From Consumer to Producer: Social Capital, Social Competence, and Self Regulation

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An Unspoken Reality

- **Once you enter any kind of hospital or rehab or helping setting, you lose *your* identity. You're not Bob or Sue, you're a "client" or a "patient". You often lose your sense of self as a result of your injury and we often expedite your loss of self by the way we behave. So, in many ways it is our collective responsibility to behave in ways that are sensitive to these realities and to alter our behaviors so we don't make the loss of self inevitable.**

FOR PROFESSIONALS:

If you are spending the majority of your time delivering a service from your office, you're doing something wrong.

If you're spending the majority of your time helping people live their lives in context, you're doing something right!

Find a friend and work collaboratively.

Success supporting people with complicated needs requires movement away from a diagnostic (e.g., disability/impairment) approach to intervention to a functional approach to intervention and support

Effective Support is About Creating Meaning
MEANINGFUL THINGS WORK

Common Themes of
All Successful Interventions

- **Intervention must be delivered early and intensively, through established routines, and focus on the development of self-regulation and problem-solving strategies in context.**

- **In the absence of meaningful engagement in chosen life activities all interventions will ultimately fail.**

- **Long term, flexible, and frequently adjusted supports may be needed to prevent behavior problems and to facilitate social development.**

The Point

Just because we think it's the best thing to do and we have evidence to support the interventions that we recommend, it doesn't mean the people will do it! Interventions must be meaningful to each person, each family member, each clinician and connected to the pragmatics of day-to-day living.
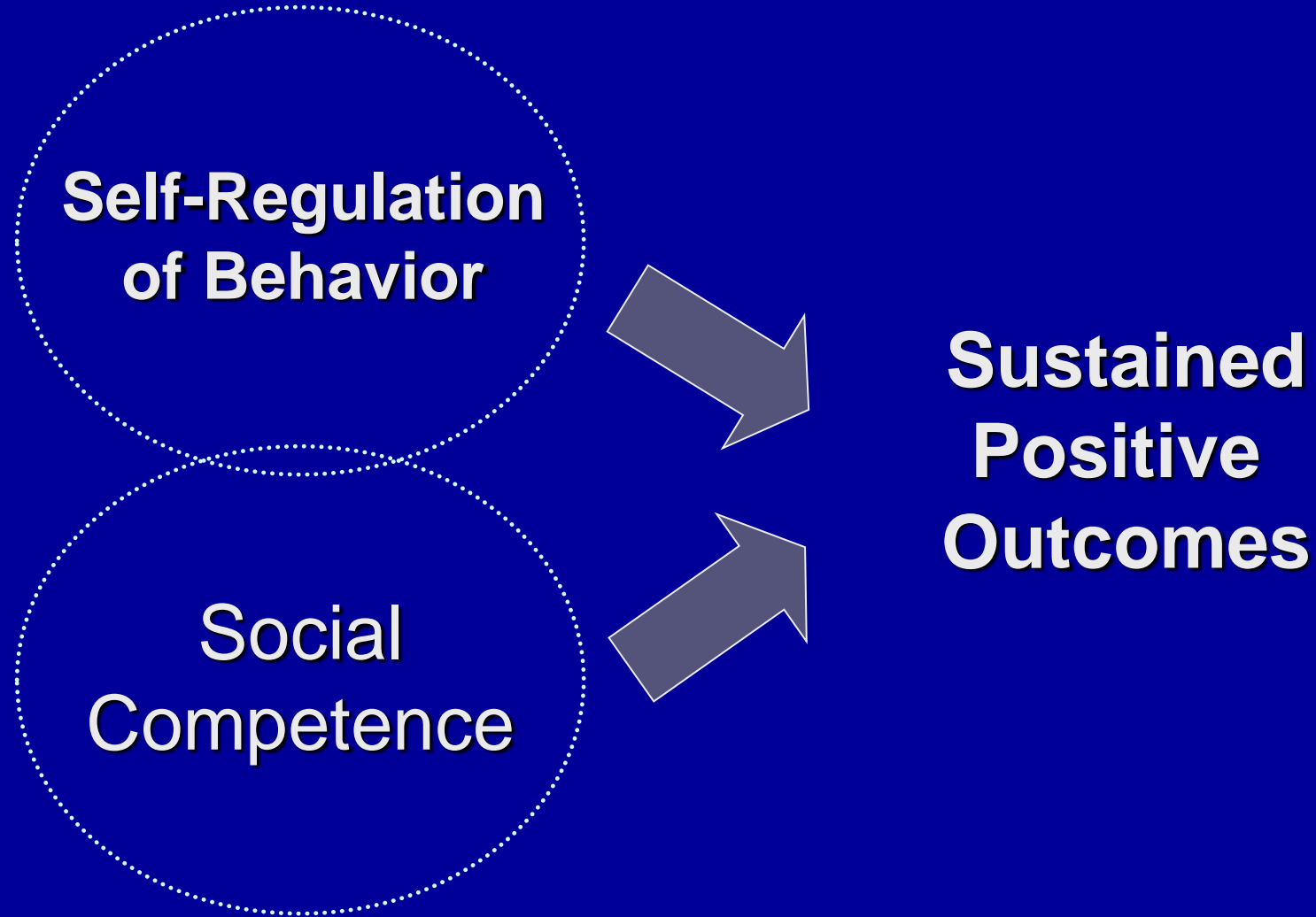
WRONG QUESTION:

What is the primary diagnosis?

RIGHT QUESTION:

What do we need to do to help this person find or create meaning in his or her life?

A Conceptual Shift:
From "Teaching Skills" or "Increasing Knowledge" to
Developing Competence in the Use of Skills and Knowledge

Self-Regulation
of Behavior

Social
Competence

Sustained
Positive
Outcomes

Social Competence and Context Relevancy in Teaching and Learning:
How does this stuff apply to the bigger world?
adapted from Sailor, 1999

- **Useful:** Do the outcomes that we're targeting produce something useful to the individual in long run?

- **Desirable:** Does the individual choose the outcomes for him/herself when given the choice? Is the individual given the choice of outcome?

- **Social:** Do the outcomes result in behaviors that will increase interactions with persons other than paid staff?

- **Practical:** Will the behavior be used in real contexts without staff support?

- **Adaptable:** Is there a focus on developing skills that can/will be used in a number of situations and without staff?

"The curious dissociation between knowing and doing."

– Teuber (1938)

SOCIAL COMPETENCE:
Skills are necessary but not sufficient.
We need to support people to become
competent in the day-to-day use of
key skills, and more importantly;
competent in determining what skills
are needed at any given time, and then
competent in the use those skills.

What's The Point?

We often teach a skill or set of skills independent of the realities of life that each person faces. While people might learn the skills and demonstrate mastery of skills these are meaningless unless we help them achieve competency in the use of the skills. In absence of competence use, skills are useless.

Context-Sensitive Structured Flexibility

Context-sensitive means pre-planned and collaboratively developed scripts are used in the actual settings where the individuals are expected to participate;

Structured flexibility means the individuals who are providing the intervention were trained and encouraged to adjust the specificity of the scripts and interventions to the needs of the individual and the requirements of the tasks, not to simply repeat the same scripts over-and-over;

