Person-centred and community based working - a mini-guide (strength based approaches)

You may hear people talking about skills and talents, strengths and assets, place based approaches, building community capacity. All these terms have a similar focus to support people to live good lives by focusing on what they can do themselves, what their community can offer, as well as what they can offer the community.

Community can be where a person lives, a community of interest, a faith community, a virtual online community; it can be anything that provides connection and a sense of belonging.

A person-centred and community approach recognises people's strengths and supports independence, wellbeing and their ability to make choices and control over their lives. It's about recognising people's history, hobbies, interests, strengths and skills to support and connect people with what really matters to them and to be part of their community.

There are many things you can do to support good conversations and it's important to always remember that conversations should empower and enable people.

Find out more about how to put person-centred and community based working into practice and how to get started. Download our interactive guide for top tips, sector stories and bite size exercises to build relationships, have good conversations about matters to people and how you can work with others to really make a difference to peoples' lives.



Top ten tips for everyday strengths based conversations

- 1. Smile and introduce yourself; 'Hello my name is...'
- 2. Be aware of the environment, for example, the layout of the room, the level of privacy or other factors that can affect the other person
- 3. Use active listening to really hear what the person has to say and give the conversation your full concentration. Show interest in the person their life and their community
- 4. Use language and ways of working that the person prefers and understands
- 5. Show empathy this means seeing things from the individual's perspective, is 'being in their shoes' to try to understand them and how they see things.
- 6. Ask open questions to explore what really matters to the person and their community see below for examples of open questions
- 7. Be non-judgemental show respect and preserve dignity sensitively bring up topics that the person may nd challenging or uncomfortable
- 8. Be honest about what you can and can't do and who else to involve
- 9. Feel comfortable using pauses, silences and gentle cues such as nods as appropriate be aware of your eye-contact, gestures, facial expressions and voice tone.
- 10. Be observant notice clues that might lead to other conversations check if there is something else the person wants to talk about.

