

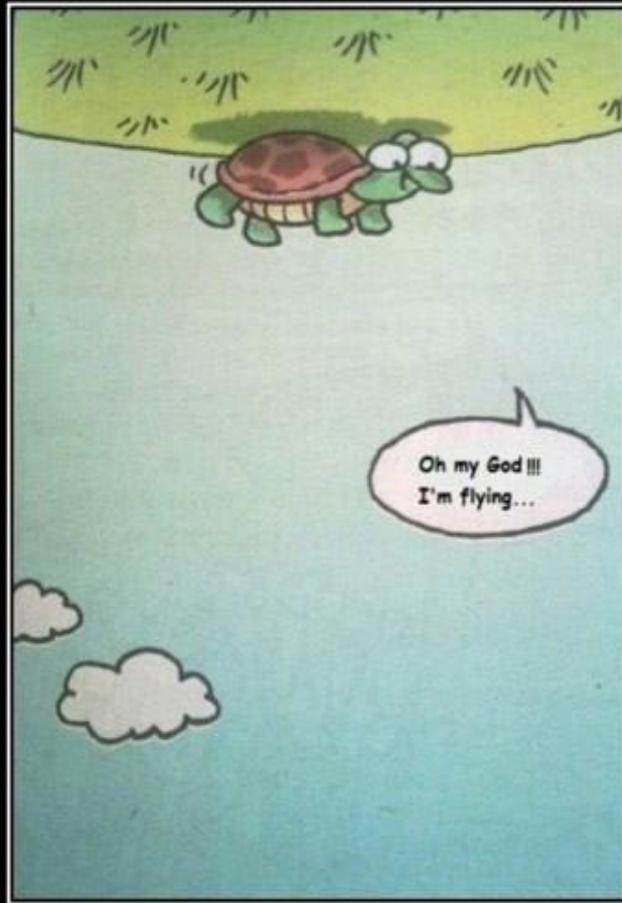
# A MEANINGFUL LIFE

- **#1: For humans here on earth, living is the everyday construction of meaning within relevant communities and in the presence of facilitators and barriers to the construction of meaning**
- **#2: Rehabilitation workers are consultants to the individual's construction of meaning!!**
- **Embracing this philosophy yields as a corollary the acceptance of a collaborative approach within teams and with individuals with disability.**

# The Importance of Optimism in the Development of Meaning

*“There’s always something that works”*

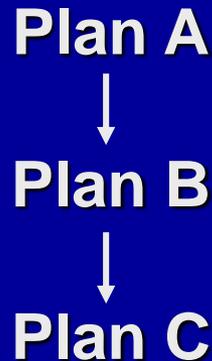
- Many people – especially those who have had a hard time in life (school, social life, work) do NOT believe that there is always something that works
- Effectively strategic people DO believe that there is always something that works



