



A Moral Imperative: “Investing to Tackle Loneliness”

Implementation Council
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Loneliness and Social Isolation

- Friendships are the heart of living a better life
- More than half of people with disabilities are likely to feel there are barriers that make it difficult for them to make and keep friends
- One in four are likely to experience loneliness on a daily basis
- One study concluded: 30 percent of adults 18 – 44 and 41 percent of those 45 – 54 reported frequent social isolation

Toll Isolation Takes: Impact on Physical and Mental Health

- Friendship is a health determinant
- Social connections helps people recover when they are ill
- Isolation erodes self-confidence
- Lack of social connections are damaging to health:
 - As damaging as smoking 15 cigarettes a day
 - Comparable to obesity
 - More prone to depression and cognitive decline

Impact of Health (continued)

- Weakens immune system
- Impairs sleep
- Associated with increased risk of high blood pressure, developing coronary heart disease and stroke
- Contributes to premature death
- Increases the likelihood of mortality by 26 percent

Strategies to Reduce Isolation

- Recognize the seriousness of problem and that there is a tremendous personal, community and financial cost of isolation
- Create a real focus on friendship and relationships: Overcoming barriers and creating opportunities for friendship needs to be a crucial part of support for people with disabilities
- Prioritize services that tackle loneliness and broaden social opportunities to enable people to fully participate in their community
- Establish outcome measures: Increase in unpaid people as part of the person's care team (expand informal network)
- Analyze data to see if there is increased use of emergency rooms, calling 911 or seeing their PCP
- Robust Person-Centered Planning Process

Strategy: Robust Person-Centered Planning Process

- Assistive technology (37 percent of non-elderly adults with disabilities who use AT said it was beneficial)
- Flexible use of dollars
 - Transportation
 - People who actively take part in their community are happier (e.g. faith communities)
 - Pet (as an alternative to the neighborhood wildlife)
 - The power of music
- Ask simple questions:
 - Do you have someone you would call in the middle of the night if there was a problem?
 - Do you have someone you would call if you had good news to share?

