



MAKING OREGON  
VITAL FOR ELDERS

---

A Study Guide for Adult Care Homes

## ***Let's Get Real: Being Person-Centered in a Task Oriented World***

This study guide serves as a supplement to the course *Let's Get Real*. The guide provides an opportunity to talk about real situations and how TRACK can be used to make sure that the *task of care* be accomplished in a person-centered way.



Making Oregon Vital for Elders (MOVE) developed this training on behalf of Oregon Department of Human Services – Aging and People with Disabilities. Funding for this project was provided by a grant from the Oregon Quality Care Fund.



---

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CULTURE CHANGE IN ELDER CARE

---

## Review

In **Person-Centered Care** (PCC), a resident's preferences or past patterns of living is the basis for planning and providing support. PCC is not a task that is added on to a caregiver's already busy schedule, but an approach to care that balances quality of care (tasks performed) with the resident's quality of life. Quality of life means supporting the whole person. By this, we mean recognizing and respecting each person's uniqueness, knowing and acting according to the person's preferences, facilitating decisions and honoring choices, and sustaining independence and dignity.

## TRACK

TRACK is a self-reflection tool that serves as a reminder in the course of care. It can be used to

**T**une-in

**R**elate

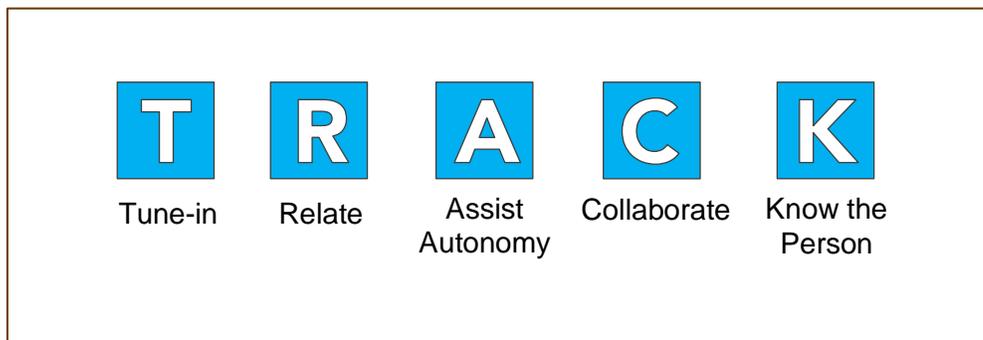
**A**ssist Autonomy

**C**ollaborate

**K**now the person

## Applying TRACK everyday

The stories presented in this guide are based on real experiences in many different kinds of settings. Read the story and then discuss how **TRACK** can help you figure out how to help the person in a way that will be important to them and provide the care they need.



---

## Lottie's story



Lottie moved into Sarah's adult care home because she was unable to manage all of her activities of daily living by herself. According to her son, Lottie had lived in an assisted living community for a short time, but had been very unhappy there. She was the person the staff wanted to avoid. She had frequent requests of her caregivers and it took a long time to tend to her requests. Nothing was ever right, she complained, frequently asked for snacks and alternative meal options and kept changing her mind

about what she wanted. The staff were frustrated over the extended time they spent in her room that prevented them from tending to other resident's needs. She had also gained a lot of weight, which made her physical care difficult. They were relieved when Lottie demanded to move.

By the time Lottie moved into Sarah's adult care home her own son had come to dread his visits with her. However, when her son visited a couple of weeks later, he was surprised and relieved when Sarah talked about how much she liked Lottie. He realized that Lottie seemed much more pleasant and relaxed than he had seen her in years. That day, he even saw her smile at another resident when she came out of her room. He wasn't sure what was more surprising, her smile or that she had come out of her room.

## Questions

1. What sort of care issues have you noticed cause us to avoid residents and why?
2. What do you think Sarah knew about Lottie that the assisted living staff did not?
3. If you were Sarah's son, what questions would you ask Sarah?

---

## What Sarah did

Lottie's son asked Sarah how she managed to develop a positive relationship with Lottie. Sarah said that Lottie was really frustrated due to her loss of independence. This led to feelings of being out of control. Sarah said that she paid attention to what Lottie requested and then anticipated those things when she was there to provide care. She also kept checking in with Lottie to make sure she was doing things the way Lottie wanted, asking, "Is this right or do you want it different?" before Lottie had a chance to complain. Sarah also looked around the room at the family photos and the quilt hanging on the wall and asked Lottie about them. She found out that Lottie had been an expert quilter and used to win ribbons for her quilts at the State Fair. She had also raised five sons. Sarah had two sons and started asking Lottie for pointers, which Sarah found helpful. Lottie also enjoyed spending time with Sarah's sons. Lottie even began telling funny stories about her kids when they were small.

Once she felt in better control, she obsessed less about food. Lottie began to lose some excess weight and her blood sugars improved.

## Questions

1. What are some experiences you have had in building a relationship with a demanding person who is difficult to be around?
2. What support do you need to be able to support Lottie and help her improve her quality of life?
3. How could this approach work in your care home?
4. What parts of TRACK can be seen in this scenario?

---

## Ben's story



Sometimes families unknowingly make it harder to focus on what the elder wants. Everybody thinks they know what's best for the elder — but sometimes it's all about them and their expectations, not what their elder family member really needs or wants.