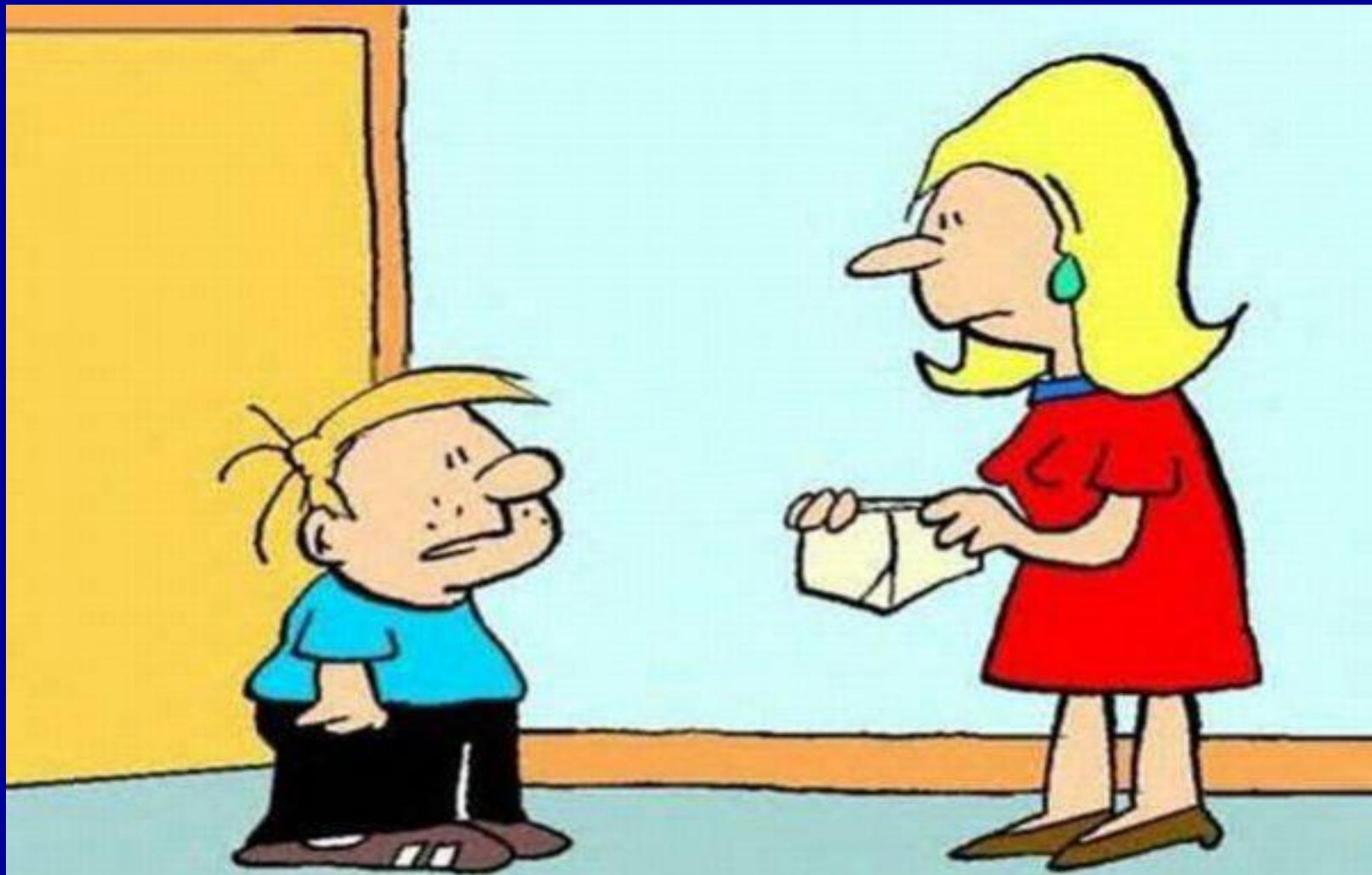
Optimism its the best  
Way to see life

**UNIFORMITY**  
**is not necessarily a good**  
**quality in intervention**

**There is no single “right”  
solution - sometimes the best  
you can do is keep trying**



**Sometimes what works today  
won't work tomorrow!**



**"Clean underwear?.....Mom, if I *were* in an accident I'd probably shit my pants anyway."**

**Everyone has a  
plan until they  
get punched in  
the mouth.**

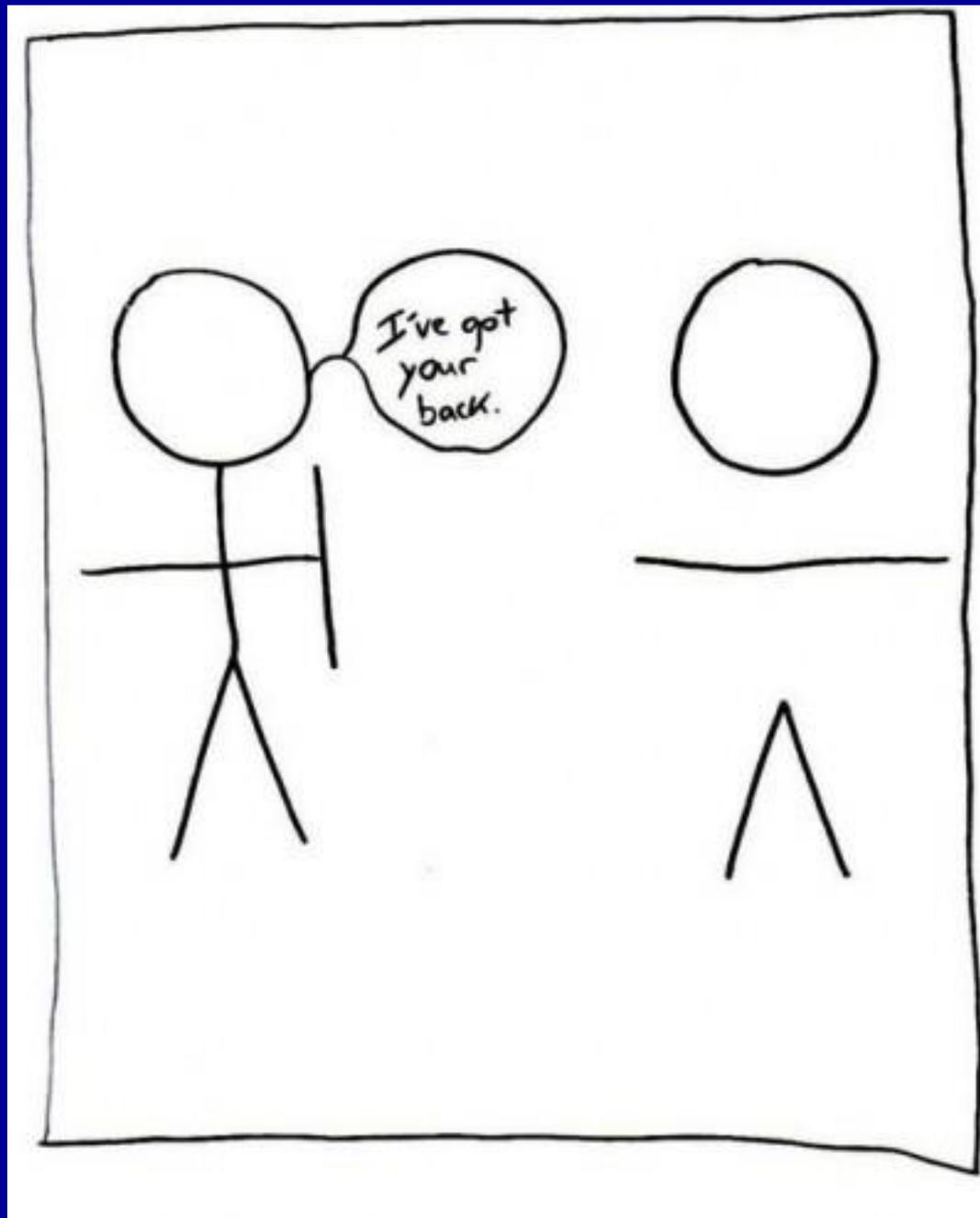
**You can make people  
do things that they  
just don't want to do  
but the price for doing  
so will be high**



**Most of the success that you will have will be direct result of the quality of the relationship that you have with the people with whom you are working**

**The best conceived approaches will FAIL if there is a poor relationship between the people who are paid and the people they serve.**

**This does not mean you all have to jump off a bridge together.**



**If it's functional that increases  
the likelihood that it's meaningful**

# FUNCTIONAL

*does not equal*

**Increased/Improved  
performance on  
standardized tests**

**FUNCTIONAL**

*does not equal*

**Bowling**

or the

**The Friday Outing**

or the

**The really neat,  
really expensive,  
simulated. . .**

# FUNCTIONAL

*equals*

**Creating stable routines of life that  
enable me to do what I need to do  
when I need to do it.**

**Why am I getting up in the morning?**

**MEANING**

- **With meaning comes the opportunity to have fun, and fun is therapeutic. With fun comes optimism, and optimism is therapeutic. With optimism comes hope, and hope is essential to pushing through the difficulties. With hope comes meaning . . .**

