

VALUES AND BELIEFS

All people have values and beliefs that provide a core foundation of their existence. Whether they are religious or spiritual, people share a common experience that influences the way they see the world. That is not to say that all things are shared by all people. There will always be things we agree or disagree with. But there are things that are essential to understanding how we see the world.

Scott was raised in a conservative family and attended church every Sunday with his parents. When it came time for Scott to move out of his parents' home, a housing specialist suggested to Scott that he move in with his friend, Doreen, and her home provider. Doreen and Scott were good friends and seemed to enjoy one another's company. Scott became visibly upset when this was suggested to him. When his reaction was mentioned to his parents, they too were not pleased at the proposed arrangement. Scott and his family were firm believers that men and women should not live together unless they are married.

Understanding a person's belief system is important when developing a vision for the future. Religion, values, traditions and beliefs all influence the decisions we make. Understanding these values and beliefs is critical to making appropriate suggestions and arrangements for the person with a disability.

What are his or her fundamental values? What traditions and rituals are important and a part of his or her spiritual or religious life? What types of tolerance do they have for people with other beliefs? How do the beliefs influence decision-making?

By recording this important information, you can better assure that future arrangements for the person will be in synch with the values and beliefs that are important to him or her.

The following tool may help you plan. Provide as much detail as you can. Add extra pages if you need to.

Tool

Values and Beliefs Questions

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1. What values and beliefs shape the person's vision of the world?

Religious Values:

Spiritual Beliefs:

Family History and Traditions:



2. What beliefs does the person hold dear?

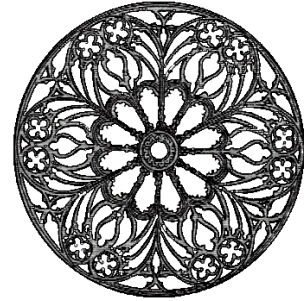
Beliefs that provide reassurance:

Issues that cause distress:

Levels of tolerance for differing opinions:

3. What traditions are important to the person? What makes them special?

Religious Holidays and Services:



Important Ceremonies:

Birthdays, Marriages, Anniversaries and Other Gatherings:



Seasonal Events (include food and decorations):



Community Socials:

4. What values did you try to impart to the person?



Our vision of the world shapes our life in it