Person-Centered Thinking

What is it?

For people who are supported by services, it is not person-centered planning that matters as much as the pervasive presence of **Person-Centered Thinking**® **(PCT®)**. PCT® begins with learning *both* what is **"important to"** a person and what is **"important for"** a person, the **balance between them**, and **discussing trade-offs**.[1] PCT® skills help people describe both how they want to live, and a reasonable balance between the components of "important to" and "important for" in their lives. As the core PCT® concept, this balance is at the center of both planning and practice.

All of the PCT® skills that are practiced during training are intended to be used to:

- Learn more to inform ourselves about "important to."
- Find a better balance between "to" and "for."
- Discover how to implement what is learned.

"Important to" is learned through discovery processes so that Person-Centered Descriptions, available on the Support Development Associates (SDA) website, and One-Page Descriptions, available on the SDA website, can be developed and updated as needed using everyday discovery tools.[2]

Why do it?

Only a small percentage of people need to know how to write comprehensive person-centered plans, but everyone needs to use the PCT® skills that underlie planning. Training and supporting the use of PCT® skills will mean that:

- It is more likely that plans will be used and acted on, that the lives of people who use services will improve.
- You will have a number of ways to get plans started.
- Updating the plans will occur "naturally," needing less effort and time.[3]

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[1] Go-To Guide for Person-Centered Thinking Skills
[2] Core Concepts: Important To/Important For
[3] Our Work: Person-Centered Thinking

Where is it happening?

Person-Centered Thinking® training has begun to be offered to educators in Minnesota beginning April 2018. We have begun getting feedback from the first educators who have been trained, and will begin to share locations where they report their use of PCT® skills with students, and their impact by the end of 2019.

What are we doing?

Annual no-cost **Person-Centered Thinking**® trainings are being offered to Minnesota educators three (3) times a year:

- April 6-7, 2019 (Alexandria) – Register for April training
- June 24-25, 2019 (Roseville) – Register for June training
- October 17-18, 2019 (Roseville) – Register for October training

PCT® training is designed for staff at all levels in an organization, as well as individuals who receive support and families. It is especially relevant for full-time staff who continually interact with students and for administrative staff. During two days of interactive training for acquiring and practicing effective PCT® skills, participants learn how to discover and balance what is "important to" and what is "important for" a person. Participants also learn how to use the information to write Person-Centered Descriptions, available on the Support Development Associates (SDA) website, and One-Page Descriptions, available on the SDA website.[4]

How much and how well?

So far, 30 educators have been trained in **PCT**® in Minnesota. One of those educators has since developed:

- One (1) Person-Centered Description for a person who receives services.
- One (1) Relationship Map for a person who receives services.
- One (1) Rituals and Routines for a person who receives services.
- One (1) Good Day/Bad Day for a person who receives services.
- Two (2) What's Working What's Not Working tools for educational teams.

Results (so far):

We are in the Exploration Stage of implementation at Minnesota Department of Education. The Person-Centered Practices in Education Leadership Team is identifying formal outcomes that can be measured and paired with success stories for students from birth to 21 years old.[5]

Contact the Person-Centered Practices in Education Leadership Team (MDE.Person-Centered@state.mn.us).

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[4] Sensible strategies for supporting people: Person-Centered Thinking Initiatives

[5] Topic 3: Exploration Stage