## **A Framework for Inquiry:**

### **Approaching Difficult Situations from a Perspective of Structured Flexibility**

- **What's the meaning? Where's the meaning?**
- **Is this a can't do? A don't do? A won't do?**
- **What's the individual's chronological age? Behavioral age? Social age? Cognitive age?**
- **How can we be therapeutic and forget about "therapy"?**
- **What's the short term goal? The long term goal?**
- **Is this a me problem? A you problem? A we problem?**

# **Time is not our enemy.**

**Sometimes the best thing we can do  
is wait . . . and wait . . . and wait**

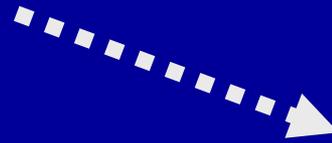
***Remember:***

**We spend much of our  
Time working with people who do not  
understand or care about time**

***An Afgani Proverb:***

**You have all the watches. We have all the time.**

**Goal**



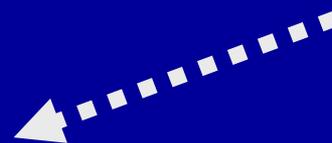
**Plan**



**Predict**



**Do**



**Review**



**Constructing an identity  
that is meaningful and  
sustainable is a primary  
goal of intervention**

**Each waking day is a stage dominated for the good or ill, in comedy, farce, or tragedy, by a *dramatis persona*, the “self”. And so it will be until the curtain drops . . . Although multiple aspects characterize the conscious self, this self is a unity.”**

- Charles Sherrington, 1946

The Integrative Action of the Nervous System

# **SENSE OF SELF FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CO-EXISTING DISABILITIES**

- **Perplexity**
- **Unawareness or denial: Retention of preinjury self-concept**
- **Fragmentation**
- **“I am a victim” (passivity; depression)**
- **“I refuse to be a victim” (anger; aggression)**
- **“I’ve changed; I’ve got my work cut out for me” (resolve)**

# “IDENTITY MAPPING”

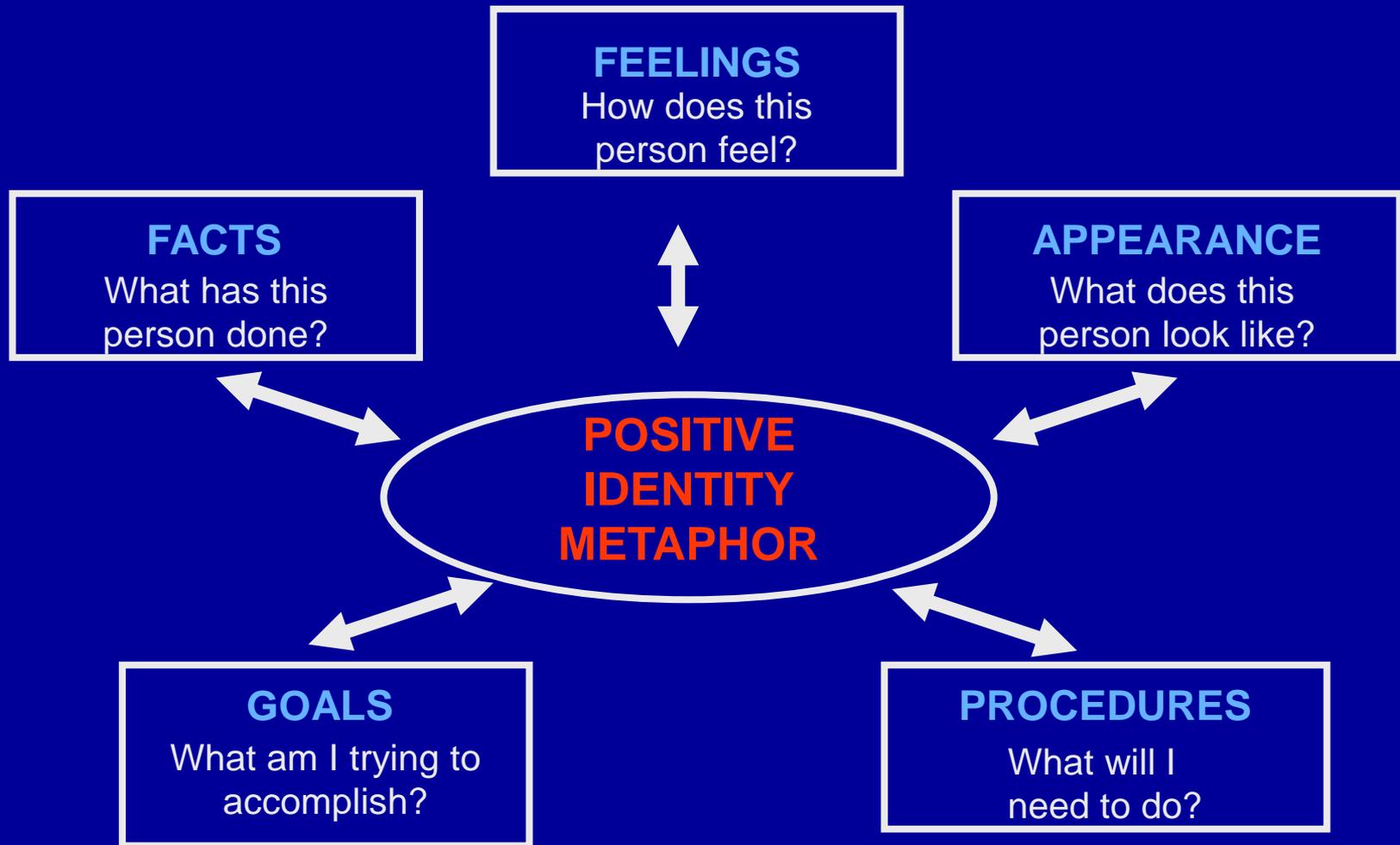
- Identification of goals
- Identification of image, hero, metaphor
- Organization of identity description
- [Creation of “identity map”]
- Supported practice
- Modification of others’ support behavior
- Possibly meaningful project

