHD’s Imagine That! Studio <http://imaginethatkc.org/> illustrate the “change” that has occurred since beginning the Person Centered Thinking Coaches process.

JP communicates to others with some sign language, a communication book, and a few words, that, once you get to know him, you are able to understand. Communication and being understood is extremely important to JP. JP likes to communicate his routine such as “go home, take a bath, eat dinner, go to bed, and then come back tomorrow.” JP is also a man who likes to adhere to his routine. He can become frustrated when his routine is disrupted or his communication is not understood.

When JP was three years old, his grandmother started writing down words on pieces of paper. JP liked to collect these pieces of paper and show others, and share with others the things he was trying to communicate. JP, his grandmother, and mother, carried on this tradition of writing words over the years. Once JP began attending the Blank Canvas studio two years ago, we noticed this need to have words and phrases written on paper. It somehow manifested into writing words and phrases on paper bracelets that JP would wear on his wrist and show to others, as a way, we assume, to communicate to others. Thus, a new routine was established at the studio.



However, to someone who does not know JP well, they tend to not understand JP’s need for the bracelet or may not even understand his version of sign language. As JP appeared to become more frustrated when he tried to communicate, the staff at the studio agreed that there was a need to collect what they have learned through their interactions with JP and use it as a tool to help others when they may be struggling with understanding JP. The staff were introduced to the Learning Log. Over the course of a month, each day JP was at the studio, the staff member working with him was asked to add to the Learning Log something they have discovered about JP’s communication in terms of when JP is doing this, we think it means this, and we should do this for him. The Learning Log is now available for all staff members to refer to, and has been helpful for new hires to gain an understanding of JP. Through this exercise, everyone soon began to realize how important JP’s style of communication is to him. It also was a great tool to use to build a relationship with him.

JP's Communication Log

What is happening? <i>In the environment, what's just gone on, the "trigger"</i>	JP is doing this: <i>The behavior (+ or -), what others notice, can be seen, heard, and felt by others</i>	We think it means: <i>Meaning of the behavior, what the emotions and feelings are, what's going on inside</i>	We should: <i>What other people should do in response</i>
Morning arrival, throughout the day	Makes scissors/cutting motion with his hands	Add to my bracelet	Ask me what I want added to my bracelet
Asking for something to be added to my bracelet	Whining, progressing to loud grunting, screaming	You are not meeting my requests	Listen to what I am asking, acknowledge you understand what I am asking, add to bracelet if appropriate
Staff is doing notes	I am screaming and tapping teeth with fingernails, vigorously	I want you to write "lunch" on my bracelet	Ask me to help you gather supplies (pen, paper)
I am working on my bracelet with staff	I tap my ears	I want you to write "listen to music"	Write "listen to music" on bracelet if I am waiting patiently
Throughout the day	I point to the office	I want to make a photocopy of my bracelet	Ask me to assist you in making a photocopy
Throughout the day	I am repeatedly pointing to my bracelet and the door, saying "Wawa"	I miss Wawa	Help to redirect me to a different activity
Throughout the day	I move both hands up and down, mimicking walking, and am saying "wa"	I want to take a walk	Walk with me around the studio or ask me if I want to take a walk outside
I am working on my art	I am pointing to my artwork and saying "Wawa"	I am excited and proud of my work, and I want to show it to my staff	Acknowledge what I have just accomplished and help me show it to others
Staff is writing on my bracelet	I point to the window/door and say "Sa"	I am sad the sun is not out	Draw a sun on my bracelet if I am waiting patiently
Throughout the day	I point at my bracelet, hold up three fingers, and point to the kitchen area	I want you to write "3 chairs for lunch with Wawa"	Acknowledge what I am asking and write it on my bracelet if I am waiting patiently

Amy Norman, Day Program Manager



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