

**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: 5 PCT Core Concept: Important To and Important For
and the Balance Between Them**

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Course Title: Person-Centered Thinking and Practices

Lesson Number & Title: 5 PCT Core Concept: Important *To* and Important *For* and the Balance
Between Them

Page No: 1

Narration:

Welcome to the lesson on PCT Core Concept: Important *To* and Important *For* and the Balance Between Them. This lesson is part of the course on **Person-Centered Thinking and Practices** in the 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) professionals must be able to recognize the difference between the concepts of important *to* and important *for*. They must also be able to guide people seeking support in determining what is important *to* and *for* them. They must be able to support people to address these aspects of their lives and express their preferred balance between the two. They can do this through person-centered discovery and planning strategies. In this lesson, the learner will review these concepts as they are defined by the Learning Community. They will practice differentiating the two areas. They will also learn more about why the sequence of discovery matters. And they will learn how to help people address their “to/for balance” when planning supports are reviewed.

Learning Objective:

After completing this lesson:

You will be able to describe critical aspects of the important *to* and important *for* concepts and how to approach the balance between them for individuals.

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:

Like everything else, service paradigms and views of people with disabilities have a history. Past views do still heavily influence today. They are embedded in service language, policies, beliefs, and practices. All of these are still rooted primarily in a medical model of disability. As a result many of these views often become common knowledge in communities even though they are inaccurate. Change often takes scrupulous review of these, along with specific effort to overcome them. The community movement has been in the works since the 1950s. However, there are still issues related to full inclusion, choice, direction, control, and opportunity. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Some Challenges of the “To/For Balance” in Services

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Narration:

A continuing struggle in long-term services and support is how to ensure that people are provided with what they need to stay healthy and safe, but in the context of what is important *to* them. Service systems were originally developed with a focus on defining and organizing support with health and safety in mind. For example, eligibility assessments seek information about what a person can't do. The context of what they would like to do, if given the right support, is often missing. The services and interventions often end up being organized around professional convenience and expectations. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Sorting Out the “To/For Balance”

People with all types of needs and expectations will come to the No Wrong Door system. Some people will more easily be able to share what is important *to* them. They will have a strong sense of what would make it possible for them to achieve those goals. They may also have the support of their families or others to achieve their goals. Others will come with histories and situations that make that more challenging. Standard assessments and eligibility checklists will focus on what's important *for* a person rather than what is important *to* them. Many professionals are committed to the core values of choice, direction, and control. However, the activities and expectations of their work can make it challenging. Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals must be able to support a discovery

process that starts with what is important *to* a person.

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Narration:

Let's look a little more in depth at aspects of the "to/for balance." Things that are important *to* a person are those things in life which help them to be satisfied, content, comforted, fulfilled, and happy. These are often the things we don't ask about. They are things that most people don't speak about directly when seeking services. Many of us would have a hard time even noticing some of these important aspects of life until they are missing. Once they are gone, however, the impact on our quality of life is tremendous. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Identifying Important *To*

Things that are important *to* a person are the things they are the least apt to be asked about or consider sharing. They are so much part of a person's life that they may not be noticed until missing. They are rooted in our circumstances and our culture. Ultimately, they are what make our lives uniquely ours.

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Narration:

It's often much easier to recognize what is important *for* a person than what is important *to* them. Aspects of important *for* include health and safety issues. They can also include meeting social expectations. Important *for* includes aspects of life that become very clear if they are missing in significant ways. However, they are not, on their own, what makes life meaningful or satisfying. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Identifying and Addressing Important *For*

Most long-term service systems have been built around a focus on maintaining health and safety. However, these have not been offered on people's own terms. Too often, people experience long-term services and support as being kept "safe and healthy" through denial of choice, control, and direction. Supervision and limits have taken the place of educating, supporting and empowering. Control is used in place of shared responsibility and dignity of risk.

Reflection Activity: Health and Safety

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Narration:

As you have probably guessed by now the “to/for balance” is not an “either/or” situation. It is a “both/and” situation. Both are important. Both need to be addressed. However, health and safety issues must be addressed in the context of the person’s values and views. We’ll learn more about this as the lesson progresses. However, before going on let’s make sure the difference between “to” and “for” is clear. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Sorting Important *To* and *For*

Activity: Sorting Scenario

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Narration:

Simply being able to sort out important *to* and important *for* is a foundational skill in discovery. There are other important aspects to think about. Attending to both what's important *to* us and what's important *for* us is something we all must do. The question is one of balance. It is also one of preferences in how to address these issues. Keep in mind, almost no one willingly attends to what is important *for* them unless it is connected to something that is important *to* them. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

The “To/For Balance”

We all have things we know we should do (important *for*). And we all have things we want to do (important *to*). Achieving the “to/for balance” is something we engage in every day. All of us engage in risk-taking behaviors and less than perfect choices around our health. Some studies show that, even with chronic illnesses, 40 to 60% of people do not follow through with treatment recommendations.