**“The self is not something  
ready made but something in  
continuous formation  
through choice of action.”**

**- John Dewey**

# Reconstructing/Constructing Identity

## An Identity Map



## **Goals:**

Simply comply  
Others set goals  
No goals for self

## **Feelings:**

Anger at driver and all authorities  
Inadequacy, dependence  
Hopelessness, frustration

## **Facts:**

TBI: 1991  
Many injuries  
11 weeks: hospitalization  
Casts, scars, crutches  
Multiple surgeries

## **Jason the Victim**

## **Appearance:**

Crutches, casts, etc

## **People**

Therapists, physicians, aides

## **Places**

Hospitals, clinics

## **Action strategies:**

No need for strategies; others take  
responsibility  
No sense of responsibility  
Other people's charge

## **Goals:**

Freedom  
Independence  
Retribution (driver, any  
source of control)  
Victory!!!!

## **Feelings:**

Anger/Oppression  
Power/Control  
Competence/Independence  
Zeal for justice

## **Facts:**

Former marine  
(Exaggerated) sense of  
Improvement  
Disjointed life in  
disarray

**Jason the  
Marine**

## **Appearance:**

Attempt to project power

### **People**

Everyday people

### **Places**

Everyday places

## **Action strategies:**

When provoked, scorched earth policy  
Demonstrate ability and power  
Demonstrate others wrong  
Experiment with new things  
Try therapy (unsuccessful)



## Goals:

First rate production  
Make a clear statement  
Define self

## Feelings:

Satisfaction  
Accomplishment  
Growth  
Control  
Focus

**Clint  
Eastwood**

## Action strategies:

Contemplate versus react  
Plan for success (daily strategy  
formulation sessions;  
daily plan sheets; barometer)  
Script in advance  
Practice taking alternative perspectives  
Goal-Plan-Do-Review  
Use supports wisely

## Appearance:

Appropriate to the context

### People

Support people  
Non-conflict people

### Places

## Facts:

Actor willing to be directed  
Director  
Mayor  
Producer  
Successful

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Goal – Obstacle – Plan – Do – Review

Before doing anything we articulate a goal with the person. This means that identify things that might make achieving the goal difficult, make a plan to achieve the goal (including things to do when an obstacle comes up), follow the plan, and then review how it all went.

