

## **Instructions for using the Communication Chart**

The **Communication Chart** is an important component in Essential Lifestyle Planning. It helps let the reader of the plan (and people who provide supports) understand and respond to a person's behavior. Done well, the Communication Chart details behaviors, the meaning of those behaviors, and then provides direction as to how to respond to that communication.

The communication chart can be a powerful tool when a person doesn't use words to communicate **OR** when a person's words are not an effective in helping them communicate clearly.

The Communication Chart can also "stand-alone"; this tool, done well provides key information that is immediately useful by a person who provides supports. A well-written communication page can offer insight into those things that are important to a person and those things that are working or not working in their lives. The Communication chart is also one way to start gathering information that will be used in developing an ELP.

### **Developing the Communication Chart**

As much as possible, the person of focus should develop the chart. Some people can be VERY clear about everything "asked for" in the chart. Consider using the "First Person" version. If the person's communication can be difficult to understand, you will want to talk to people who are in close relationship to the person. People in close, good relationships often will fairly gush with information about how the person communicates. This holds true for all information you gather in a person centered planning process.

Begin your work by thinking about the primary feelings we all express; fear, anger, sadness, joy. Does the person express these feelings in ways that people around them know immediately what the person is saying and what they should do in response? If there are critical communications that do not get interpreted accurately, this is evidence that a Communication Chart should be completed for the person.

While the completed Communication Chart reads best from left to right, it is developed in a different order.

- First, write down the focus behaviors (things that you can see or hear) in the second column.
- Second, complete the third column regarding what we think the person means by their behavior.
- Third, write in the first column events that are in happening when the behavior occurs.

- Fourth, detail what the support person is expected to do in that particular situation.
  - Last, read the completed “row”, and see if the information reads with enough clarity, detail, and instruction to help the support person “get it right”.
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Good person centered planning requires that we listen with a goal to get an increased level of understanding. When we begin to better understand what a person is trying to tell us, we increase our opportunities to support people in a way that they can get more of the life they truly desire.

# Communication Chart

When this is happening (or has just happened)...	I do this....	It usually means....	And I want you to...
<p>#3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the environment</li> <li>• What's just gone on</li> <li>• The "trigger"</li> </ul>	<p>#1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What others notice</li> <li>• Can be seen, heard, and felt by others</li> </ul>	<p>#2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the emotions and feelings are</li> <li>• What's going on inside</li> </ul>	<p>#4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What you want people to do</li> <li>• Or not do.....</li> </ul>





