Growth and Wellness Plans – Seven Domains of well-being

So, what is quality of life? How do we define genuine caring? As human beings, we are inclined to pay more attention to the limitations rather than the possibilities. We believe that those who are aging and/or living with physical, developmental, intellectual, or psychological challenges are whole, capable human beings deserving of well-being.

Well-being, as a frame of reference, requires us to focus on the strengths, possibilities, dreams, and goals of each individual. Doing so, we define quality of life in terms of what each individual can do and what they have to offer their communities.

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7 Domains of Wellness

1. **IDENTITY –** Nothing exists without identity. Part of knowing each other deeply involves acknowledging our strengths and what we each have to offer. How we bring forth these strengths each day is a powerful way to celebrate each other's unique individuality.

2. **GROWTH –** In a person-directed model of care, Elders and their care teams have every opportunity to learn and grow. Individuals living with frailty continue to grow and teach us how to be human beings in a caring community. Everyone has the potential to be a "growth partner" to someone else.

3. **AUTONOMY –** Simply put, to be autonomous is to be one's own person. . .to be respected for one's ability to decide for oneself, control one's life and absorb the costs and benefits of one's own choices.

4. **SECURITY –** Abraham Maslow theorized that human beings are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, and that certain lower needs must be satisfied before higher needs can be fulfilled. For example, safety needs — the security of home and family, freedom from fear and anxiety — must be satisfied before we can grow toward self-actualization.

5. **CONNECTEDNESS –** A person-directed model seeks to reconnect Elders or individuals accepting support and their care teams with the past, present, and future, with their environment and with hope and dreams. Care team relationship consistency is the beginning of this reconnection.

6. **MEANING –** A person-directed approach infuses meaning into every corner, every act and every relationship. This way, all care teams share in a life worth living. Simple pleasures are brought to life for all. The rhythm of daily life is affirming and nurturing, drawing people together in meaningful ways. Meaning is generated because of the caring relationships we have nurtured with one another.

7. **JOY –** Joy is a short, simple word that describes the best, most elusive dimensions of human experience. Joy is both deeper and more encompassing than happiness.

The Eden Alternative defines an Elder as someone who by virtue of life experience is here to teach us how to live. Even though this definition implies that one needn't be chronologically older to be an Elder, we assume that not everyone will relate to the term "Elder" as the most appropriate identifier, regardless of this definition. We encourage you to "fill in the blank," as needed, wherever you see the phrase "Elder or individual accepting support." Apart from how you choose to identify the individual accepting support, this person should be seen as an active partner in his or her own care.