Self-regulation means identifying actions that are used to guide thinking, emotions, and behavior required to succeed in a given setting or for a given task
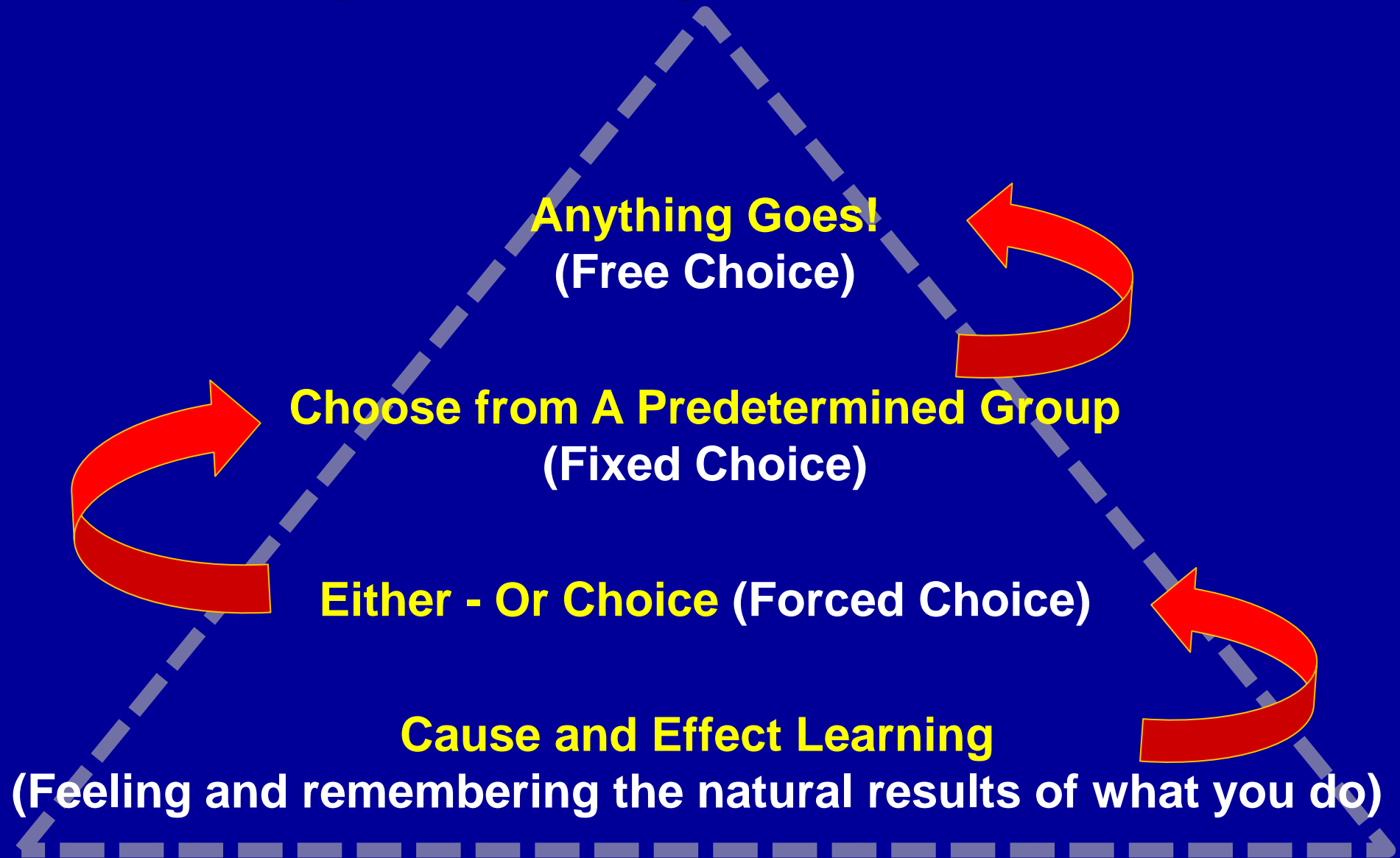
Helping People Move From Consumer to Producer

Learning How to Make "Choices"

- We live in a world where everyone talks about people's choices, that the people we work with have the right to choose and that our programs are based on choices. This is a good thing; however, its critical to make sure that people are really making choices.

When choice is offered, of course, it is essential that the person being offered the choice have the information necessary for making a meaningful decision . . . without such information, being given a choice will feel more like a burden than a support for autonomy.

- Edward Deci, 1995
Why We Do What We Do

Choice and the People We Support

- What may have started as a choice often does not end as a choice!

- For many people there is a momentum (or a compulsion/obsession or perseveration) to behavior that results in people losing control of their behavior

- When this happens we roll with it. We don't discharge or terminate our services, we work to help people to overcome or change the pattern. We keep on trying. That's who we are, that's what we do.
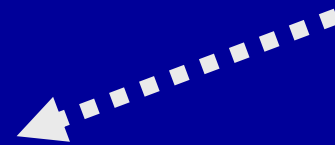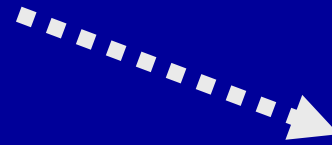
We're in the Risk Business

- What's the worst that could happen? There is dignity in taking risks.

- Anything short of someone getting hurt is often worth the risk.

- But we don't take risks in isolation. We think about it, talk with everyone about it, then take the risk in a planned manner with the support of others.

- "Every good thing we do stands on the razor's edge of disaster."

