

**Administration on Community Living (ACL) No Wrong Door System  
Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) Training Program**

**Course Title: Person-Centered Thinking and Practices**

**Lesson Number & Title: 1 The Core Values of Person-Centered Counseling (PCC)**

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# Administration on Community Living (ACL) No Wrong Door System Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) Training Program

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**Narration:**

Welcome to the lesson on the Core Values of Person-Centered Counseling. This lesson is part of the course on Person-Centered Thinking and Practices in the Person-Centered Counseling Training Program. Please review the information on this screen and go to the next page when you are ready.

**Text:**

**Welcome!**

**Here is a description of the lesson you are starting:**

Person-centered counseling (PCC) is an approach to counseling that is built on the core values of choice, direction, and control. This lesson reviews these core values in the context of using person-centered thinking (PCT) practices in a No Wrong Door (NWD) system. The lesson will help the learner understand these values as a foundation to person-centered approaches. It will also review some common challenges in applying them. It helps the learner connect the PCT skills they will learn in other lessons to the values. Finally, it will review some ideas for how to maintain these values in practice when the system or others make this difficult. The remaining lessons in the course provide more details regarding how these values and other critical attitudes and skills can be applied through PCT and related skills.

**Learning Objective:**

After completing this lesson:

You will be able to list the three core values of person-centered counseling and give an example of each value in practice.

To view course information, including On-the-Job Training Assessments, Portfolio Assignments, and a list of Activities, click on the “Menu” tab and then click Lesson Information.

This course is one of the six foundational courses in the No Wrong Door System Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) Training Program meant to provide basic skill and knowledge related to the identified competencies for a PCC professional. Click on the box below to learn about how person-centered thinking approaches are infused throughout these courses.

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## **Narration:**

People engage the No Wrong Door system for a variety of reasons. Some believe that additional support or resources may be helpful. Some people may come with a strong sense of what they want. Others may be exploring options. Some may be in crisis or on the brink of a significant transition. Or they may simply be trying to make life a little better. It's important that you, as a Person-Centered Counseling professional, have the skills to explore each person's situation in a purposeful but open-ended way. This will help them identify what is most important to each person. Review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

## **Text:**

### **The Core Values in Action**

Person-centered counseling (PCC) is a specific approach to supporting people seeking long-term services and support (LTSS). It applies to anyone, of any age, and with any LTSS concern. It does not start with screening processes or assessing people for program eligibility. It starts with active listening and discovery. These approaches ensure people are heard. (Discovery is taught more thoroughly later on in the course.) They help people formulate meaningful goals and actions related to their concerns.

Person-centered counseling approaches help do more than obtain access to services. They help people organize their resources in ways that support their overall quality of life. The information may be formulated into a formal person-centered plan, if the person chooses. Person-centered counseling

may be a one-time contact between a person and the professional. Or it may be a series of exchanges over time. It may also include others who the person identifies as important.

You will learn more about the role of a PCC professional and how these approaches apply in a variety of situations in this and the other courses. However, the core values of choice, direction, and control on the part of the person who is seeking support are always part of the approach.

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## **Narration:**

Human services professionals are often good at solving problems. However, it can be easy to start creating solutions before fully understanding the person and the situation. The goal of person-centered counseling is to help people make good decisions about how they want to manage their lives. These must be based on the person's own culture, values, and preferences. Their needs and the resources available to them will influence their decisions but not define them. To do this job well, you must have skills in discovering what is important to people as well as what their needs are. Review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

## **Text:**

### **Engaging People in Purposeful Discovery**

It's important to understand what is meaningful to an individual. To do this, a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional must engage in discovery. Both discovery and assessment can be performed using person-centered practices. However, discovery is not the same as assessment. Assessment is a process related to understanding if a person is eligible for a specific program or service. Discovery is a process that is meant to elicit an accurate, culturally relevant, and well-balanced understanding of the person's "to/for balance." It considers the person in their current and past context. It includes strengths, gifts, hopes, expectations, relationships, and other resources. What is learned during the discovery process can help identify if a person may be interested in pursuing supports that require

screening and assessments. It may provide information that helps complete these activities. Discovery should include what a person has tried and what is already working for them. It should help get a sense of resources a person has including unpaid support.

