



Registry Consumer Guide

Milestone 1 in the Path to Mastery™

Background

The Eden Alternative Registry is an honor society to recognize organizations that make a deep commitment to integrating the Ten Principles into the daily life and routines of the organization. Each organization finds its own way to bring the Philosophy to life whether they are a full-time home for Elders or provide support services to Elders and their care partners.

The Eden Alternative does not own or operate any Eldercare organizations. We provide resources, tools and ongoing support to help them be successful in bringing about the necessary changes to create a home where life is worth living. It is our honor to work closely with organizations that are working hard to eliminate the institutional model of care and move toward creating a true home environment where strong, caring relationships thrive.

Organizations embracing The Eden Alternative are part of a social movement called Culture Change. Its roots are in the long-term care world and it is slowly spreading into other parts of the healthcare system. The goal of the culture change movement, using The Eden Alternative, is to create a person-directed model of care where the person who receives the services is the central decision-maker designing how those services will be delivered. The Eden Alternative offers the Path to Mastery™: The Art of Creating a Caring Community to assist organizations in identifying what should be changing within the organization and the impact it has on those who receive the care.

The Path to Mastery™: the Art of Creating a Caring Community

The Eden Alternative receives requests from consumers looking for a place for themselves, for a loved one to live, or find the support services they need. We also hear from people looking to visit and experience firsthand just how different Eldercare can be when relationships are strong and the Elders are the decision-makers about their own lives. They are in search of an organization that aligns with their own personal values and beliefs about what life should be like despite any frailties or physical limitations their loved one is experiencing. Up until now, we have not had a method to

explain to others what to expect when they visit an Eden Registry organization. Some organizations are just getting started and others have been working on transforming their organizations for ten years or more. Each is unique in how it is creating home for those they serve.

The Eden Alternative has recognized the need to be able to explain to others the depth and breadth of what culture change can accomplish and what to expect when an organization is successful. The Path to Mastery: the Art of Creating a Caring Community is a resource that accomplishes this goal for a couple of reasons:

- It provides markers of success called Milestones that explain where an organization is at in their culture change journey,
- It provides a path for organizations to follow based on the successes of hundreds of pioneering organizations, and
- It gives consumers guidance to be able to determine what to expect when they interact with the organization.

How to Use This Guide

This consumer guide for the Eden Registry is designed to be a tool to assist you in determining how the organization is doing at changing their approach to care. We will indicate on our website what Milestone the organization is mastering in the Path to Mastery. To see where an organization is on their journey you can go to www.edenalt.org. In the center of the Home page is a button entitled “Eden Homes in Your Area”. Clicking on that button brings up an interactive map where you can choose the state you are interested in. A list of organizations will appear and by clicking on their name you will find a short story about them and contact information to get in touch with them.

Milestone 1 is all about preparing the formal leaders to take action and assure they have the commitment to truly transform their organization.

This Milestone 1 Consumer Guide contains questions that will help you determine what the organization has accomplished to date in their culture change journey. Milestone 1 organizations are working towards building relationships among everyone, providing education so that those who live and/or work there understand what The Eden Alternative is and why they are using the Philosophy. The formal leaders should be comfortable talking about the Principles and their vision of how the lives of those they serve are being changed daily. Trust, optimism and a generous spirit should be growing in the home. People often say when they walk in the door, “I am not sure what it is but it feels different. This place has a good feel to it.”

The questions are divided into three sections:

- Employee care partners, those employed by the organization to care for the Elders
- Elder care partners that live in the home or receive services from the organization
- Formal leaders within the organization

We know that providing a quality life for Elders is more than the treatment they receive for their physical and mental health. The Eden Alternative believes that ongoing growth throughout all of life

is central to creating a life worth living. No matter what physical disabilities or how frail a person may be we believe they continue to grow and teach us important life lessons. As organizations proceed through the Milestones in the Path to Mastery, the decisions will move closer to the Elders and everyone connected with the organization will experience well-being.

