Sharing Culture in Culture Change

An institution seeks to make everything and everyone the same. So, as we push the institutional hold away, we get to really see and begin to understand all the things that make us, residents and staff, who we are. Of course a large part of that is the culture we grew up in – be it the Midwestern United States or Nigeria. By sharing our cultures we not only get to know each other better, but learn about the diverse richness of the world.

By Kay Provine, Chaplain, Episcopal Church Home in St Paul, MN

Episcopal Church Home is blessed with a diverse population of staff and residents from all over the world. As a way to get to know each other better, residents and staff in Isabella House decided to have a day to celebrate and share traditions from everybody’s ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Residents gathered in community circles to plan menus and then took responsibility for preparing them. Evelyn from Italy made ravioli and biscotti. Another resident prepared Scandinavian lefse. Family members brought dishes, too.

Staff brought some native dishes and dressed in native costumes from Nigeria, Liberia, Somalia, Cameroon and Laos. One staff member could no longer “get into” her dress so a resident consented to wear it! The staff shared how their costumes were made, what they symbolized, when they were to be worn and why certain colors were used. One staff member from Nigeria brought a DVD showing a celebration in Nigeria. Residents decorated and displayed flags from the various countries.

The celebration was taken one step further. A resident asked, “Where are the pictures? We always took pictures and put it in a scrapbook.” So now photos are taken and the residents scrapbook their events and can remember and re-celebrate any time they look at the photos.

It was most gratifying to have a family member comment, “My mom’s cognitive ability and alertness is really better. Whatever you are doing keep it up.”
somewhere in my future and I would like to be treated with respect and dignity,” she said. “I suppose I, like many others, pigeon-hole those with dementia and feel they tell stories that are not based on fact. Through community circle involvement I have learned these folks do indeed know what they are talking about and their stories are indeed interesting. It’s also a big plus to get to know the staff in AL and HC and to know that they are pleasant, caring individuals. I receive far more than I give.”

The staff at Pleasant View is experiencing an unexpected benefit of the IL residents’ involvement.

**Immersed in Change**

*by LaVrene Norton*

My father’s father started a family tradition. He was a farmer in Southern Illinois who sneered at winter. Yes, he accepted frost as a necessary part of the growth process, but he saw no reason for it to go on forever. After all, the southern states had shorter frosts and were still able to produce healthy crops. So, he came up with a way to “warm the soil” that gave him an early start on lettuce and peas in the family garden. Every year on George Washington’s Birthday (February 18th), he built a huge bonfire. It didn’t matter that there might be snow on the ground, he would merely shovel it aside before he built the bonfire. It didn’t matter that the ground was still frozen. It wouldn’t be for long. After the bonfire burned down he turned over the ashes into the thawed ground, raked the earth and planted his seeds. Our family enjoyed the earliest lettuce and the best peas in the entire county!

Perhaps you have the culture change seeds in your organization but could use a little soil warming to get them growing. Action Pact is now offering a very special and very effective workshop that gives you that early start. We would be glad to bring our Immersion program to you or help you design your own.

With an Immersion program, the soil is warmed by involving everyone, right from the start, in your culture change commitment. Work out a schedule that allows every single employee (and interested families and residents) to participate in a two to four hour workshop over a two to three day time period. The results are powerful:

- Everyone feels rewarded and attended to;
- Everyone comes away with the same understanding of why culture change is worth all the trouble;
- “I especially love the relationships that have been formed between IL residents and staff through the PF training,” Janette said. “I didn’t know any of the IL residents prior to PersonFirst™. Now, I work with several of them regularly on the team and we have become good friends. It is nice to see the interaction during the classroom training when IL residents interact with staff, especially the high school students who work part-time at the facility. There are new friendships formed between folks of different generations who never would have met and come to appreciate and understand one another otherwise.”

“Unexpected benefits” are the norm when people come together to work and learn and share. Action Pact consultant, Megan Hannan, recently led an immersion at Village Shalom in Leawood, KS. She shares with us about the experience:

Over three days, 200 people from Village Shalom engaged in learning, sharing and brainstorming about culture change in their organization in a balance of information sharing and group process. The groups shared their own vision of person-centered care, identified and talked about the barriers to moving forward as well as the successes they continue to have each day.

Often there are things we say we are doing, because we are - they do happen - and yet they may not be happening consistently. Because an Immersion includes and involves all staff in a short amount of time, these types of issues are brought to light and can then be dealt with by both honoring what is happening and being realistic about how to make that more consistent.

Many folks commented about how special it was to get to know people they normally don’t get to work with. Now that everyone has had a similar experience, it is in the lexicon for further discussion. No matter what department, what shift, what building you work in, there is common ground. The Immersion sparks energy that builds from this common ground into real action.

For more information on Immersions, contact our office at 414-258-3649 or visit our website: [http://www.culturechangenow.com](http://www.culturechangenow.com)
Got Photos?

Share your household memories and win

Got photos of staff and residents in daily life and special celebrations in their households or neighborhoods? You could be part of a scrapbook of photos from households and neighborhoods around the country as part of our new book, You Hold the Key to a Vibrant Daily Home Life. Each household or neighborhood that submits digital photos will receive a free copy of Living Life to the Fullest (http://www.actionpact.com/wb-lttf.html) by Carmen Bowman. The household or neighborhood whose photo is chosen for the grand prize will receive a $200 gift certificate to Home Depot for household improvements. So, gather residents and staff around the table, relive some memories through photos and get the group to pick out their favorites to send to us. Or, use this an opportunity to start collecting memories by grabbing a digital camera and capturing vibrant daily life. Send photos and questions to steph@actionpact.com.

“Conversations with Carmen” Guest Christine Krugh: Changing the Culture of Care Planning: A Person-Directed Approach

July 17

The OBRA ’87 regulations have not only supported a person-directed approach but have required it all along. Do you support your residents to continue to "drive" their lives or are you doing "the driving?? Are you creating care plans in disciplinary silos with disciplinary sections or those that really reflect the person? This workshop will free you from the institutional model while showing you ways to create compliance better than ever before. This session shares some of the content of the Action Pact workbook with the same title that Christine and Carmen co-authored:

Culture change care planning techniques progressing from personalized to "I" care plans to narrative care plans
What Tag F729 Comprehensive Care Plan requires and what it doesn’t
Tag F729’s requirement to identify each resident’s highest practicable level of well-being
Tag F780’s requirement that the person, the resident, lead the planning of their care including setting their own goals for their own life just as they always have.

Additional Offering in July, July 10th REPEAT of Softening the Assessment Process with guest Christine Krugh

The hour-long Conversations with Carmen webcast is an educational talk show where you can join in the conversation by asking questions of Carmen and her guests. Webcasts are held the third Friday of every month at noon Mountain time (11am Pacific, 1 pm Central, 2pm Eastern). Certificates of participation will be available to participants as well as handouts for each show. The $99 fee is per site, so get as many folks as you can together and be ready to be inspired and informed!

Click here for more info: http://www.culturechangenow.com/webinar-carmen.html or call our office: 414-258-3649.