The intensity and length of discovery will vary. It will be influenced by the person's circumstances and reason for seeking assistance. However, with a person-centered approach, the PCC professional can provide information that makes sense to the person. The professional will find person-centered thinking (PCT) skills helpful to ensuring this process incorporates the values of choice, direction, and control. The rest of this course helps teach PCT skills.

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## **Narration:**

People seeking services will have variable backgrounds. Some will come with many skills and resources. Some will be very familiar with human services systems. However, others may be completely unfamiliar. Some people will have few resources. Some may have serious or multiple barriers to engaging in a discovery process. The right skills and attitudes will help the person-centered counseling professional better meet each person where they are. Review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

## **Text:**

### **Important Attitudes**

As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, you will want to ensure the values of choice, direction, and control are present in all interactions. You will also want to engage with people in ways that are likely to be useful and empowering. You need to be able to engage person-centered skills and support self-direction. The following attitudes will help.



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**Narration:**

The foundation values of choice, direction, and control can be difficult to apply at times. Many times we are not even aware that we are making assumptions. It takes skill and effort not to get caught up in our own views or experiences when supporting others. Systems as a whole push standardized approaches. It takes commitment to keep a focus on each person as an individual. We have to make sure that good intentions don't override people's choices and views. Review the information on this page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

**Text:**

**The Problem with “Good Intentions” and Untested Assumptions**

**Directions:** Listen to the two voice clips on this page. Once you have heard what each person has to say, complete the following reflection questions. Click on the “My Notes” icon at the top of the screen to use the electronic journal or use your own notebook. Write down your answers to the following.

After you have completed your responses to the reflections, click on the “person-centered” icon to learn more.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. Both of these people had good intentions to help a loved one. Describe a

time when you had “good intentions” to help someone and it didn’t go well. What happened? Who was involved?

2. Describe how you knew your actions or words of “support” were not appreciated. What did the person say or do that let you know this?

3. What ways do you think a person engaging a No Wrong Door system might indicate they do not appreciate assumptions or advice on the part of the Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional? List out at least three different specific signs that might indicate the person is not appreciative of the support provided. (What might a person do or say?)

4. Consider the voice clip scenarios. What strategies might be useful in helping get the relationships back on track? What might each person do to repair the damage? List out 1-2 strategies a PCC professional could use if a conversation or relationship gets off track.

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## **Narration:**

Choice, direction, and control are different but related values. The next three screens will explore each definition a bit more. These values will also be continually explored in the illustrations and information in further lessons. Let's start with choice. At its most basic level it means that the person has options. However, it also means that the person has enough information and effective strategies to meaningfully select from those options. Review the information on this page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

## **Text:**

### **Supporting Choice**

Supporting choice can be more complicated than simply offering choices. Making good choices from those options requires access to high-quality information. This information must be provided in ways that are understandable and useful to the individual. Some people have had few opportunities or experiences in making their own choices. There are often barriers and challenges to supporting people in making their best choices.

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## **Narration:**

Each person has an internal orientation as to what makes sense to them. When provided high-quality information, choice, and control, people will often make good decisions. These will be in the context of their own values, beliefs, and experiences. Using discovery conversations and taking the time to share information in ways the person understands is central to this. The ideal result is that a person creates a situation that works well for them from the available options. However, there are times when supporting self-direction can be challenging. Review the information on this page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

## **Text:**

### **Supporting Direction**

Informed choice and control support positive self-direction. People want to be able to decide for themselves how to live day-to-day. They want to direct the larger events of their lives in a way that makes sense to them. Services should fit within the person's expectations. However, at times, a person's choices appear risky or ill-informed. The Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional and others will struggle more with how to balance support for safety with support for direction. In situations of immediate and extreme risk of harm to self or others, the professional may need to engage protective or crisis services. They should know their roles and boundaries in terms of mandated reporting and similar responsibilities.