Then do it all over again. And again. And again. And again. And again. And again . . .



## **Understanding Goal - Plan - Do - Review**

**Using Helpful Scripts to Make Plans, to  
Establish Routines, Help Get Through  
the Hard Stuff and to Demonstrate  
Respect**

**Hard - Easy  
Ready - Not Ready  
Big Deal - Little Deal**

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Rituals of Greeting, Interacting & Leaving

- Looking everyone in the eye, shaking hands, saying “hello” and then making a plan.
- Communicating respect in every interaction: (e.g., asking if someone needs help, making a plan for help, and then helping). Always asking before doing.
- Looking everyone in the eye and wishing them well at the end of your interaction.

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Rituals of Transitioning

- We work hard to plan for transitions.
- Explaining what will be happening:
  - When your time together will be done. This can be time based (“We’re together til 1:30.”) or task based (“Once we’re done with this then our time together is over.”)
  - Who will be supporting next; when and where they will be supporting the person

# **SPECIFIC SCRIPTS TO HELP PEOPLE LEARN THESE CONCEPTS**

**Here's the general idea that we want everyone to learn:**

- 1. Identify the issue or problem confronting me/us/them right now.**
- 2. State some reasons why it is a problem.**
- 3. Make a plan for specific things to try to address/overcome the problem.**
- 4. Offer general reassurance: "There's always something YOU can do to make it work"**

**Big Deal – Little Deal**

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Conversations of Self-Control

**Big Deal – Little Deal:** Many people struggle to understand the difference between what's important and what's not important. Often reversing the two (thinking unimportant stuff is important, and visa-versa). So we spend lots of time helping to figure out what's a “big deal” (anything that could result in a risk to health and safety) and what's a “little deal” (anything else!).

# BIG DEAL/LITTLE DEAL SCRIPT

- Identify an issue as a “big deal” or a “little deal”.
- Work with the individual to figure out why it’s a “big deal” or a “little deal” Big Deals are things that can result in risk or harm to one’s self or to others, everything else is a Little Deal.
- Generate a strategy to follow when something is a big deal. Who will do what? When will you do it? How will we know it worked? Didn’t work?
- Plan for what will happen next time the individual is confronted with a similar big deal and, most importantly, how to make “big deals” into “little deals”.

**Ready – Not Ready**

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do)

## Conversations of Self-Control

**Ready – Not Ready:** Many people will often begin a task or attempt to engage in an activity without being ready to do so; they don't have what they need, they're not completely prepared, they don't really understand what they're supposed to do. They just plow ahead. This conversational script is designed to provide a framework to decide what is important and to prioritize the important things and not worry about the little things.

# READY/NOT READY SCRIPT

- **Identify an activity or task to be done and identify how you'll know the person is ready to start it.**
- **Work with the individual to figure out what "Ready" looks like.**
- **Start a task, start a conversation, make a plan only when the person is "ready" and remind the individual what "ready" looks like. Do not start anything, do not continue with a task or activity if the person is "not ready"**
- **Wait for the person to get ready, then continue.**
- **When you're done review what happened. What the person looked like when they were ready, when they were not and make a plan to be ready the next time.**

**Hard - Easy**

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Conversations of Self-Control

**Hard – Easy:** In order to increase one's chances of success at any given task, it's essential to understand the ease or difficulty of the task. This conversation is designed to provide a way of thinking about just how hard (or easy) a specific activity might be so that a plan for help can be made. These conversations are particularly important because many people have a hard time asking for help.

