

## **Disability Resource Hub Disclaimer**

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# Important to/for

Learning the fine details of What's Important To and For, and supporting a balance in between is an essential concept that underlies all person centred thinking skills.

## What's Important To includes

Only what the person tells us with their words or behaviour. When what people say and what they do is different, we rely on the behaviour. This is not what others think should be important to the person. Things that are important to us help us to be happy, content and fulfilled. This could be people in our lives and what we do together, it could be the way we spend our time, or little but crucial details throughout our day. Things that are Important to us can also be things that need to be absent in our lives. For example “never feeling rushed” or “not being around loud people.”

## What's Important For includes

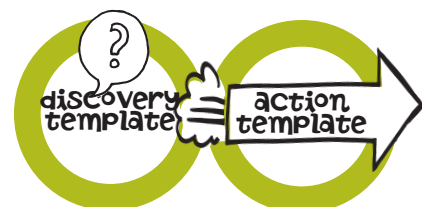
Only the things that help us to be:

- **Healthy and Safe**
- **A valued member of the community**

Information about Important For should only include things that are relevant to the person at that time, rather than general things that may be important for anyone to be healthy and safe or valued. For example some people enjoy exercising so they probably don't need exercise listed under what's important for them unless there is something specific they are struggling with e.g. avoiding certain types of exercise while an injury heals. Others may struggle to do enough/any exercise in order to keep them healthy – in this situation we would expect to see something about exercise recorded as Important For them. Things that are important for someone should never be enforced without striving to learn the detail of what's important To in order to help this work better for the person.

## Tips for gathering information about this

- **Ask the person.**
- **Look for specifics – ask what is it about that? What aspect? How does it play out for you? How often?**
- **Do we need to keep checking? Is it important now? Always?**



# tools that help gather this information

Routines and rituals

Good day/bad day

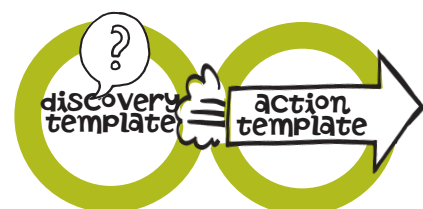
Learning logs

- *Is that all the time?* (eg. type of food for breakfast – is it different on the weekends or holidays).
- *Is there anyone in particular that you like doing this with?*
- *Check if people are happy with what you've recorded and how it's written.*
- *Make sure information recorded stays 'alive' – people change over time, any information recorded about people should reflect this.*
- *Resist the urge to fix or problem solve until you have all the information – although keeping a record of any obvious actions that emerge through discussion is fine.*
- *Don't assume. Best guesses are okay to get started. (Gather more learning after)*
- *Think about patterns, rhythms.*
- *Listen to the person and those who know and care about them.*
- *There wont always be clear answers. Record a question so that people can continue to think about it.*
- *Spend time with the person, playing close attention to what they do and what this may mean.*
- *Ask different people, especially if the person doesn't use words to communicate*
- *Think ahead about the environment and the right time to talk to the person.*

This information was developed by Helen Sanderson Associates (Australia) in 2011, for Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW, as a resource to support the Lifestyle Planning Practice Guide and Tools. Most of these tools are Person Centred Thinking tools, and were either developed by The Learning Community for Person Centred Practices, or Helen Sanderson Associates. They are used here with permission. We would like to thank the residents, family members and staff for their time and support in developing examples.

These instructions are not intended as a substitute for training. If you are using these tools for the first time and have not attended a Person Centred Thinking course, please seek support from a colleague or manager who has attended training.

Sorting Important to and for helps us to remember that none of us can ever have everything that's important to us all the time (especially if something that's important to us makes us unhealthy or unsafe), but that very few people do what's good for them to stay healthy and safe all the time.



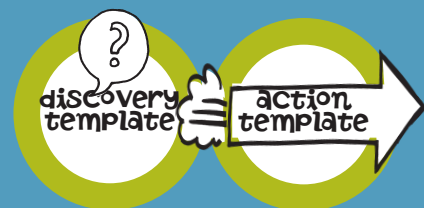
Important to .....

Important for .....

What else do we need to know or learn?

# tips

- 1 What does the person tell you (with their words or behaviour) matters to them?
- 2 Are there any things that people don't agree on?
- 3 How does the person let you know it's important to them? (what are they communicating to you?)
- 4 Do we need to learn more?



## Important to Judith

Visits from Mum and Dad  
Going to "work" each day  
Having her bag with her  
Food - meal times, treats, drinks  
Her teddy bears  
Having her own possessions  
Control of her daily routine - no changes, as she wants it to run  
Acceptance by staff and other clients  
Being able to trust staff - if you say it, do it  
1:1 conversation  
Not having to wait  
Reassurance of daily routine - constant feedback  
Getting clothes out of her wardrobe for next day  
People respecting her privacy - not going into her room  
Being able to help with household chores

## Important for Judith

Taking medication daily  
Charting her bowels daily  
Not over eating  
Staff to use same behaviour word scripts  
Regular toileting - incontinence  
Staff to brush her teeth - must let her brush her own teeth afterwards  
Keeping food cupboards and fridge/freezer door locked  
Having all wounds - no matter how small - dressed  
Not eating food out of the rubbish bin  
Respecting the space and preferred pace of the other ladies at home

## What else do we need to know or learn?

What does "acceptance" mean to Judith - what is it that she needs/wants others to do in order to show their acceptance?

Is privacy for Judith just about people not going into her room or are there other things people need to pay attention to with this?

In what situations do staff need to use the 'same behaviour word scripts'? Are these written down somewhere? Where would staff find them? Does this need to be included in the one page profile - or would it be better in the communication charts?

Judith likes to brush her own teeth after staff have supported her to do it first, are there other situations like this?

Could pictures or another system be used to help Judith understand what is good and bad to eat? Eg. To avoid food from the freezer or the rubbish bin being eaten again.

Does Judith often have wounds that need dressing? If so, does this need to be included in the one page profile?

## tips

- 1 What does the person tell you (with their words or behaviour) matters to them?
- 2 Are there any things that people don't agree on?
- 3 How does the person let you know it's important to them? (what are they communicating to you?)
- 4 Do we need to learn more?



What's important to?	Date	Is it happening? Yes/no/how often?	What's working about supporting this? What should continue?	What's not working about supporting this? What needs to be different?	New things to try

Supporting what's important to

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