



## Registry Consumer Guide

### *Milestone 2 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 create 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 Path to Mastery provides a method for The Eden Alternative to explain to others what to expect when they visit a Registry Member. 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 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. To see where an organization is on their journey you can go to [www.edenalt.org](http://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.

Those organizations that have completed Milestone 2 are:

- Reaching out to educate and engage those connected with the organization in their Eden Alternative journey.
- Continuing to build relationships among everyone associated with the organization.
- Providing more in-depth education so that those who live and/or work there understand what The Eden Alternative is, why they are using the Philosophy and how they are involved.
- Enabling everyone to be comfortable in talking about the Principles and their vision of how the lives of those they serve are being changed daily.
- Weaving variety and spontaneity into people's daily lives.
- Having everyone participate in learning circles to create a common understanding of where they are going.
- Setting goals, accomplishing them and celebrating as they bring the Principles to life.

This Milestone 2 Consumer Guide contains questions that will help you determine what the organization has accomplished to date on their culture change journey. 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

## Definitions

The Eden Alternative believes that words make worlds. Therefore, we teach a new language to help us all to see the world differently so that we can be a part of changing it. These are some definitions that will help you understand what this new language means 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.

- Neighborhood: A new designation for a group of Elders that live in close proximity, often the same hallway. Those living in that area will often name their neighborhood and there will be consistency in who lives and works there so relationships can deepen over time. Several neighborhoods will come together to form a community.
- Household: Remodeling of areas of a building to resemble a home. Households have consistency in those who live and work there. They often have a central living room, dining room and kitchen area. Those that live and work there combine their interests and strengths to assure that life in the household flows according to the wishes of those who live there.
- Simple Pleasure: Those moments in time that bring you joy and fulfillment. Each person's simple pleasure is unique and meaningful to them.
- Learning Circle: A communication tool that develops common ground and mutual respect among everyone in the community.
- 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 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 doing in laying a firm foundation that will create a life worth living for 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 questions 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

- Do you care for the same Elders each day? Tell me about the relationships that you have developed with those Elders.** *(You should be looking for stories that speak to the consistency of relationships, the excitement of the person you are speaking to, their connection with people they serve, and their love for the job. Meaningful care partnerships can only be formed when people are well-known to one another.)*
  
- Tell me about the bathing experience you provide for the Elders. Can my \_\_\_\_\_ continue to have the type of bath they enjoy whenever they choose? Day or night? What options are available beyond a traditional tub bath for my \_\_\_\_\_?** *(Are the Elders they serve the decision-makers in their daily routines, are their simple pleasures honored, is the organization flexible enough to meet the Elders' needs and are those caring for the Elders equipped with the skills they need to adapt to the Elder's changing physical condition?)*
  
- Tell me about the formal leaders in your organization, their relationships with the Elders and with you.** *(How well known are the formal leaders to those that work for them and those they serve? Are the relationships healthy?)*
  
- How do those within your organization celebrate individual milestones in the Elders' lives?** *(Does the organization celebrate the uniqueness of each Elder and their accomplishments big and small? Can they share stories about how they celebrate with the Elders and other care partners?)*
  
- What kind of 'fun' do you have here? Tell me about some of the fun events or functions that occur in your community or with your care partners.** *(Does the organization and those within it value and uplift the gift of variety and spontaneity as an antidote to boredom in everyone's lives?)*
  
- My \_\_\_\_\_ always does \_\_\_\_\_ each day. If \_\_\_\_\_ moves here or receives your services, will they be able to continue enjoying this simple pleasure?** *(The opportunity to do things that we find meaningful is essential to human health. How are the simple pleasures of the Elders being captured and implemented?)*
  
- Tell me how this community brings meaning into the Elders' personal living space. Are Elders encouraged to personalize their rooms/apartments and the larger community spaces? What of their own belongings can they bring in (if moving into a home) or can be kept close to them (if living in their own home)?** *(Part of the difference between feeling homeless and feeling at home has to do*

*with how people are able to “see” themselves in the physical space they live in. If an Elder is living at home with services coming in, are they able to keep their home looking like home despite additional medical equipment and supplies? If they are moving to a new home, how many of their own possessions can they bring with them to create a meaningful physical space?)*

- What education about The Eden Alternative have you received?** *(In what ways is the organization ensuring that all care partners have the information, knowledge and skills they need to actively participate in implementing the Principles into their daily lives?)*
  
- How is your organization honoring the value of each care partner?** *(Are the unique strengths, talents and skills of each care partner honored and brought forth in the care partner team to assure that all are experiencing well-being?)*
  
- What is a Learning Circle? Do you use them?** *(One of the most powerful tools available to organizations involved in changing their culture is a Learning Circle. Organizations that use them on a regular basis, and include all care partners, are able to create deeper and more lasting change. Listen to who are involved with the Learning Circles and how they are being used. The goal is to have the Learning Circles include all care partners (Elders, employees and families) and be used for things like relationship building, generating new ideas and resolving conflict.)*
  