# HARD TO DO/EASY TO DO SCRIPT

- **Identify a task or activity as hard or easy**
- **State the reason that it is hard or easy**
- **Generate a strategy when something is hard and/or when something is easy with tasks for the individual and the staff. Who will do what? When will you do it? How will we know it worked? Didn't work?**
- **Plan for what will happen next time the individual is confronted with a similar problem**

**Your Job – My Job**

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Conversations of Self-Control

**Your Job – My Job:** It's a big challenge to figure out when you do something *with* a person (helping him/her to follow a plan) and when you do something *for* a person (doing something that an individual's disability prevents them from doing). As a result, it's important to have conversations that clarify "my job" and "your job" – who's responsible for what and who will do what and when they will do it.

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Creating Daily Plans and Routines

We always have a clear idea about what we're doing with people before we do anything with (or, in some cases, for) them.

Before we start anything we ask the individual to make a "plan". And we don't start anything until we've heard the plan – until we're sure that everyone knows the plan.

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

(the stuff that everyone must do well)

## Creating Daily Plans and Routines

We do things the same way as much as we can and we ask the individual how it's going all the time.

We try to be as predictable as possible – in our words and our actions.

We use the same language: we “make a plan”, we “figure things out”, we only do things when we’re “ready”.

## **Figuring Out When Something Will Be Hard or Easy Before Starting**

**It's generally a great idea to get an understanding of how the person thinks about a task before starting. If they think it's hard then you know you'll probably need to help. If s/he thinks it's easy and it's actually hard, it's likely that you'll need to be available to support him/her pretty quickly and *very carefully*.**

# Figuring Out When Something Will Be Hard or Easy Before Starting

## SAMPLE SCRIPTS TO USE TO FIGURE OUT THE DIFFICULTY OF A TASK OR ACTIVITY:

- “Do you think this will be hard or easy?”
- “If it’s hard, then what will you need? If you need help how can I help you? When do you think I should start helping?”
- “Have you ever done this before? What happened?”
- “So, you think it will be easy. Great! What should I do to make sure that I can be around to help you if you need help?”
- “Looks like it might be harder than you thought. No worries. I’m glad to help you get through this; happens to me all the time.”

## **Figuring Out When Something is a Big Deal or Little Deal Before Starting**

**It's generally a great idea to get an understanding of how the person thinks about a problem or issue or task. If they identify something as a "big deal" you'll need to have some conversation about why it's a "big deal" and – most often help them to see that it's probably a little. We want people to recognize that the only real big deals are things that can result in a health or safety risk.**

# Figuring Out When Something is a Big Deal or a Little Deal

## SAMPLE SCRIPTS TO USE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S A BIG DEAL AND A LITTLE DEAL:

- “Now that we have an idea about what we’re doing it will be really helpful for me to understand what’s a big deal to you and a little deal for you and what’s a big deal - little deal to me.”
- “So, you look concerned (or upset) what’s your worry?”
- “I get it, you’re worried about \_\_\_\_\_, but let’s think about it is this really a big deal? What can we do to take care of it?”
- “Yes, I understand you’re upset, let’s figure out what we can do. What can we do to see this as a little deal. You know, something that we can manage and get on with our plan.”
- “Great. If we do \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, it’s not a big deal anymore. Just a little deal!”

## **Working Through the Plan: Coaching Through Problems That Often Occur**

**It is almost a sure thing that after people spend time making plans things will not go the way they had planned or expected. When this happens it will be important to provide support in a way that is positive and respectful.**

**You want to communicate that things often don't go as planned and that it's not a big deal and you can make a new plan.**

# Working Through the Plan: Coaching Through Problems That Inevitably Happen

## SAMPLE SCRIPTS TO USE WHEN HELPING TO MANAGE A PROBLEM OR A DIFFICULTY:

- “You look upset (or confused or stuck), how can I help?”
- “OK, looks like you’re not ready to work on this. No problem; just let me know when you are ready. There’s no hurry, no worry. I’ll just wait until you ready.”
- “Just to make sure that we’re both on the same page, we’ll both know you’re ready when you look like this . . .”
- “You know we’ll figure this out, how about we try something else, like . . . “

***\*\*\*Be very careful with “ready-not ready”; the idea is to show that you recognize that someone is struggling, but you have to be sure to do it in a way that is respectful!***

