

# REALM YEAR END SUM UP

Jan.8/2021

Thoughts Concerning the Year in Review and Ideas for the go forward to 2021.

## A RECENT SUCCESS

The SAOTR have been working diligently for many years- they recently replied to a expression of interest and have been offered and awarded the funds to move forward.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> ICE awards were held in October and were well received. We continue to bring awareness of inclusive employers through current ICEolation Christmas Challenge.



## What A year 2020 has been

This year started like every other year, a busy New Year to be looking ahead and planning the timelines. The word timeline was being bandied around in every group, committee, and event planning situation. The Organization had determined that it would be our Goal to be in the go forward mode and that timelines were the ticket. It also was a great way for us to wrestle with everything Accreditation. It could only be the best way to get it all together- remember things like Magazine, Spring trip to the dinner theatre, Elvis, Elvis, Elvis, acting classes and the Production? Well, we had great starts to it all including bookings for travel and accommodations then March 13<sup>th</sup> we began looking at things changing rapidly due to Covid-19.

In the middle part of March, we along with the entire world began learning about living, working, and understanding Covid-19, this of course meant that we needed to review, reflect, revamp, and recreate how we approached the services that we were providing. We and those we provide that services to be the most included we have ever been as everyone maneuvered through the ever present and ever altering information. We learned, adjusted, and moved forward. We continue to work through the deluge of new information, changes that are occurring continually and it is important to note that we have been doing so with commitment, dedication, and passion (-even when it can on some days be described as subdued). We have continued to learn from the experiences that we share, the community and each other.

Communication is the watchtower that we need to look to. It is this skill that has supported us through this challenging time and will continue to be the key to how we continue forward. Throughout the year we have altered our communication needs to suit the present situation that we were operating in. There have been times when it has been hourly, daily weekly, and monthly. We have found that what needs to be shared is done through as many means as possible: Calls, texts, emails, written memos, video updates and of course in person! The in real time



by a real person is the one that we are grateful to have the opportunity to continue to offer by participating in the safe practices outlined by the Public Health Office.

Goals, values, and mission are always the corner stones of our practice but during this past year we really have had to ensure that as we understood and upheld these as we face the challenges that are presented. As we have recognized, it is essential that we follow all the things required to keep people physically safe without losing the continued momentum of building empowerment with and for those that we support, it is all in the balance and continue learning together. **So, it is important to note that as we are moving into 2021, this balance will continue to be imperative and it can be said that we will need to continue review, renew and adapt so that we remain mission focused.** We need to ensure that we are in the continued practice of empowerment even when it feels safest to take care of the situation on behalf of someone. We need to ensure that we continue to work with purpose, expectation, and reciprocation. ***In this year of exploring the theme “Life” we need to ensure that we are working in the eight domains of living a quality life, as identified by Dr. Robert Schalock and the quality life framework which provides framework for our daily work and ways that we support and work towards outcomes identified by people that we support.***

Commitment and expectations will become more centric in our work this year. This will be important that we look at it for our personal one to one work, the work that we do with our fellow team members, the stakeholders that we collaborate with and our community- the importance will be to ensure that our commitment to the meaning of our work is openly shared as well as the expectations of being involved with us. We need to do this so that we can be clear on how we build relationships that continue to reflect the parameters of the values that we hold and reflect the authentic support that we need to continue to build.

Authentic support is the basis of building all service that we provide. We get to the real by really knowing persons that we are working with. One of the tools that we use and will continue to use is the Individual Service plan. This guides our ideas of how supports can look. During this on going pandemic, this process is evermore important and will continue to be present. It can be said that it is an expectation that can be counted on!

In terms of supports that have been maintained, created, or changed, we can say that we will be monitoring the Public Health Office directive, those of CLBC and our local Authorities to help us gauge the types of activities that we can offer in combination with the items that have been brought to us by the information shared by persons through their plans. We will continue offering the service and adjusting to the phases as they are presented. We have been offering services; in person that are pandemic friendly, scheduled in the appointments in the building, virtual offerings, drop off activities and when the situation permitted scheduled events like hot dog days, parking lot movies, pancake breakfast etc. We have had a few pod evenings where we could have up to 6 people socially distance to enjoy a dinner together. It has been a time to be creative while being safe. Although we miss some of the socially connected things that we can do in person we keep striving to offer connections in the ways that we can.

In terms of Pods, the work within pods will continue through our moving through the pandemic. Pods have been created in the view of limiting transmission and keeping persons with health concerns to have limited exposure as well as having the ability to keep connected and responsive to the needs of the individuals and their support team. Pods have been a source of support, connection, and resource. Learning to stay within our bubble, within our homes and within parameters has been a challenge but having the ability to have the Pod has been helpful.

One of the tenants of our Organization has been working with the idea of matching- personalities, skills, interests to persons that are working together. During this last year, we have had to be creative in this way, offering through the Pods a variety of introductions to persons that previously may or may not have been known well. The other tenant that we have always worked with is understanding the need for *person centered focus on service delivery* which allows an understanding of the individual wants and needs -this leads us to the ability to find the common ground of the working relationship. This in itself is has been tried and tested this year, and there have been many new situations of learning, growing and connecting created from maintaining these practices. Of course, this revision of these valued practices ensures that they will continue to be expected moving forward into 2021.

To summarize, Covid-19 has been a strange bed fellow- it is something that we need to handle, manage and protect each other from and it is something that no one wants hanging around but it has been reason to remind us of our values and best practices, it has been a teacher of how to push ourselves in new directions to find similar outcomes and it has been a director in the sense that it has meant that we must look, assess and prepare for the best that we can make happen. We can honestly say that this last year of 2020-the year of Covid-19 has been a year of challenges and change. To this I would like to finish with the following thoughts, ***“Get Involved. Create What You Want To Be A part Of,”Kobi Yamada*** because, ***“We have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize. Thich Nhat Hanh***

- Kerry Taylor-Johnson, Co-Managing Executive Director