

SUPERVISOR TRAINING

Document One-Care Philosophy: Building Authentic Relationships in Supportive Environments-Getting Started?

We have prepared three documents that you can use to help explore the concept of a Care Philosophy with your supervisor.

A First-Line Supervisors should review the principles below with their supervisor to kick off the discussion and explain how they relate to your organization's Care Philosophy. If your organization has not identified a Care Philosophy, the principles below will help the organization find one that is a good fit for your Assisted Living or other Community-Based setting.

A Care Philosophy should be centered on the belief that care addresses physical needs and nurtures the whole person—emotionally, socially, and spiritually. It is rooted in the following principles:

1. **Relationship-Centered Care:** At its core, this philosophy emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining authentic, meaningful relationships. Whether between staff and residents, among team members, or with families, every interaction is guided by the goal of fostering trust, understanding, and mutual respect. These relationships form the foundation of all caregiving practices.
2. **Person-Centered Approach:** This philosophy rejects a one-size-fits-all model. Instead, it prioritizes the individuality of each person, recognizing their unique histories, preferences, and abilities. Care is tailored to meet these personal needs, empowering individuals to maintain autonomy and dignity throughout their journey.
3. **Inclusivity and Holistic Support:** The philosophy extends beyond just those living with dementia; it applies to all care settings and everyone within the care setting, including staff and families. It acknowledges the interconnectedness of well-being, aiming to create environments where everyone feels supported, valued, and engaged.
4. **Empathy and Compassion:** Care is provided with a deep sense of empathy, and an understanding that emotional and psychological support is as crucial as physical care. The philosophy encourages staff to approach every situation with compassion, validating the emotions and experiences of those they support.
5. **Simplicity and Accessibility:** The philosophy is communicated in clear, straightforward language, making it easily understandable and actionable for all levels of staff. It is supported by ongoing training and resources to ensure that every team member, from direct care workers to leadership, can fully embrace and embody these principles.
6. **Commitment to Continuous Learning and Improvement:** The philosophy is dynamic, allowing for reflection and adaptation based on the evolving needs of those in care. It promotes a culture of continuous learning, where staff are encouraged to grow in their roles and enhance their relationship skills, particularly in supporting older adults and individuals with disabilities.
7. **Organizational Embrace:** This philosophy is not just a set of guidelines; it's a shared belief system that permeates the entire organization. It is embraced at every level, from leadership to direct care workers, ensuring a consistent and unified approach to care. This collective commitment creates a supportive environment where residents and staff can thrive.

Conclusion:

This Care Philosophy is about more than just delivering services; it's about creating a culture of genuine connection, understanding, and support. It guides every interaction, ensuring that care is effective, compassionate, and deeply human. By focusing on authentic relationships and person-centered care, this philosophy aims to enhance the well-being of everyone involved, making the setting a place where people genuinely live well together.

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Document Two-Care Philosophy Examples:

The following examples are just that, examples that are a place to begin exploring what might work in your setting or organization. This resource is something to share with your supervisor if a Care Philosophy needs to be identified or just to explore the world of ideas that can improve care and staff morale.

(Click on the links below to explore. Some may better fit your setting or the people you support.)

Person Centered Care -It is the most widely used and common philosophy in Assisted Living and other Community- Based settings. Person-centered care is an approach that focuses on an individual's needs, values, and desires. This model of care is built around the needs of the individual and is based upon knowing the person through an interpersonal relationship. It challenges the traditional medical model of care that tends to focus on processes and schedules, as well as staff and organizational needs.

Positive Behavioral Support -PBS is a proactive, person-centered approach that focuses on an individual's unique needs, strengths, and preferences to understand why they behave in specific ways. Unlike traditional behavior management, PBS aims to create a supportive environment that encourages positive behaviors instead of reacting to negative ones.

Seven Domains of Well-Being -G. Allen Power, a board-certified internist and geriatrician, explores how to achieve sustainable success in dementia care by changing the caregiving lens to focus on well-being and how it can be enhanced in people living with dementia. This approach challenges widely accepted dementia care practices and provides a compelling new framework to guide care decisions.

Culture of Gentleness -A Culture of Gentleness is a Care Philosophy that focuses on building, strengthening, and sustaining relationships. Many staff have found this approach helpful, as it stresses positive interaction. These interactions are essential in building relationships, which everyone can master without difficulty.

Snow Approach -This is a series of simple techniques based on understanding the areas of the brain that are no longer working and using the parts of the brain that are still active. These methods will aid in protecting and growing your relationship, reducing resistance, and reducing stress.

The SPECAL Method -Specialized Early Care for Alzheimer's is a unique dementia management method that anyone involved can learn and use in caring for a person with dementia. This method places the well-being of the person with dementia at the center of the care, treats dementia as a disability, and works positively with it rather than trying to ignore or defeat it.

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Document Three-Definitions:

If you are still unsure what the terms Philosophy and Culture mean or if they sound intimidating, it can be helpful to consider the definitions below and how they relate to your Assisted Living or other Community-Based setting.

The terms "culture" and "philosophy" are related but distinct concepts, especially when applied to an organization or a caregiving environment.

Philosophy:

- **Definition:** Philosophy refers to the fundamental beliefs or principles that guide an organization or individual's decisions and actions. Philosophy is the "**why**" behind the actions and provides the underlying reasoning and purpose.
- **Focus:** Philosophy is about "**why**" things are done. It provides the foundational beliefs that inform decision-making and policy.
- **Scope:** Leadership often establishes philosophy and communicates it throughout the organization. It can serve as a guiding framework for developing policies, procedures, and practices.
- **Example:** An organization may have a philosophy of person-centered care, where the needs and preferences of individuals guide all care decisions.

Culture:

- **Definition:** Culture refers to the collective set of attitudes, values, goals, practices, and behaviors that characterize an organization or group. It's the way things are done, the unwritten norms, and the shared understanding within a group.
- **Focus:** Culture is about "**how**" things are done. It encompasses the day-to-day interactions, behaviors, and practices that reflect the organization's values and beliefs.
- **Scope:** Culture is lived and experienced by everyone within the organization. It's shaped by leadership and the behaviors and attitudes of all members. It evolves over time and can be difficult to change because it's deeply ingrained.
- **Example:** An organization may have a culture of openness and transparency, where communication is encouraged at all levels, and everyone is expected to contribute ideas.

Summary of Differences:

- **Philosophy** is the **why**---guiding belief system or set of principles that informs the Culture.
- **Culture** is the lived experience of the Philosophy in action---**how** the Philosophy is implemented and manifested in daily interactions and behaviors.

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