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING THAT WORKS:
TALKING AND THINKING COLLABORATIVELY WITHIN COMMUNITIES OF SUPPORT

The Importance of Community in Establishing an Identity

- Communities help us to accomplish things.
- Communities are change agents.
- Communities are sources of meaning and belonging.
- Need to Belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995)
    - *"The need to belong is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivation."*
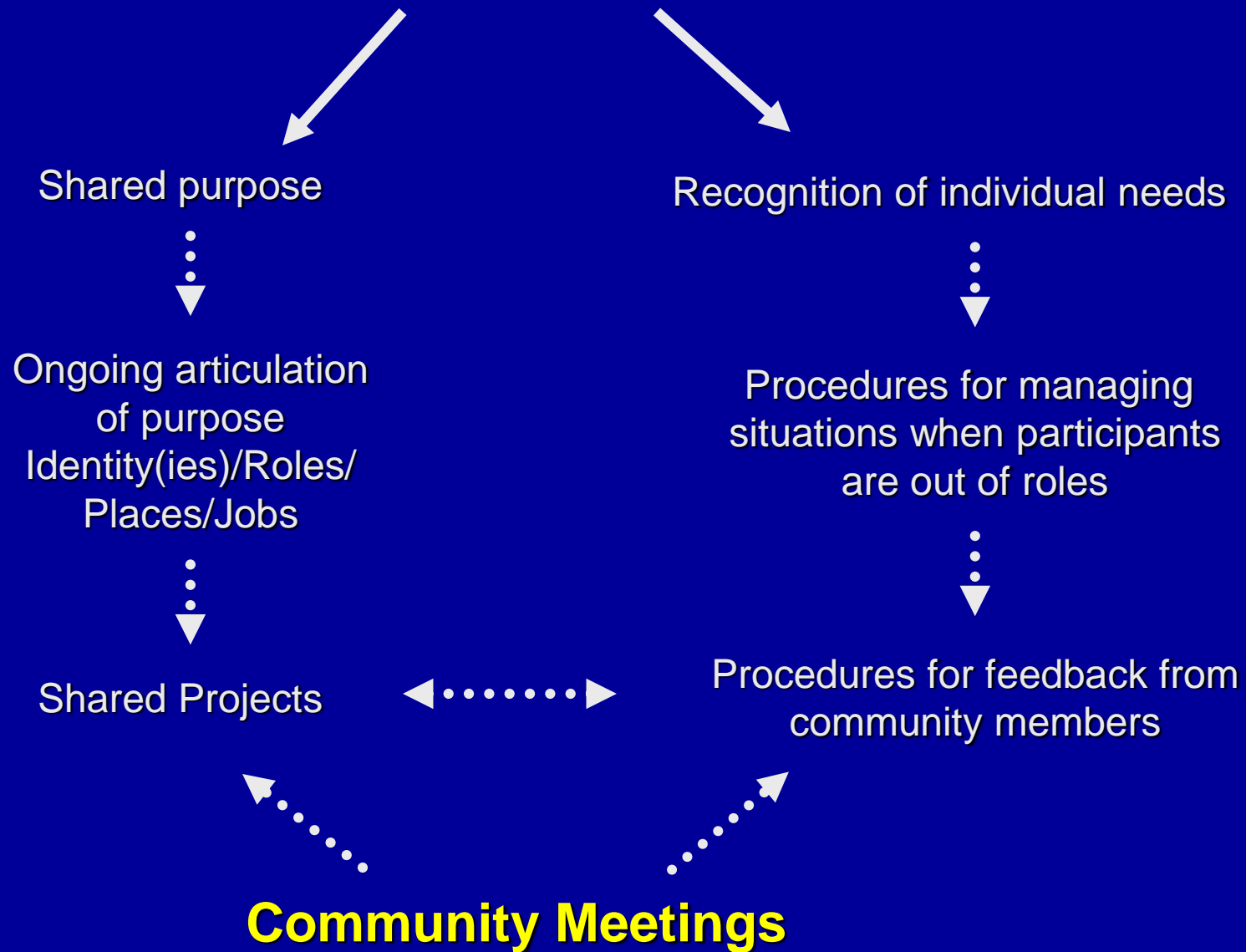   - A lack of belongingness constitutes severe deprivation and causes a variety of ill effects.

"Alone.... Uh, I'm alone! I'm a lonely, insignificant speck on a has-been planet orbited by a cold, indifferent sun. "   -Homer Simpson

- The Belongingness Hypothesis: A drive to form and maintain at least a minimum number of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships.

Social Identity Theory

- People have an innate and strong tendency to mentally organize things and people into categories

- To the extent that we associate ourselves with communities (i.e. categorize ourselves), we have *social identities*

- Social identities (via our community memberships) are important aspects of how we define ourselves

- To the extent that we identify with communities that are valued (e.g., powerful, prestigious, high status, popular), we'll feel good about ourselves.