Definitions

The Eden Alternative believes that words make worlds. Therefore, we teach a new language to help us all to see the world differently to help bring about change. The following are some definitions that will help you understand this new language and why it is being used in this guide.

- Care Partner: The care partner concept implies a balance of care, an acknowledgement that opportunities to give as well as receive care are abundant and experienced by everyone involved in the care relationship. The term “care partner” evens the playing field, as it is often easy to get trapped in a one dimensional experience of the caring relationship.
- Elder: Someone who by virtue of life experience is here to teach us how to live. By this definition, even someone who is not chronologically elderly can be an Elder.
- Eden Associate: Someone who has attended a three day intensive workshop on the Ten Principles of The Eden Alternative. They are equipped with information, knowledge and resources to bring about change within their organization.
- Eden at Home Certified Trainers: Someone who has attended a three day workshop to gain the skills and knowledge needed to lead Care Partner workshops within and outside of the organization.
- Empowerment: The creation of an environment that honors and brings forth the decision making skills of everyone, most especially the Elders and those closest to them. It is how the organization transforms itself from a hierarchy to home.
- Simple Pleasure: Those moments in time that bring you joy and fulfillment. Each person’s simple pleasure is unique and meaningful to them.
- Warm soil: Growing the ideas of The Eden Alternative is much like growing a garden. People cannot be open to new ideas and approaches if their hearts and minds are closed. In other words, you cannot plant seeds in your garden when the soil is cold. All organizations begin the implementation of The Eden Alternative by determining how warm their organization’s soil is, i.e. how open and receptive people are to making deep and lasting changes. Organizational soil warmth is measured through a survey tool from The Eden Alternative that assesses the levels of trust, optimism and generosity among those connected with the organization.

Visit the Organization or Be a Guest in the Elders' Home

The best way to determine if the organization will meet your needs or the needs of those you care about is to visit and get to know them. The following questions will aid you in determining how the organization is creating a firm foundation that will create a life worth living for you or your loved one. It is a wonderful chance to meet the people who are already making their home there or using the organization's services. Feel free to reword the question in a way that feels comfortable for you. Each question includes a brief explanation about why it is a good question to ask and what you should be listening to hear in response.

Employee Care Partner Questions

- Can you tell me about the mission of your organization?** *(You want to explore if those that work here understand their organization's mission. Understanding the organization's mission helps create a common purpose in achieving goals as a team)*

- Do you feel you know the Elders you spend time with daily really well?** *(You should be looking for stories that speak to the relationships, the excitement of the person you are speaking to, their connection with people they serve, and their love for the job. See if they share stories that go beyond large group activities and tasks they assist with.)*

- What does The Eden Alternative mean to you?** *(Listen to see if they can they express what The Eden Alternative is about and how it affects them and the Elders. This will help you know who is receiving education opportunities within the organization.)*

- What kinds of fun things do you do with the Elders daily?** *(You are looking for stories about fun and enjoyment, support from leadership, are their talents brought into their work, flexible schedules, and if they are focused on the person they are caring for or the tasks they have been assigned to do.)*

- My _____ loves to _____. Would he/she be able to continue doing this with your support?** *(You are looking to see if decision are made by the Elders, if schedules are directed by Elder's normal routines, and if they honor and know the simple pleasures of the Elders.)*

- What is the best thing you like about working here?** *(Look for answers that show the empowerment of employees, love/dedication to the Elders, and a healthy relationship to the managers or supervisors.)*

- If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be?** *(Learn about the empowerment of the employee, if they feel safe to share without reprisal, what you hear in the response, and are they venting or speaking to opportunities for the organization to improve.)*

- If my _____ moved in/received your services, what would you need from me to make their life meaningful?** *(Learn about the commitment to involvement from family/guardian/friends, how you can be involved in the daily life of the Elder, do they see family as an adversary or asset, and is this a welcoming organization. Look to see if they are comfortable in engaging in a conversation about what they need from you to be successful in their professional role.)*

