

What’s Working and What’s Not Working: Medications

This person-centered activity can be used to train staff on how to handle disagreements that might come up with supporting an individual to safely take their medication. This can also be distributed to Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) to try the activity with the individual they support.

Introduction:

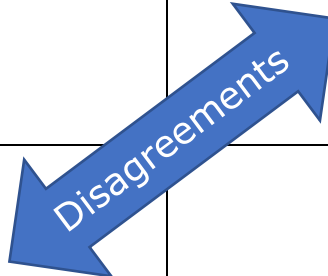
- Everyone has a perspective or a point of view.
- Knowing the point of a view of an individual can help you address any concerns that come up, especially when it is time to assist them with taking medications.
- As you know, some medications may come with unpleasant characteristics, such as:
 - Poor taste
 - Large size (pills or tablets)
 - Involve some discomfort during administration
- Individuals may especially be more reluctant or refuse to take these types of medications.
- By completing the **What’s Working and What’s Not Working** tool with an individual, it can become clear where you can find potential solutions.



“What’s Working and What’s Not Working” Tool:

Here is a tool that identifies **what’s working** and **what’s not working** for you (the Direct Support Professional), the individual you serve, the individual’s team, and the individual’s family. This tool can be used as part of a person-centered review or used separately.

	What’s Working	What’s Not Working
The Individual You Support	Usually Related to What’s Important TO the Individual	
You (The Direct Support Professional)	Usually Related to What’s Important FOR the Individual	



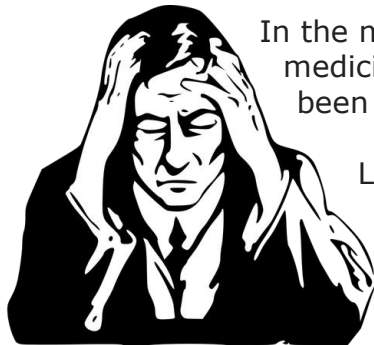
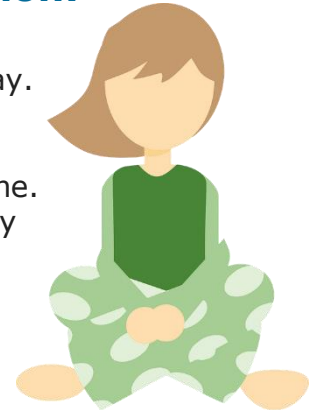
Disagreements

This simple tool works like a “Pros and Cons” list but it includes more than one person’s point of view. The **What’s Working** and **What’s Not Working** tool can be used to analyze the views of more than one person about a situation. Ultimately, this tool can help identify what is important to an individual and whether they feel that they are being supported in ways that make sense to them.

Here is a Story about Medication Administration:

Alice is an individual with developmental disabilities. Bob is the direct support professional (DSP) who works with Alice every day.

Alice needs to take medicine every day. It’s a prescribed medication in pill form (tablet). Bob helps Alice take her medicine. Bob knows that assisting Alice with taking her medications every day is a very important part of his job. He understands how necessary it is for Alice’s good health that she takes her medications at the right time every morning and evening.



In the morning, Alice has always taken her medicine on time. She takes her pill right after breakfast and has been doing so for a year.

Lately, Alice has become very upset when reminded to take her medications in the evening. Her favorite TV show is on during that time. Alice now says that the pill is too big and hard for her to swallow. Alice has begun to either take her medicine very reluctantly or refuse to take her medicine at all.

Bob doesn’t know what to do because Alice needs to take this medicine on time every day.

What can be done?



Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. In this situation, what is working for Alice?
2. What is not working for Alice?
3. In this situation, what is working for Bob the DSP?
4. What is not working for Bob?
5. What needs to stay the same?
6. What needs to change?



Person-Centered Activity

Let's Try to Fill Out the Tool with What is Working or Not Working for Alice and Bob...

	 What is Working	 What's Not Working
Alice		
Bob the DSP		

Negotiations:

When there is disagreement, DSPs can negotiate solutions with individuals. Careful negotiations can help find solutions.

Try to follow these core principles to have successful negotiations.

Core Principles of Person-Centered Negotiation:

- Everyone must feel listened to, so that each person can understand the other's perspective.
 - Once someone feels listened to, the conversation becomes easier.
- Negotiations must start with "common ground."
 - Look at "what is working" for everyone, or "what's not working" for everyone.
- Negotiations must remain neutral and unconditionally constructive.
 - You must work at this; it isn't easy.
- Negotiation must be done in partnership.



Potential Solutions:

Try to brainstorm with the individual you support on what can be done. Here are some example solutions:

1. Talk to the doctor about cutting the pill in half (it may be that the pill now feels too big for Alice to swallow).
2. Talk to the doctor about whether the medicine can be crushed into foods like applesauce.
3. Ask the doctor if the pill can be taken at an earlier or later time in the evening.
4. See if Alice's TV show is on at an alternative time.

More Resources:

- Michael Smull for Helen Sanderson Associates:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M190htHcvok>
- Michael Smull and Mary Lou Bourne (Reinventing Quality):
<http://www.reinventingquality.org/docs/MSmull10.pdf>
- Another "What's Working, What's Not Working" tool template:
https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/didd/documents/providers/forms-tools/person-centered-thinking-tools/Whats_Working-Whats_Not_Working.pdf

