



Mapping Exercise

An Illustration of Community Participation, Connections and Valued Social Roles

Understanding what social roles are and how they happen can be complex. It can be challenging at times to help staff who work directly with people you support to understand, grasp the concept and know their role in bridging social roles. This exercise can be done at a staff meeting to help start a conversation with your team around some of the barriers that get in people's way in developing social roles and what you can do to help.

If being done in person, you could get people to use whiteboards or flip charts, however, it is equally effective to simply have each staff grab two sheets of blank paper. This exercise can be done virtually or in person.

On one sheet of paper, each person will map their own activities/roles and on the other, you will map the activities and community participation of a person they support. (It is helpful to have staff do both as this helps them see the differences that receiving services and/or having a disability has on people's opportunities to build social roles and make connections.)

1. First you get them to quickly draw boxes on the paper to represent all the spaces and places that they spend in one week. So they may have a box for home, work, and all the other places they go or spend time in. These days some of those spaces may not be physical but digital. Do you have a weekly zoom call with your family? Mark that down too! If you want to remove COVID out of the picture, than map and average week pre-pandemic. Have them do the same for the person they support.
2. Now put an I or S on each of those places that are integrated or segregated. A segregated space is a place where only certain types of people are allowed. If you live in a senior's home, a group home or student's residence – those are segregated spaces. If you work in a place where only people with disabilities work, that's segregated. McDonald's is integrated. The mall is integrated. - Facebook is integrated.... everyone is able to go there.
3. Make an estimate on the number of times per month you go to or use these spaces. If every day than put 30.
4. Next determine if you interact in these spaces as an individual or as a group. Put a G for group or A for Alone.
5. Next consider how people interact in these spaces... are they simply there or are they actively participating? Put a T for just simply being there and P for actively participating.



6. Now reflect on whether you and the person you support have any social roles – not labels – true responsibilities and contribution must be present. If a social role is present put SR, if no social role put NSR.
7. Now take a step back and compare each map... what do you see? My hunch is that you will see that predominantly people receiving services are:
 - Going to less places
 - Spending time in mainly segregated options
 - Often in groups as opposed to alone
 - Are frequently simply observers or passive participants as opposed to actively contributing
 - And have fewer social roles
8. You can then engage your staff in conversation about how to correct this. WITH THE PERSON LEADING, how do you encourage more integrated, individualized activities in the same spaces and places so that people can move from simply observing their lives to having true opportunity to fulfill meaningful and valued social roles.

Have fun!