- Do you participate in the care plan development meetings or conferences?** *(The care plan drives how the support services are provided to the Elder. The care plan needs to be driven by the Elder through the support of the whole care partner team. It is important that the employee care partners that spend the most time with the Elders are actively engaged in developing the care plans. Some organizations on the Eden Alternative journey may use the phrase “growth plan” instead of “care plan.”)*
  
- How do the Elders connect with the surrounding community/world?** *(As an Elder becomes frail and dependent on daily support services it is easy for them to become isolated from the larger world, including nature. How is this organization maintaining connections for the Elder with their community and nature so that they continue to enjoy those relationships?)*

## Elder Care Partner Questions

- Do the same care partners always care for you? Do you have the opportunity to build relationships with them? Do they take time to visit with you?** *(Does the organization value the person more than the task being done to support that person? Are the employee care partners driven to develop relationships or quickly complete the tasks on their 'to do' lists? Is consistency in care partner relationships important to how this organization operates?)*
- Are you able to choose when you get a bath or shower?** *(Does the Elder feel they have a voice and choice and that it is being honored by their care partner team?)*
- Do you know the leaders or managers that work for this organization? Do you have a relationship with the Administrator, Executive Director, Director of Nursing, etc?** *(Formal leaders may have different titles depending on the organization. Is the leadership in the organization role modeling healthy relationship building skills? Do they demonstrate that they care about those they serve?)*
- Do you believe the leaders or managers that are in charge of this organization are doing a good job?** *(Do Elders feel those leading the organization are creating an environment where they are well cared for? Are the leaders ensuring the physical environment is well cared for? The Elders can often give an indication about how safe, well cared for and happy they are by the feedback they provide. Suggestions or criticisms are not all bad. When an Elder feels safe to share honestly, that can be a sign of healthy relationships.)*
- Do you and your care partners have fun?** *(Are the members of the care partner team well-known to one another? Have they found ways to create variety and spontaneity that alleviates boredom in a meaningful way? Are relationships growing stronger over time?)*
- Do you feel that you are part of the care partner team and involved in your care? Does your family have the opportunity to be involved?** *(Is decision making about the Elder's daily care needs in the hands of the Elders or as close to the Elder as possible? Do the family members understand their role on the care partner team? Are family members invited to be a part of the daily rhythm of life with the Elder?)*
- Do you feel that you have privacy? Is your room the only place where you can have privacy, or are there other spaces that you can use?** *(Privacy is important to each person in order to feel secure. If this is a new home to the Elder, what are some ways they assure that the Elders have privacy and security in their rooms and in other places)*

*around the home? Can they have private, uninterrupted conversations with visitors, including spouses? If the Elder is receiving services in their own home, how is the privacy and security of their home protected by the members of the care partner team that comes in to support them daily?)*

- A simple pleasure is something that you do on a regular basis that gives you pleasure. This might be a cup of coffee early in the morning with the newspaper, sitting on the front porch, etc. Would you be willing to share a simple pleasure that you enjoy? Are you able to continue to enjoy your simple pleasure(s) now?** *(Do the care partners involved in the Elder's life know their simple pleasures? Have they put things in place to assure that the simple pleasure can continue to be enjoyed as the Elder desires?)*
  
- Tell me about the meals you receive. Do you have choices of what you want to eat? If you don't like what there is to eat, do they offer you something else? If you wanted something to eat in the middle of the night, would it be available? How do you participate in the meal?** *(If the Elder is living in a new home, how does that home honor the Elder's food choices? Will they be put on a special diet? Can the Elder eat what they want, when they want it? How flexible is the organization at adjusting to the changing preferences of the Elder? If food is being delivered to the Elder in their home, do they have a choice about the menu and when the meal comes? If the Elder is receiving a meal at a senior center, is he/she involved in the menu development and meal preparation? Is the meal experience meaningful regardless of the setting it is received in?)*
  
- Do you have opportunities to connect with your family, friends and community, outside of this home? What do you enjoy outside of this home?** *(Is the Elder's connection to the larger community through church, clubs and social events continuing? If the Elder enjoys being outside, is their connection with nature continuing to be nurtured? If they were gardeners, can they continue that simple pleasure? When was the last time the Elder had a vacation, even if only for a few hours? Are relationships with family and friends continuing as the Elder desires?)*
  
- What do you know about The Eden Alternative?** *(Are Elders being informed about the Eden Alternative Principles, what they mean and how they will change the support provided in their daily life?)*
  
- How do you celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and other special occasions?** *(Do the members of the care partner team know about the important events in the Elder's life and are they participating in honoring those events in a meaningful way?)*



- Can you decorate your room/apartment however you like? If medical equipment is being brought in, can you continue to have the special items you love close to you such as decorations, trinkets, or furniture?** *(Often the medical needs take precedence over those homey touches that make a place meaningful to the Elder. How is the care partner team assuring that the Elder's precious possessions are in close proximity to them?)*
  
- Are you given the opportunity to volunteer or help outside your home? Are you still connected with clubs or groups that you enjoyed before moving here?** *(Are long standing community connections continuing for the Elder despite their need for daily support? If the Elder enjoys volunteering, are meaningful ways for them to contribute to the larger community being found? How is the whole care partner team working together to maintain those important relationships?)*

