

## Home vs. Homelessness Exercise

### Goal

This exercise has three instructional objectives:

1. To increase participants' understanding of culture change by having them reflect on nursing home life from a personal point of view
2. To experience adult learning methods which draw on the knowledge of participants and create an opportunity for experiential learning
3. To build relationships and teamwork through an exercise that depends on sharing and reflecting with others and brings out a level of personal sharing that is more than happens in workplaces.

### Description

- In pairs, have people discuss what the word "home" means to them. Allow a few minutes for the conversation; this kind of question requires reflection
- Ask people to share what "home" means to them with the larger group. Look for themes, probe what people are saying so as to get their full meaning. Flipchart their answers. Do not make an exhaustive listing; get the essence of what is "home" to people. As people share, ask for response from others so that this is more of a group conversation than a reporting back.
- Display the findings from Judy Carboni about what home means to people and make connections back from her research to what people identified today.
- Juxtapose Carboni's findings about home with her findings about characteristics of homelessness, and relate to comments participants made when they shared their list.
- After you have completed review of Carboni's list of home and homelessness characteristics, reveal that she is a gerontologist and that she found that the characteristics of homelessness matched what she saw of characteristics of people who live in nursing homes. Review the homelessness list in the context of nursing home living. Explain her finding that people living in nursing homes decline into psychic despair. Describe how people can recover from this when they are able to be at home.
- Group pairs into groups of 4 to discuss together how their nursing home supports people feeling at home and how it supports people feeling homeless. Have each group make a list. Have groups share their lists.
- Show video "Look At Me." Note that because this video was produced by the Veterans' Administration, the first minute of it has information about VA services. Set the film to start at the point where the music begins. Allow for people to catch their breath after the video because it is very emotional.
- Closing take-home points:
  - The bad news is that we are inadvertently making people feel homeless while they are in our care and this is causing their psychic despair. The good news is that we can reverse this by genuinely getting to know people and changing our culture from being institutionally-centered and directed to being individually-centered and directed. This is the purpose of this endeavor together.
  - We will be able to make this journey together if we allow ourselves to think, what if this were me, what would I need to feel at home?
  - We will have a better chance of succeeding if we work well together, talk honestly with each other, and look at our own homes with new eyes.
  - Seque to next session – the next session will allow us to see how others have begun to change their physical environment to support home.

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### Teaching Tools Needed

- “What do you see” poem (page 3 of this document)
- Home vs. homelessness chart (page 4 of this document)
- “Look At Me” video
- Home vs. homelessness article

(Note: All of these items are available in the “Education and Communication Tools section of the Ohio KePRO Nursing Home Culture Change Resource CD-ROM)

### Time needed:

30 minutes

## WHAT DO YOU SEE?

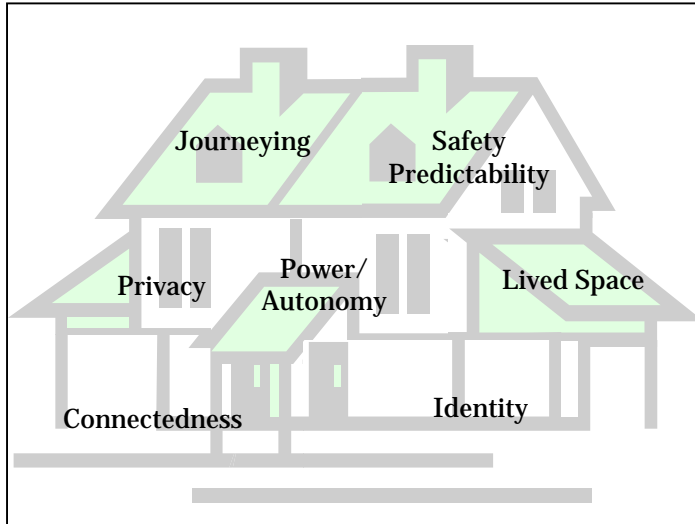
What do you see, nurse, what do you see?  
A crabby old man not very wise  
Uncertain of habit-with far away eyes.  
Who dribbles his food and makes no reply  
When you say in a loud voice "I do wish you'd try."  
Who seems not to notice the things that you do  
And forever is losing a stocking, a shoe.  
Who unresisting or not, lets you do as you will.  
With bathing and feeding the long day to fill.  
Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?  
Then open your eyes, nurse, you're not looking at me.  
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still,  
As I rise at your bidding and eat at your will.  
I'm a small child of ten with a father and mother.  
Brothers and sisters who love one another.  
A young boy of sixteen with wings on his feet.  
Dreaming that soon now a lover he'll meet.  
A husband soon at twenty; my heart gives a leap,  
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.  
At twenty-five builds a secure happy home,  
A man of forty my young now all grown,

But my woman stays beside me to see I don't mourn.  
At fifty once more babies play at my knee,  
Again we know children my loved one and me.  
Dark days are upon me, my woman is dead.

I look at the future, I shudder with dread.  
For my young are all busy rearing young of their own,  
And I think of the years and the love I have known.  
I'm an old man now and nature is cruel  
'Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.  
The body it crumbles, grace and vigor depart.  
There is now stone where I once had a heart.  
But, inside this old carcass a young man still dwells,  
And now and again my poor battered heart swells.  
I remember the joys, I remember the pain,  
And I'm loving and living life all over again.  
I think of the years all too few-gone too fast,  
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.  
So open your eyes, nurse--Open and see...  
Not a crabby old man, look closer...

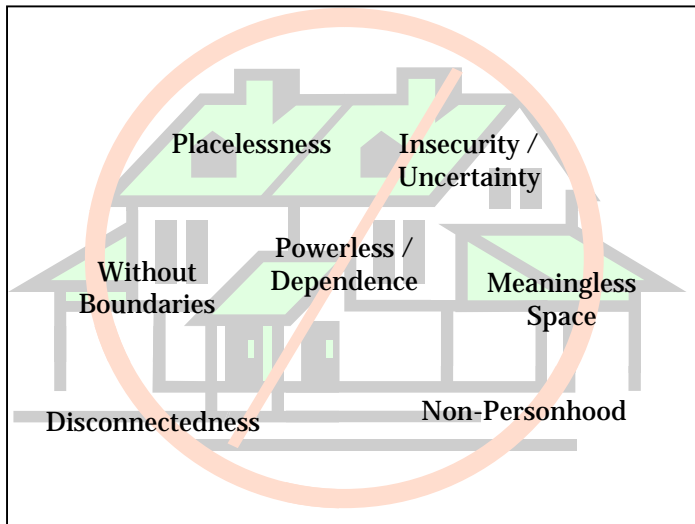
**SEE ME!**

## Home vs. Homelessness



### Home

- Identity
- Connectedness
- Lived Space
- Privacy
- Power/Autonomy
- Safety Predictability
- Journeying



### Homelessness

- Non-Personhood
- Disconnectedness
- Meaningless Space
- Without boundaries
- Powerless/Dependence
- Insecurity/Uncertainty
- Placelessness