# **Working Through a Plan Positively: Coaching in Context**

## **SAMPLE SCRIPTS TO USE WHEN SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS:**

- **“So, how is it going? Everything going according to your plan?”**
- **“I see that you’re doing \_\_\_\_\_. Is that helping you? Not helping?”**
- **“How are you doing? Not going the way you thought it would? No worries. Is there anything else you can do?”**
- **“Is there anything I can do to help you?”**
- **“Sounds like a great plan! When are you going to start? Do you need any help getting started?”**

## Review What Occurred

### SOME SAME SCRIPTS TO USE WHEN SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO REVIEW WHAT HAPPENED:

- “We’re done. That’s great! How do you think it went? What helped? What didn’t help?”
- “Thinking about it for a little while, how do you think you did? Did it go as you planned?”
- “Sometimes it helps to remember something if you talk about it out loud, so, if you wouldn’t mind, can you tell me exactly what happened . . . and then what?”
- “So, you thought it went \_\_\_\_\_. What do you think other people thought?”
- “I noticed that you \_\_\_\_\_. What were you thinking when you were doing that?”
- “Next time you do this, what will you do differently? The same?”

# Simple Rules of Apprenticeship Interactions

- Think: Repeated conversations focused on self-regulation scripts (big deal – little deal, etc.)
- Collaborative – Elaborative conversations
- Establish a goal (as simple and basic as you need) and then demonstrate/reflect on whether what you are doing is addressing that goal – if yes, continue, if no, then try something else
- Wait!

# **POSITIVE INTERACTION STYLE: COLLABORATION**

- **Intent (Goal)**
- **Cognitive support (Filling in the blanks or clarifying confusion)**
- **Emotional support (Optimistic focus on what can be done, and acknowledging upset and difficulty)**
- **Meaningful, supported questions (You think that'll help? Anything I can do?)**
- **Collaborative turn taking (This is going to be hard, how can we work together on this?)**

# **PERFORMANCE-ORIENTED TEACHING (Ineffective When Teaching Self-Regulation)**

## **CONTEXT**

- **Training context – not associated with the daily life one has or is planning outside the training context.**
- **Performance demanded by others**
- **Solo performance**
- **Hierarchical organization of tasks**

# PERFORMANCE-ORIENTED TEACHING

## TASK STRUCTURE

- Model (teacher)
- Performance demand
- Performance (student)
- Reinforcement OR cues, prompts, simplification, etc
- Repeated practice
- Transfer procedures

# **APPRENTICESHIP TEACHING**

**(Most Effective When Teaching Self-Regulation)**

## **CONTEXT**

- **Natural context; perhaps projects with a meaningful goal**
- **Social, collaborative activity**
- **Success due to collaboration**
- **Non-hierarchical organization of tasks**

# APPRENTICESHIP TEACHING

## TASK STRUCTURE

- Engagement in guided observation
- Collaborative, goal-oriented work, with supports as needed
- Learner contributes as possible
- Ongoing coaching, encouragement, modeling, brainstorming, etc.
- Supports systematically withdrawn
- Transfer guaranteed because of context and procedures

# **Some Scripts That Will Help You Figure Out if This is Really A Choice**

**So, what are you doing?**

**Why are you doing that?**

**How's it going?**

**Is this helping? Not Helping?**

**What are you hoping to achieve?**

**What else can you do?**

**What's your plan?**

# **Key “Executive System” Concepts That Help Individuals Learn Self-Regulation**

**Hard - Easy**

**Big Deal - Little Deal**

**Ready - Not Ready**

**Scary - Not Scary**

**Like - Don't Like**

**Choice - No Choice**

# Teaching Positive Attribution

## **UNHELPFUL ATTRIBUTION**

- **“I can’t do anything well”**
- **“Teachers don’t like me”**
- **“Other kids are lucky”**
- **“Sometimes I get it; sometimes I don’t; I don’t know why”**

# Teaching Positive Attribution

## HELPFUL ATTRIBUTION

- “When I work hard and use my strategies, I do OK; When I don’t, I do badly”
- “Reading is harder for me than for other students, but I can get it if I give myself enough time and use my strategies.”