### **Leadership Care Partner Questions**

- How do you try to make each day fun for yourself and others in the organization?** *(Boredom is as much a plague for the employee care partners as it is for the Elder care partners. Formal leaders in the organization need to be able to share examples of how they are creating meaningful ways for everyone to experience some variety and spontaneity to keep boredom away.)*
  
- As an Elder home, have you, or do you have plans to, divide it into households or neighborhoods?** *(Relationships grow from smallness. To create home for the Elders, leaders understand that closeness of contact creates the meaningful relationships they desire. The leaders should have a plan to divide the home up into smaller clusters of care partners (Elders, employees, families) who are working together to create a caring community. The terminology often used for these small clusters includes neighborhoods, households, or families.)*
  
- Do the same care partners spend time with the same Elders each day?** *(Consistency of connection between employees and Elder care partners is essential to creating home. Only then can the Elder's preferences and choices be honored daily. You want to learn if the leaders have "consistent" or "permanent" assignment of employee care partners.)*

- Are you using any outside employees (temporary staff), or is everyone working here employed by the organization?** *(Some organizations use temporary or agency staffing to fill in when they do not have enough employees. It can be upsetting to the Elders to have strangers in their home. You want to learn if this organization uses these temporary employees, how often and why.)*
- Have all of your formal leaders attended Certified Eden Associate Training or Eden at Home Certified Trainer class?** *(Formal leaders need to be prepared to lead the journey and that includes having the experience of attending the three day Certified Eden Associate Training or Eden at Home Certified Trainer class. The commitment of the organization is revealed in the way they assure formal leaders have the information, knowledge, skills and resources they need to lead the culture change process. Without that commitment it is often easy to fall back into institutional practices that undermine the quality of life for the Elders.)*
- How do you provide education to the employees, families and Elders on the Eden Alternative Principles and Philosophy?** *(How are leaders assuring that everyone has the information they need to fully participate in the implementation of their vision of home?)*
- What type of participation does the leadership team have with the national Eden Alternative organization?** *(The advantage of being part of the Eden Registry is that the organization is working on change as a part of a larger community. The more connected and well-known the organization is to the larger Eden Alternative organization the more motivated they are to continue to drive change deep within their organization. If they are doing well with changing the culture of their organization, they will be featured in the national organization newsletter, website, webinars and at the conferences.)*
- How are formal leaders getting to know the Elders, employees, and family members connected with this organization?** *(It is often easy to leave the relationship building up to those who spend the majority of their days in close proximity to the Elders. Formal leaders should be "out and about" building healthy relationships across the organization. Listen to how they are accomplishing that or if they spend most of their time tied up with meetings and other priorities.)*
- Tell me about the education the employee care partners have had about the Eden Alternative.** *(Education is an important step in implementing the Eden Alternative Principles. If people do not understand the direction the organization is going, it is difficult for them to get involved. Pay attention to the amount of education*

*being provided, by whom, how often and who is receiving it. Education should be ongoing.)*

- I understand that the culture change journey is using new language. Should I be aware of any new language you are using that would help me understand your services better?** *(Words make worlds. The language used to describe how the organization supports the Elders and the kind of life the Elders live speaks volumes about where the organization sets their priorities. Pay attention to the words they choose both in written and spoken forms. What is the balance they provide between medical words and words we would use in our own home?)*
  
- How are those closest to the Elders involved in daily decision-making that impacts the care you provide? Can you give me an example?** *(Some examples of daily decision-making could include personalizing the bathing experience, choices at mealtime, medication times, or waking and sleeping schedules. This organization should be striving to empower the Elders or those closest to them to be the daily decision makers. They are just starting this process, so listen for their first steps of how they are beginning to move decision-making closer to the Elders they serve.)*

### **Family Care Partner Questions**

- Do you feel welcome and encouraged to be an active care partner for your loved one?** *(Does the family member know what their role on the care partner team is and how they contribute to the daily life of the Elder? The family member should recognize that they have a team of support around them and their loved one and that they are not alone.)*
  
- How do you bring meaning into your Elder's physical space?** *(Does the family member work with the Elder and other care partners to make sure that the space around the Elder contains items that are meaningful and important to the Elder? Can those that come to spend time with the Elder get to know something about them simply by looking around their living space?)*
  
- Does the care partner team support the Elder in enjoying their simple pleasure(s)? Can you share a simple pleasure that your loved one is enjoying?** *(How well-known is the Elder to their care partners? Are they working together to bring those moments of simple pleasure to life daily?)*

- How did you get to know the care partners on the team?** *(How and when does the care partner team get together and how are the Elder and their family members involved? Are they becoming well-known to each other beyond the healthcare needs involved in the support services?)*
  
- Are you invited to get involved with this organization? How and with what?** *(Does this organization value the involvement of the family members? Have they found a way to involve family members in meaningful ways? Are the family members experiencing well-being in their lives because of their connection to this organization?)*