Ben used to be an insurance salesman who wore a suit and tie to work and he was always on the go. Then his wife died and Ben had a stroke that made it hard for him to take care of himself. His daughter and son live on the other side of the country and Ben declined to go live with either of them. So they found an adult foster home run by Natasha and her family, not far from where he used to live, where he could get a little more support and care on a daily basis.

Ben's daughter visited a couple of times a year, but she always had a laundry list of "reminders" for the home about what she wanted done for her dad – she wanted to preserve his dignity by maintaining the way he dressed and the activities he pursued throughout his working life. She told the staff that it was important for Ben to get up at 8am every day and go for a walk, make

sure he reads all his magazine subscriptions they get him, make sure he wears his button down shirt and slacks, that he be kept clean-shaven and his hair is kept short. Ben says his kids still expect him to be like he was when they were in high school.

The thing is, Ben now likes to sleep in until at least 9:30 or 10. He has *no* desire to wear dress pants. He says they're too hard for him to zip and all he really wants to wear are his drawstring sweat pants and a sweatshirt. He doesn't like to read much anymore – he'd rather watch sports on TV. He does enjoy his walks and goes on one with Natasha or one of Natasha's family members most days right after lunch. One day Ben saw the International Beard Competition on TV and decided he wanted to grow a beard (he'd never had one).

When his daughter came to visit she found her dad lying in bed at 2:30 in the afternoon, wearing sweats, with a week's worth of beard. She saw the pile of unopened magazines in the corner and ESPN was blaring on the TV. She was *livid*. She confronted Natasha and went into a tirade about how she thought this was supposed to be a "person-centered" adult care home and instead they were letting her father languish here. She said she obviously wasn't taking care of him well and they weren't giving him enough mental stimulation. All this before she even said "hello" to her dad.

---

Natasha calmly listened to Ben's daughter finish her litany of complaints before she spoke. The first thing she said was, "I can see you are very concerned about your father". She then asked the daughter "Have you asked your father what *he* wants?" The daughter was silent. Finally she said "He's my dad and I know what's best for him."

Very respectfully, Natasha explained that person-centered care isn't about what everyone else wants for the elder, it's about how the elder wants to live his or her life

right now., not how they used to be or how others would like them to be. She said that elders need to have the ability to make their own decisions about how they want to live.

She walked back to her father's room. The two of them had a long talk. They could hear the daughter arguing, then crying. Later that afternoon, as his daughter left to go to her hotel, she handed Natasha a piece of paper. At the top it said "To-Do List for Ben" and there was only one item on it. It said: "Whatever makes him happy."

## Questions

1. Have you taken care of someone whose family had different ideas about what the person wanted than the person himself or herself?
2. If so, how was this resolved?
3. How can an adult care home provider support person-centered care when family members want something else?
4. What could Natasha have done to prevent the "blow up" with Ben's daughter?
5. How can TRACK be used to support Ben?

---

## Betty's story

Betty didn't want to get out of bed for lunch. At the breakfast table Amy, her caregiver, had mentioned that she was planning to make chicken Alfredo and broccoli for lunch. Amy had noticed that Betty had wrinkled her nose. Amy knew that Betty's favorite meal was meatloaf and mashed potatoes which was on the menu yesterday and she had one portion left in the refrigerator. Amy went into Betty's room

and said, "Hi Betty! I have a plate of meatloaf and mashed potatoes in the kitchen for you!" Betty's eyes got big and she cracked a smile. "Can you bring me some?" She asked. "Joe and Freda are waiting for you at your table. Let's get you out of bed. And guess what we have for dessert today? Lemon meringue pie!" said Jennifer. "Oh, I love lemon meringue pie! I guess I'll get up," said Betty.

## Questions

1. How does knowing an elder's preferences help you encourage them to get out of bed when they are initially reluctant?
2. In addition to nourishment, how does an elder benefit from eating at the dining table with others?
3. How can TRACK be used to support Betty?



---

## Jodi's story



Jodi had moderate dementia and had lived in an adult care home for some time. She had a lot of sadness every

afternoon when she began to talk about her husband. Her husband never visited because he was living in another care setting and was unable to come. She didn't speak about her husband in flattering terms, always accusing him of having an affair in their upstairs bedroom. She worried about her looks because of this belief that her husband was seeking the company of another woman. She would describe her breasts as her "flats." She used to be a voluptuous woman but now believed she had nothing to attract her husband.

### Question

1. Think of a time when you knew a resident's beliefs were unfounded and how did they respond when you tuned in to where they were at?

For her birthday her daughter gave her a leopard print push up bra. Jodi cracked a huge smile and they couldn't get it out of her hands! At first the Adult Care home provider was reluctant to put it on her thinking it didn't suit her, but her daughter insisted. As

soon as they put Jodi's new bra on, her demeanor changed instantly. She talked about feeling beautiful again and had had a twinkle in her eye that Susan, her caregiver had never seen before.

### Question

1. Think about a time when you witnessed an elder rediscover their sense of personhood. Why is it important to know what gives elders their sense of identity?

---

One day, the leopard print bra was in the laundry when they got Jodi dressed for the day. That afternoon Jodi was distraught about her husband again. She looked tiny and hunched over in her chair. Susan rubbed her shoulder to console her and realized that she did not have on her bra. Susan found it in the clean laundry and helped her put her bra on and her demeanor instantly improved.

## Question

1. Think about a time when an elder was showing signs of distress and how tuning in helped you identify how to respond?