

## Meeting Advancing Excellence Goals with The Eden Alternative®

### *Process Goal: Increase Person-Centered Care Planning and Decision-Making*

*by Denise Hyde*

**Description & rationale:** Person-centered care means that each resident of a nursing home has a choice about his or her daily routine, activities and healthcare. Staff places value on listening, learning, and knowing each individual's background and personal preferences – regardless of the individual's cognitive ability or length of stay. Using the MDS 3.0, Artifacts of Culture Change and similar tools, the nursing home staff works with the resident and family to develop a care plan, so that a person's daily routine mirrors the individual's aspirations, and can adapt to changing needs as they evolve. Working on this goal will ensure that a resident's needs are met according to personal preferences.

**How The Eden Alternative strengthens this goal:** A core belief of The Eden Alternative is that all decisions belong to the Elders or those closest to them. Each of the Eden Alternative Principles drives person-directed care through personal and operational transformation. [Principle Eight](#) specifically speaks to Elder-driven decision-making. The Three Plagues of loneliness, helplessness and boredom cannot be eliminated, if the daily rhythm of life is not designed to facilitate the preferences and choices of the individuals. [Principle Six](#) emphasizes that meaningful daily activity is essential to human health and should be based on the preferences of each individual. [Principle Nine](#) states that human growth should never be separated from human life. Therefore, organizations practicing The Eden Alternative foster environments that promote ongoing growth, regardless of what phase of life an Elder is in. The Eden Alternative also encourages a change in language from "care plans" to "growth plans," and that every care partner (employee and Elder) deserves to have an individualized growth plan. The use of the term Elder, widely used by The Eden Alternative, indicates a desire to shift assumptions and honor each person for the unique contributions they bring to the care partner team, regardless of their phase of life. The Domains of Well-Being™ offer further motivation for organizations to deepen their integration of person-directed practices and create care (growth) plans that fit the unique needs of each individual.



All of the Eden Alternative's educational offerings discuss and provide tools to assist in the development of person-directed care environments across the continuum of care. Here are some to consider:

- In the [Path to Mastery](#), the care (growth) planning process is specifically addressed in [Milestones 2](#) and 3 with several tools that provide examples, templates, and ideas on how to personalize the process and format it for the individual. In [Milestone 3](#), a particular tool guides leaders in empowering teams to drive the care (growth) plan process and maintain it wherever the Elder lives.
- The Eden Alternative Paradigm Buster, "[The Role of Job Descriptions in Person-Directed Care](#)" offers examples of growth plans for employees that are very similar to what is shared through the Path to Mastery Milestone Toolkits.
- The Eden Alternative Paradigm Buster, "[The Role of Policies and Procedures in Person-Directed Care](#)" has a template and examples focused on how to write a person-directed care (growth) plan policy and procedure.

- The Eden Alternative Paradigm Buster, "[The Role of the Therapist in Person-Directed Care](#)" provides examples of how to shift from treatment-driven care plans to individualized growth plans including goals set by the Elder.
- "[Revolutionizing the Experience of Home by Bringing Well-Being to Life](#)," a white paper featuring The Eden Alternative Domains of Well-Being™, defines each domain and how it can be woven into different systems and processes across the organization. The related Well-Being Assessment Tools can be used to track the well-being of individuals and teams over time.
- Decision Rings is a tool that helps leaders understand the process of empowerment and how to move decisions closer to the Elder. It is featured in [Certified Eden Associate Training](#) and [Certified Eden at Home Associate Training](#), and instructions are included in *The Eden Alternative Handbook* and *Haleigh's Almanac*.
- "[The Art of Creating a Caring Community with Dr. Bill Thomas](#)" is a DVD that covers over 50 topics focused on person-directed care, surplus safety, and the wisdom of Elders in general.

Since its conception by Dr. Bill and Jude Thomas in the early 1990's, the Eden Alternative Philosophy has been an important part of the culture change movement. The Eden Alternative has never swayed in its commitment to person-directed care, the growth of each individual, and Elder-driven decision-making. The stories and experiences of Elders and their care partners, not to mention the journeys of many [Eden Registry Members](#), demonstrate just how crucial this goal is to reshaping the experience of aging for all of us.