A Community

Shared purpose

⋮
↓

**Ongoing articulation
of purpose
Identity(ies)/Roles/
Places/Jobs**

⋮
↓

Shared Projects

Recognition of individual needs

⋮
↓

**Procedures for managing
situations when participants
are out of roles**

⋮
↓

**Procedures for feedback from
community members**

◀ ········ ▶

Community Meetings

**Staff Roles – Leader, supporter
Participant Roles – Leader, supporter, facilitator**

Common Sense Examples of Approaches to Establishing a Community

- Rituals of Greeting/Checking In
  - Entering an interaction
  - Entering a building, a room, someone's house
- Rituals of Leaving/Checking Out
  - Leaving an interaction
  - Leaving a building, a room, someone's house

Some Examples of Ways to Talk With the People We Support

The ideas make sense, but how do I do all this stuff? What do I say? How do I talk to people in a way that shows I'm being respectful?

Some Ways to Start: Making Decisions About a Goal

How you start an interaction will often have a big impact on the *entire* interaction, so it's important to get off on the right foot. Each and every time you start working with an individual you need to establish that you are a positive and helpful person. It's critical that the person you are helping understands that you are a person who will be respectful and that you will listen carefully to his/her ideas.

Some Ways to Start: Making Decisions About a Goal

SOME SAMPLE SCRIPTS TO USE WHEN IDENTIFYING GOALS AND MAKING PLANS:

- "I'm so glad to have the chance to help out. I just want to make sure that I'm really helping, so I was wondering what you're hoping to do in our time together."

- "So, what are you trying to do?"

- "What are we here for? What are we doing?"

- "It's usually a good idea to make sure that we both know that we're finished with something. how will we know we're done?"

- "We'll know we're done when it looks like . . ."

The Language of Planning: Knowing What You Are Doing, Why You Are Doing It, and How You'll Do It

- "Before we do this I was just wondering what you were trying to do. Could you let me know? I just want to make sure that we're on the same page and that I'm helping."

- "OK, so what's the plan? Do you know the steps we're going to follow? I don't really know, can you tell me?"

- "What will you need to get this done? Do you have everything you'll need?"

- "How will you and I know if you need help?" *Collaborative Planning*

- "What will help look like?" *Elaborative Planning*

- "What are you going to do? What am I going to do?"

Thinking About Support and Help: Helping People Without Making Them Helpless

Many of the people we work with struggle to ask for or accept help. For some they might not recognize that they need help; for others help might seem like weakness and, thus, something to avoid.

SPECIFIC KINDS OF ROUTINES

Concrete Routines

- Picture Routines
- Written Routines

Interaction Routines

- Language Routines
- Activity Sequencing

Routines to Deal with Changes in Routines

- What I do when what I expected to happen doesn't happen

ORGANIZING SUPPORTS THAT ADDRESS CONTEXTUALLY MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES

"**In the absence of meaningful engagement in chosen life activities, all interventions will ultimately fail**"

- **Option: School, work, volunteer experiences, family responsibilities**
- **Option: Preparatory skill development related to school, work, volunteer experiences**
- **Option: Meaningful projects!!**

Project Based Intervention

- Present a project in terms of helping others identify important information for transitions

- Provide a context to evaluate and plan for the "big picture" with student and family

- Provide a context to collaborate, as consultants, with the team (e.g., the aide, classroom teacher, vocational teacher, and parents).

- Create projects that are designed to help others – to develop and enhance social capital

Project Approach

- **Meaningful goal; *product***
- **Deep processing**
- **Planning and organizing**
- **Meaningful context for practice**
- **Integration of activity over time**
- **Integration of several contexts**
- **Expert role**
- **Helper/producer role**

Project Approach: Rationale

- **Organizational impairment**
- **Superior involuntary learning**
- **Weak elaborative encoding**
- **Need for situated learning**
- **Need for errorless learning**
- **Need for routine learning**

Project Approach Rationale (cont'd)

- **Internalization of mediated interaction**
- **Egocentrism**
- **Unawareness**
- **Intrinsic motivation**
- **Oppositionality**
- **Sense of self**
- **Self-esteem**