The truth is most of us only do what we “should” do if it is connected to something that is important *to* us.

Reflection Activity: The “To/For Balance”

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Narration:

People with support needs want an opportunity to balance their lives in a way that makes it meaningful to them. They want to be able to make decisions about balance based on their own views and values. Ultimately, they *will* make their decisions based on their own views and values unless coerced into a different approach. For that reason, it is very important to know a lot about those views and values when engaging in discovery and organizing action steps. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

The Role of Discovery and Planning in the “To/For Balance”

When engaging in a discovery conversation and planning for responses, it's important to keep these two things in mind:

- <bullet> The sequence in which you engage discovery matters. Always start with trying to find out more about what is important *to* the person.
- <bullet> People often do what is important *for* them willingly if it is connected to what is important *to* them. In planning as well as discovery, make sure to start with important *to*. Make sure the connection to important *for* goals is clear.

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Narration:

In order to achieve a person-centered balance between “to and for,” the sequence of discovery makes a difference. If exploration starts with important *for*, the focus is on a person’s risks and limits. However, little will be learned about what will make sense to the person in terms of how to address these. Once that path has been taken, it can be difficult to get back on track. Too often, exploring what is important *to* the person will be an afterthought. With little to go on for context, the professional will be challenged to offer resources or support planning that will be meaningful to the person. Please review the information on the page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Person-Directed Balance

When only important for is considered, we have an institutional model. A person may be “safe and protected” but their life is not their own. On the other hand, for some people, if there is no support for the basics of health and safety, they are likely to fall ill, get hurt, or shorten their lives unnecessarily. Each person decides for themselves what is the right balance and what are the right tradeoffs within the “to/for balance.” Keep in mind, no one maintains perfect balance all the time.

Activity: Finding the “To/For Balance”

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Narration:

Many people know what the right balance is for them. And most want and understand how to stay healthy and safe. However, one challenge is supporting someone with experiences or conditions that make the “to/for balance” difficult to sort out. For example, sometimes a person may have cognitive disorders or conditions that challenge their ability to think clearly in the moment. Or perhaps the person has been sheltered from decision-making and has little experience. These and similar issues can make exploring the “to/for balance” more challenging. Please review the information on this page. When you are ready, go to the next page.

Text:

Final Thoughts on the “To/for Balance”

You may work with people who have challenges in understanding the “to/for balance.” It’s one thing to support decisions when you believe the person has made a free and informed choice. It’s another when you feel they may not understand the consequences.

In these situations, it’s even more important to start by learning what is important *to* the person. Ensure those things are the basis of options offered to them. Helping to make explicit the connection between “to and for” and offering enough support can be helpful. For example ensuring that a person who has grooming challenges understands the connection of clean clothing and good hygiene to maintaining the job they want. Offering them

appropriate support options to help them arrive clean and well groomed is also important. When faced with real choices and real outcomes that matter to them, people frequently make better decisions for themselves. Even when people require some supervision or monitoring to stay safe, they can be provided options that work for them and embrace what is important *to* them.

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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. People naturally build their lives around what is important *to* them. However, services are typically focused on what is important *for* them. There is sometimes little regard to the context that makes the important *for* aspects personally meaningful. A foundational skill of person-centered thinking is being able to recognize and sort out what is important *to* and *for* a person. Starting with what is important *to* a person sets a tone. It will support effective discovery and a good balance.

Please review the information on this page. You can also review the content as needed by using the "Left Arrow" icon at the bottom of the screen. This will take you back through the lesson. You may take the test now, later, or as requested by your employer. Good luck and thanks for completing the lesson!

Text:

Conclusion and Lesson Review

<bullet> An essential skill in being person-centered is being able to discriminate between important *to* and important *for*. Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals must also be able to assist people seeking

services to identify what is important to and important for themselves.

<bullet> Important to includes things that help a person feel satisfied, content, comforted, fulfilled, and happy in their life. It includes relationships, status, and choices about daily routines and options. It includes meeting health, safety, and societal norms on the person's own terms.

<bullet> Important for includes health, safety, and things that others see as important to fit in, such as grooming.

<bullet> Discovery should start with learning more about what is important to a person. It will help to illuminate options that will be meaningful to the person.

<bullet> No one has a perfect "to/for balance" but in general, people only willingly and seriously address health and safety in the context of what's important to them.

Reflection on Learning Objectives

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. When you are done 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 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?

Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, you will be able to describe critical aspects of the important *to* and important *for* concepts and how to approach the balance between them for individuals.

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!

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