However, in most situations, people have a right to decline available services even if there is a risk. They have the right to engage in the portions they want and refuse the portions they don't want. Denying people these rights is not only against the value of direction, it invites anger or discouragement. It also prevents people from experiencing the opportunity to take responsibility for decisions and to learn as a result, which is sometimes referred to as “the dignity of risk.” Denying direction also presumes that PCC professionals know better what the person needs. This is not always the true. In fact, if people are properly supported, they usually have a pretty good idea of what will work for them and why. Respecting people's choices in directing their services is part of your role as a PCC professional.

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**Narration:**

Control is the ability to exercise influence on aspects of life that are important to an individual. The control or lack of control is highly tied to a person's sense of security and comfort. When people are denied access to healthy control in their lives they will still seek control — often in unhealthy or destructive ways. Helping people find services that help them experience control is important. However, each person has different needs for control. Review the information on this page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

**Text:**

**Supporting Control**

Helping people experience control as they find support and services is a central value of person-centered counseling (PCC).

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**Narration:**

While each Person-Centered Counseling professional strives to support choice, direction, and control there are many barriers and challenges. Some are blatant and some are subtler. They can include the attitudes, beliefs, and resources each person brings to the situation. They can include how the person's needs are expressed. They can include the local resources available. The professional must continually use person-centered thinking skills and practices to help them return to the person's views. Review the information on this page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

**Text:**

## **Overcoming Barriers and Challenges to Core Values**

Supporting choice, direction, and control can be complicated at times.

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## **Narration:**

Congratulations! You have now finished the lesson. Let's take a few moments to review the key ideas and learning objectives.

This lesson gave some context of the three values of the person-centered counseling approach. In future lessons, you will learn more about person-centered approaches, such as discovery. Having the foundation of these core values will help you stay on track.

You can review the content as needed by going back through the lesson. You may take the test now, later, or as requested by your employer. Please review the information on this page. Good luck and thanks for completing the lesson!

## **Text:**

### **Conclusion and Lesson Review**

- <bullet> The three core values of person-centered counseling (PCC) are choice, direction, and control.
- <bullet> Discovery is a distinct process from assessment. The value of discovery is that it produces a well-balance and holistic view of the person that places their goals and needs in context. It is easier to support choice, direction, and control with this type of information.
- <bullet> Attitudes that make PCC possible include believing in the rights and responsibilities of all people to direct their own services to the greatest



extent possible.

<bullet> Supporting choice, direction, and control can be challenging in some circumstances. You may need additional training or support in working with situations in which people experience conditions that impair judgment or make it difficult to ensure informed choice.

<bullet> Trauma-informed processes consider people's comfort and need for healthy control. They are a good universal design approach.

## **Reflection on Learning Objective**

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. When you are done click on the "My Notes" icon to use the electronic journal or use your own notebook. Write down your answers to the following questions.

1. What did you learn in this lesson that you felt was important?
2. What will you do differently because of the content in this lesson?

### **Learner Objective:**

After completing this lesson, you will be able to list the three core values of person-centered counseling and give an example of each value in practice.

If you are ready to take the test, click on the "Take Test" tab. You can also take the test later: It will be available from your "Personal Page." To access it, click on the "My eLearning Lessons View" button. Choose the lesson title from the list of assignments, and then click on the "Start the Lesson" button at the bottom of the screen. Click the "Take Test" tab to start the test.

We recommend that you complete the On-the-Job Training Assessments and Portfolio Assignments for this lesson. They will help you demonstrate competencies for the ideas presented. To view On-the-Job Training Assessments, Portfolio Assignments, and a list of Activities, click on the "Menu" tab and then click "Lesson Information."

Again, congratulations and good luck!