Projects

- Personally meaningful goal = *product*
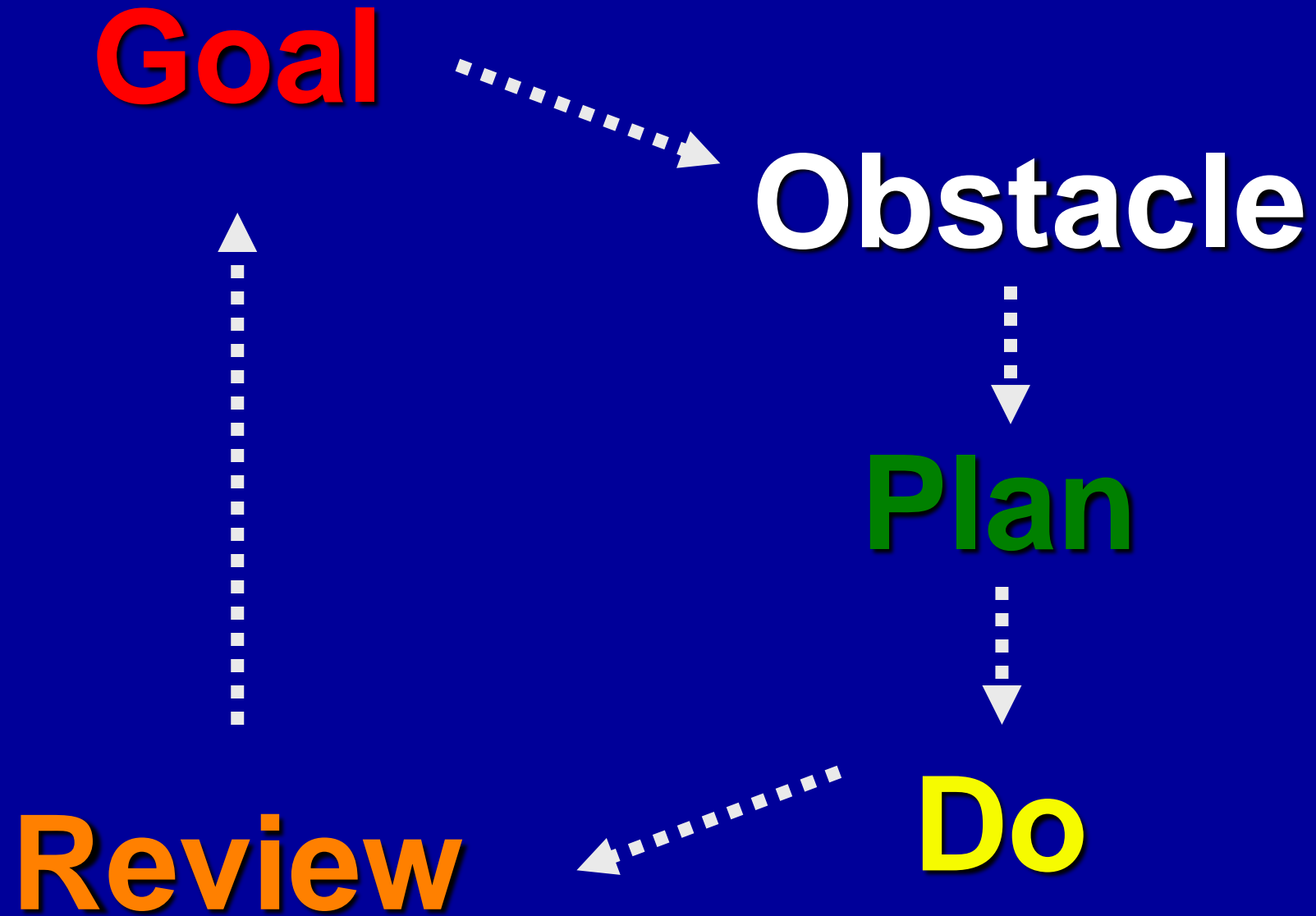
SENSE OF SELF AND MOTIVATIONAL THEMES

- Expert role; helper/producer role
- Intrinsic motivation; meaningful engagement
- Anti-egocentrism
- Relevance, anti-oppositionality
- Awareness of strengths and needs

SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL THEMES

- Meaningful context for practice of social/ interactive competencies
- Meaningful context for practice of collaborative, cooperative effort and behavioral self-regulation

COGNITIVE THEMES

- Deep processing
- Planning and organizing
- Meaningful context for practice of all cognitive and "Executive Function" processes
  - G-O-P-D-R
  - Compensatory strategies
- Integration of activity over time – day to day
- Integration of several contexts

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?"