

## The Power of Person-Centred Language Worksheet

Adapted from work developed by Mario Tsokas, BSW, RSW, Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant, Psychogeriatric Resource Consultation Program of Toronto, Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto.

### Case A: Aggressive long-term care resident

- You are reviewing the resident’s care plan before going into their room in the 1 East Unit to provide care, engage them in an activity, do an assessment – something related to your role as a team member or leader in long-term care.
- You read the person is an aggressive resident who is extremely demanding and resistive to care, especially in the dining room, and it is challenging to get her to take medications and to leave her room.
- You also notice she is usually aggressive verbally and physically when attempts to interact with her are made.

#### 1. What are your physical, emotional and mental reactions to this situation?

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#### 2. How will what you are feeling and thinking affect your approach verbally and non-verbally with this person?

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#### 3. How do you expect the person to respond to you?

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## **Case B: Long-term care resident communicating via personal expressions / responsive behaviours**

- You are reviewing Alma’s care plan before going into her room in the Pine Hill Neighbourhood to provide care, engage her in an activity, do an assessment – something related to your role as a team member or leader in long-term care.
- Alma lives with vascular dementia and lung disease, and tends to keep to herself.
- You read there are times when you approach Alma, she politely declines and gently taps your hand, but when you come back later Alma will accept what you invite her to do or take.
- It has also been noted that Alma sometimes will wince and scream “ouch” when you touch her left arm. She will reach out to hold onto your arm for a moment when you do this.
- Additionally, Alma often asks to go back to bed right after dinner and if she waits for a long time, her breathing looks uncomfortable and she will call out, “Please, bed, bed, please” repeatedly. Once Alma is settled in bed she usually relaxes and stops calling out.

### **4. What are your physical, emotional and mental reactions to this situation?**

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### **5. How will what you are feeling and thinking affect your approach verbally and non-verbally with Alma?**

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### **6. How do you expect Alma to respond to you?**

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**Believe it or not, Case A and Case B is the same person living in long-term care, in the same situation.**

- The difference is how the person was perceived by you based on what you read in her care plan.
- The team member who documented Alma’s care plan in Case B used a person-centred approach, while the team member in Case A did not.

**7. If you read or received information similar to Case A, what could you do to make the experience better:**

- a) for yourself?
- b) for the person living in long-term care?
- c) for other team members?

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**For resources about person-centred language and approaches to care, visit:**

- ➔ Ontario CLRI Enhancing the Use of Person-Centred Language in Your Long-Term Care Home  
<https://clri-ltc.ca/resource/person-centred-language-in-ltc/>
- ➔ Behavioural Supports Ontario Person-Centred Language  
<http://behaviouralsupportsontario.ca/Pledge>
- ➔ Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto Specialized Geriatric Services  
<https://www.rgptoronto.ca/services/>