Six Steps for Person-Centered Planning

Step 1: Knowledge

Step 2: Create Circle

Step 3: Dream

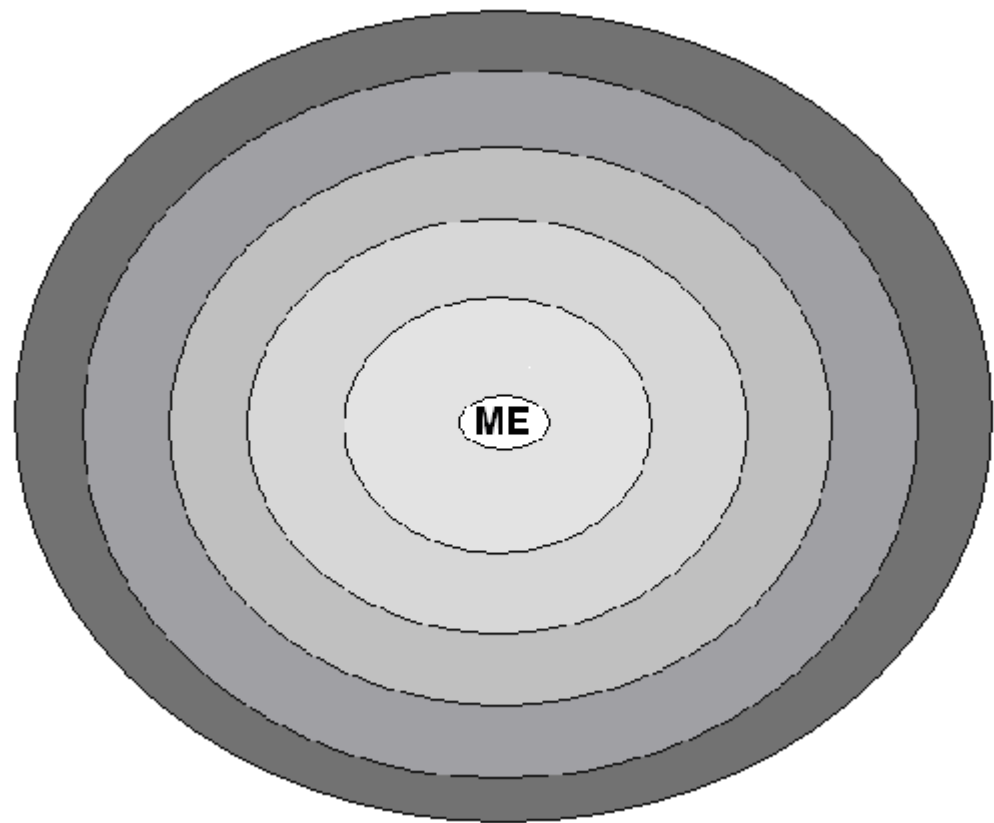
Step 4: Resources

Step 5: Implement

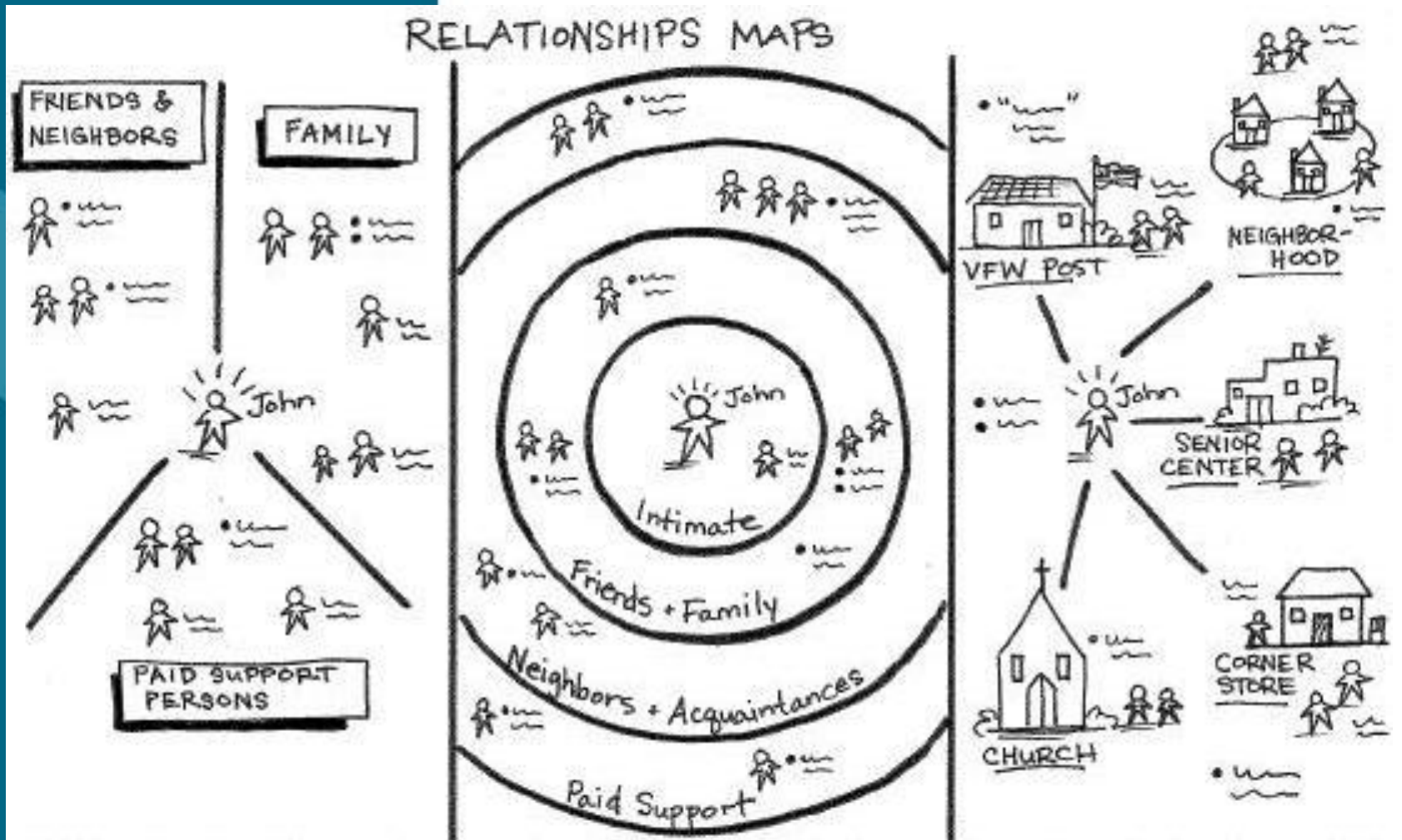
Step 6: Evaluate

Circles and Building Community

1. Circle of INTIMACY
2. Circle of FRIENDSHIP
3. Circle of PARTICIPATION
4. Circle of EXCHANGE
5. Mentors
6. Reconnect



Person-Centered Tool: Relationships Maps



Outcomes

- Better health outcomes
- Higher quality of life
- Minimize stigma, segregation and isolation
- Community benefits
- Reduce overall costs

Power to Impact Change

