

Action Pact, Inc.

www.Culturechangenow.com

Ask Pact



Topic: Activities in Daily Life

Dear Ask Pact,

I am a grad student studying activities and leisure in regards to the culture change movement. I would like to know how activities are successful in this model, and what are the challenges a community would face when planning, and implementing such. I am working on an education module to assist those in the culture change movement to use activity program to the benefit of all. I have looked around but there are not too many books on the subject of activities in a culture model, usually just the medical nursing home approach. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

-Brandy M. from Kansas State

Dear Brandy:

There's not much written yet on activities and leisure in the new world we're all wanting to create. But one name does stand out: Carmen Bowman from Educating in Colorado has written a couple of significant workbooks, [Quality of Life](#) and

[Living Life to the Fullest](#), and [Lighting the Way](#), which are available in the Action Pact webstore.

We decided to contact our good friend Carmen and ask her to offer you some some sage words. Here's what she has to say:

Regarding activities and the exciting culture change movement, really what it is all about is getting back to what is normal. Person-centered care is what we all want, care that is centered around each of us, our lifelong routines, interests and preferences. Pioneers are realizing it is not normal to have group birthday parties for anyone who happens to have a birthday in the month, mass memorial services for anyone who happened to pass away since the last one or only structured activities planned by someone else. These are welcome and needed changes.

A sterile hospital-like environment is also not what people want. Thankfully, pioneers recognize this as well and as we create true home for people, even those needing nursing care, we find that persons with dementia no longer need to find home and families and visitors come more often and stay longer.

"Ask Pact" is our own question-and-answer column where people can ask their Culture Change questions and have them answered by our seasoned team of trainers and educators. You may find some topics here that are relevant to you - if not, feel free to [Ask Pact!](#)

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Ask Pact

Daily Life, *continued*

*Culture change
is all about
common sense.*



Person-centered care also includes that anyone can take care of me at anytime regardless of what I need. Thus there is a growing trend of the use of universal workers within the culture change movement. Unfortunately, many activity and recreation professionals (as well as every other kind of professional) fear this move to a cross trained workforce for fear of losing our identity and what we went to school to do! However, what has helped me is realizing that when we can each do anything a resident wants or needs, this is true customer service, what we're there for finally in its best form. Another way to view universal workers is that we are gaining more opportunity to offer residents activities via cross training and also the opportunity to teach others how to offer activities that are meaningful to residents. In addition, this model of care is becoming our future.

When we worry about "but that's not my job," we are simply perpetuating what is being called "disciplinary silos" or "department silos" that just add to the institutionalization of it all creating barriers toward providing residents with what they need and when they need it. Culture change is all about common sense. A home is where family members take turns

taking care of the home and each other.

The universal worker concept works best when the entire home is undergoing changing from institutional to person centered care. Those pioneer homes who have really incorporated every aspect toward genuine person-centered care are succeeding with this much more than those who may only do parts of culture change. Case in point, in one home that decided to have CNAs also provide activities, that was the only change made - a new duty assigned to already burdened staff. When the activity/recreation director called me because activities were going undone I told her she would have to become the "activity ombudsman" advocating for the residents' desires and rights for activities. In this situation, you could try to make some demands up front regarding how activities will occur every day and get them in policy. But you see, this is a home that is not changing the entire culture, only adding burden to already burdened staff. LaVrene Norton of Action Pact teaches that culture change includes deciding to undergo personal transformation as well. Cross-training challenges us personally to make a commitment to change.

In a true neighborhood or household

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Daily Life, continued

...culture change includes deciding to undergo personal transformation as well.



model, the original activity/recreation director now grows into a teacher and trainer of other staff in assessing, care planning and implementing activities that are resident-centered and resident-directed. An advantage to this cross-training is that no longer is the activity staff "assigned" to a unit, viewed as an outsider nor are activities viewed as something only the activity staff do and therefore only take place when activity staff are present.

Culture change is challenging us all to move away from only caring for "parts" of a person, where I care for their activity interests and someone else cares for their dietary needs. This is where the institutional model fails us. We should all care for the whole

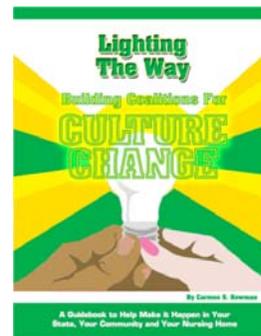
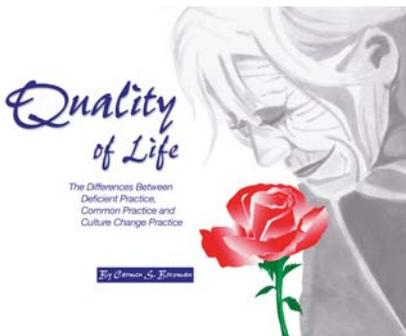
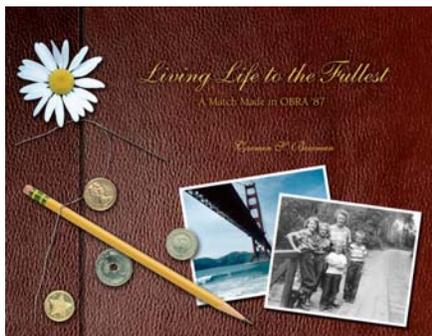
person and when staff make this commitment, beautiful things happen – from people living longer, to increased census, to more satisfied residents and staff.

It really is a win-win when done thoroughly and in a way to affect the entire culture.

Feel free to copy this answer and [the attached questionnaire](#). Pass them around and encourage recreational therapy and activities folks to talk, argue and grow. This is an exciting time - a time in which we all can truly make a difference.

Sincerely,

Carmen Bowman



Culture Change Workbooks written by Carmen Bowman and available on the www.culturechangenow.com webstore.



Action Pact, Inc. Getting to Know You,

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(name)

Where were you born?
 Where did you grow up?
 Favorite parts of childhood?
 High school days?
 College/Secondary Ed/Service?
 Married?
 Children?
 Career/Life Role/Spouse's career?
 Moves?
 Retirement?
 Grandchildren?
 Favorite pastime
 Favorite hobbies
 Favorite leisure activity
 Favorite spectator sport
 Favorite active sport
 Favorite music
 Play an instrument?
 Have what you need to enjoy your music?
 Favorite intellectual activity
 Favorite games
 Favorite arts/crafts
 Favorite outdoor activity
 Favorite drinks
 Favorite baked goods
 Favorite meals
 Favorite snacks
 Favorite restaurant
 Morning Routine
 Afternoon Routine
 Evening Routine
 Sleep Routine
 Daily Pleasure
 Birthday Tradition
 Special Holiday traditions
 Ethnic culture/culture traditions
 Volunteer work/community service
 Psychosocial Needs (see list)
 Spiritual/Religious Beliefs/Traditions
 Is there something you would like to learn?
 If you could do anything, what would it be?
 What is something you never got to do you wanted to?
 What things around you bring comfort?
 What can we do to make you feel more comfortable here?