- Can you tell me what a typical day will be like for an Elder that living with frailty in this home/with your support services?** (*Look to see if they share stories of how the Elders are well-known, how their continue to have opportunities to enjoy their simple pleasures, and that the employee care partners are working on eliminating loneliness, helplessness or boredom for Elders that are in the phase of their life where they are very frail.*)

Elder Care Partner Questions

- What is the best thing that happened to you today?** *(Looking to hear stories about variety, spontaneity, and choices.)*

- Do you have a friend here (in the home or within the organization)?** *(Listen to how they describe this relationship. Does it appear to be a strong, caring relationship where there is opportunity for the relationship to flourish?)*

- What does The Eden Alternative mean to you?** *(Have they heard of The Eden Alternative and can they express what it is about and how it affects them.)*

- What did you ask for at _____ (meal) today? Did you get what you asked for?** *(To see if it is safe to ask for choices and if choices are met.)*

- If you need something, who do you go to?** *(See if they appear comfortable asking for assistance from employee care partners. Find out who the Elder knows and what they know about them.)*

- What are your plans for this morning/afternoon/evening?** *(Hear about flexibility, choices, are they experiencing loneliness, helplessness, or boredom, and is life the same every day.)*

Leadership Care Partner Questions

- What does The Eden Alternative mean to you?** *(Can they express what The Eden Alternative is about and how it affects them and the Elders?)*
- When visiting or being a guest an Elder home, note who gives you a tour, how much time they spend and if you needed an appointment. What did they do to make you feel welcome?** *(This reveals information about the organizational structure, who speaks for the organization and how they welcome those who are new to them.)*
- When visiting a community-based service organization, note who you are speaking to, how much time they spend and if you needed an appointment. What did they do to make you feel welcome?** *(This reveals information about the organizational structure, who speaks for the organization and how they welcome those who are new to them.)*
- When touring or being a guest an Elder home, note who the tour guide acknowledges by name, what they know about them and if they touch in some manner like a handshake or on the shoulder.** *(Look to see if the leadership of the organization knows the people that live and work there and what the relationships are like. Does there appear to be trust and a level of comfort between individuals?)*
- When visiting a community-based service organization, notice how they refer to those who will be caring for your loved one in their home.** *(Does the leadership of the organization know the people that work there and what are the relationships like?)*
- Was there an opportunity to meet with the Administrator or Executive Director during the tour?** *(Pay attention to the top formal leader's accessibility to others.)*
- How long have those in top leadership roles been in their position? (For example, the Administrator, Executive Director, Director of Nursing) If they are new, ask, "How long was the previous leader in their position?"** *(Learn about leadership turnover and corporate/ownership practices.)*
- How many of the employees are Eden Associates or Eden at Home Certified Trainers? Which formal leaders or managers are Eden Associates or Eden at Home Certified Trainers?** *(Learn about whether the formal leadership has fully embraced The Eden Alternative, grown leaders in this Philosophy through advanced education and are educating others inside and outside the organization as well.)*

- What have you done so far to educate employees, families, and Elders about The Eden Alternative?** *(Are the leaders spreading the word and sharing the vision across their organization?)*

- Is there any written information that you could give me today about The Eden Alternative?** *(Do they have materials available for visitors, families, etc?)*

- What are your dreams and changes you would like to bring to this organization?** *(Listen for the larger goals the organization is striving to achieve and whether they are continuing to stretch and grow together. Can they express their vision of the future to you?)*

- What are you working on right now related to The Eden Alternative? Who is involved in this effort?** *(How are they transforming their people, systems and processes to move away from the traditional medical model of care for Elders? Are they engaging others, including the Elders, in the changes they are making?)*

- What are you doing to warm the soil in your organization?** *(Are they making an effort to deepen relationships and connections among all employees, Elders and families? Do they invest themselves in assuring that trust, optimism and generosity thrive in their organization? Are the leaders doing good deeds for others daily?)*