

Welcome!

Take a moment to reflect:

What are the traits of a
person-centered team leader?

Session 5

Leading in a Person-Centered Way: How Do YOU Lead?

Sonya Barsness & Karen Stobbe

Series Host and Moderator: **Gigi Amateau, PhD**



Gerontology



SUPPORT

This series was created by the Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Gerontology for the

**Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)
Nursing Facility Quality Improvement Program (NFQIP) using
Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Reinvestment Funds.**

HOUSEKEEPING

Please keep your microphone and camera off until being asked to share them.

You'll be invited to unmute during discussion/Q&A times.

Have a question during the lecture?

Use the **QA tab** anytime—our team is listening!

At the end of today's session, we'll share a short survey link (this link will repeat in an email following the session).

This helps us improve and also lets you **request your certificate of attendance**.

Certificates will be emailed about a week after the event to those who:

- ✓ Attend at least 75% of the session
- ✓ Participate in at least 75% of polls, questions, or breakout activities

Attending as a group?

Please have the registered attendee complete the exit survey and list the names of all group participants.

SERIES PRESENTERS

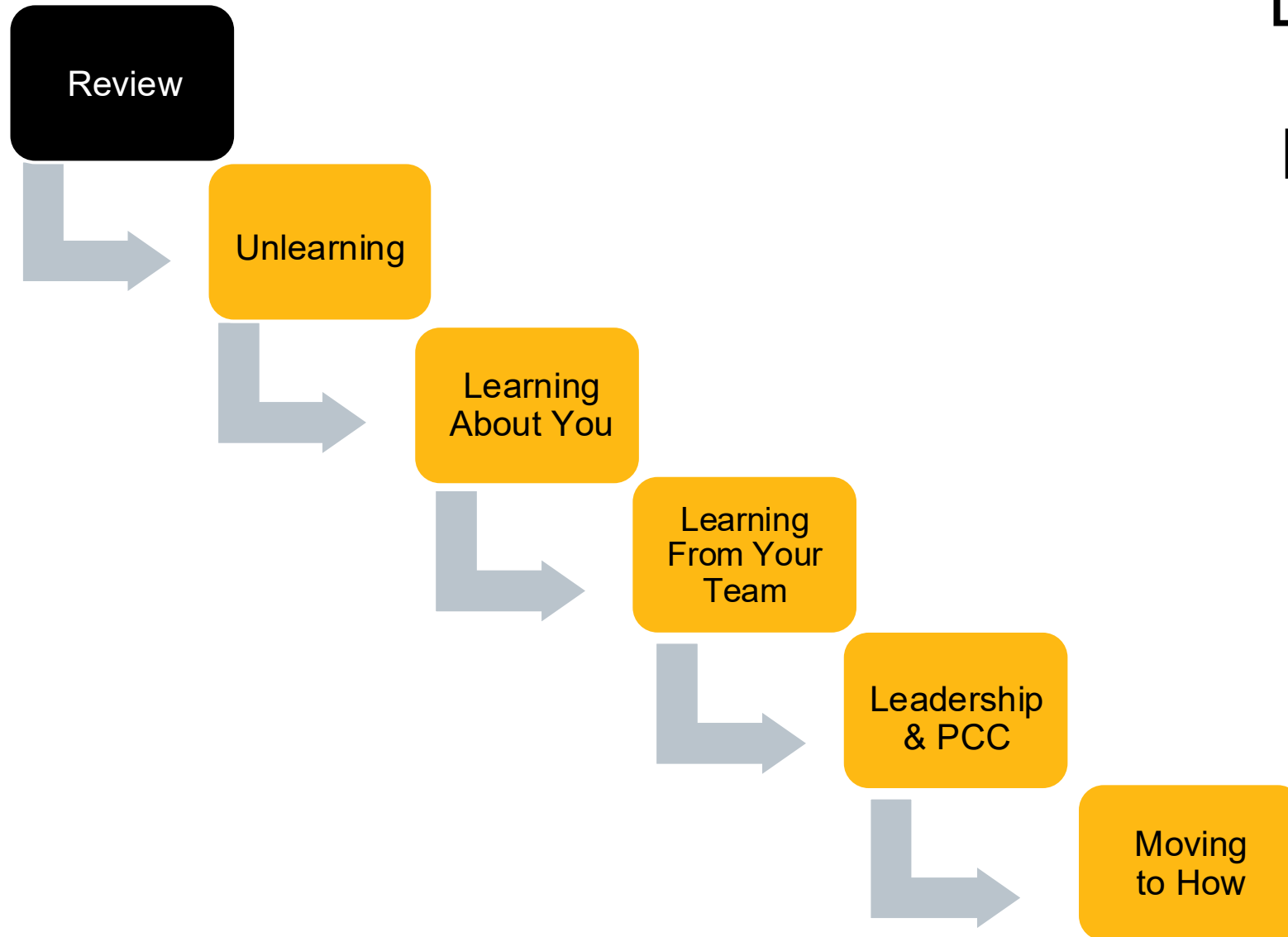


SONYA BARSNESS



KAREN STOBBE

Today: Leading in a Person- Centered Way: How Do YOU Lead?

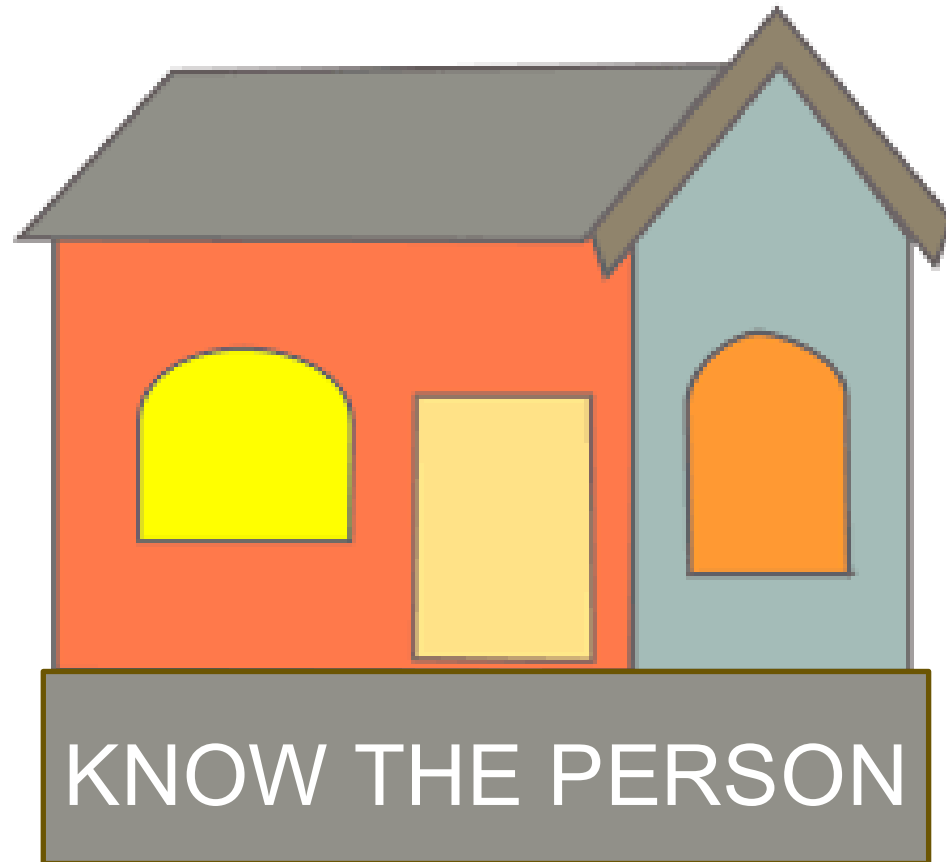


Person-centered values of choice,
dignity, respect,
self-determination and
meaningful living.



Let's Review – From Webinar 1

Foundation of Person-Centered Dementia Care



Let's Review – From Webinar 2

The environment can
communicate
negatively or positively



Let's Review – From Webinar 2

Listen fully
Mind, Body & Soul



Let's Review – From Webinar 2

By listening you create the space
for the other to experience
personhood.



Let's Review – From Webinar 3



“If the care environment is focused on the person and their needs, none of the so-called ‘challenging behavior’ needs to happen.”

- Christine Bryden



Let's Review – From Webinar 3

**Behavior is a
form of communication.**

**Behavior is an
expression of a need.**



Let's Review – From Webinar 3

Each person listening right now
is an individual.

If we all got diagnosed with dementia
we would still be individuals.

No two people would be the same.



Let's Review – From Webinar 4



Let's Review – From Webinar 4

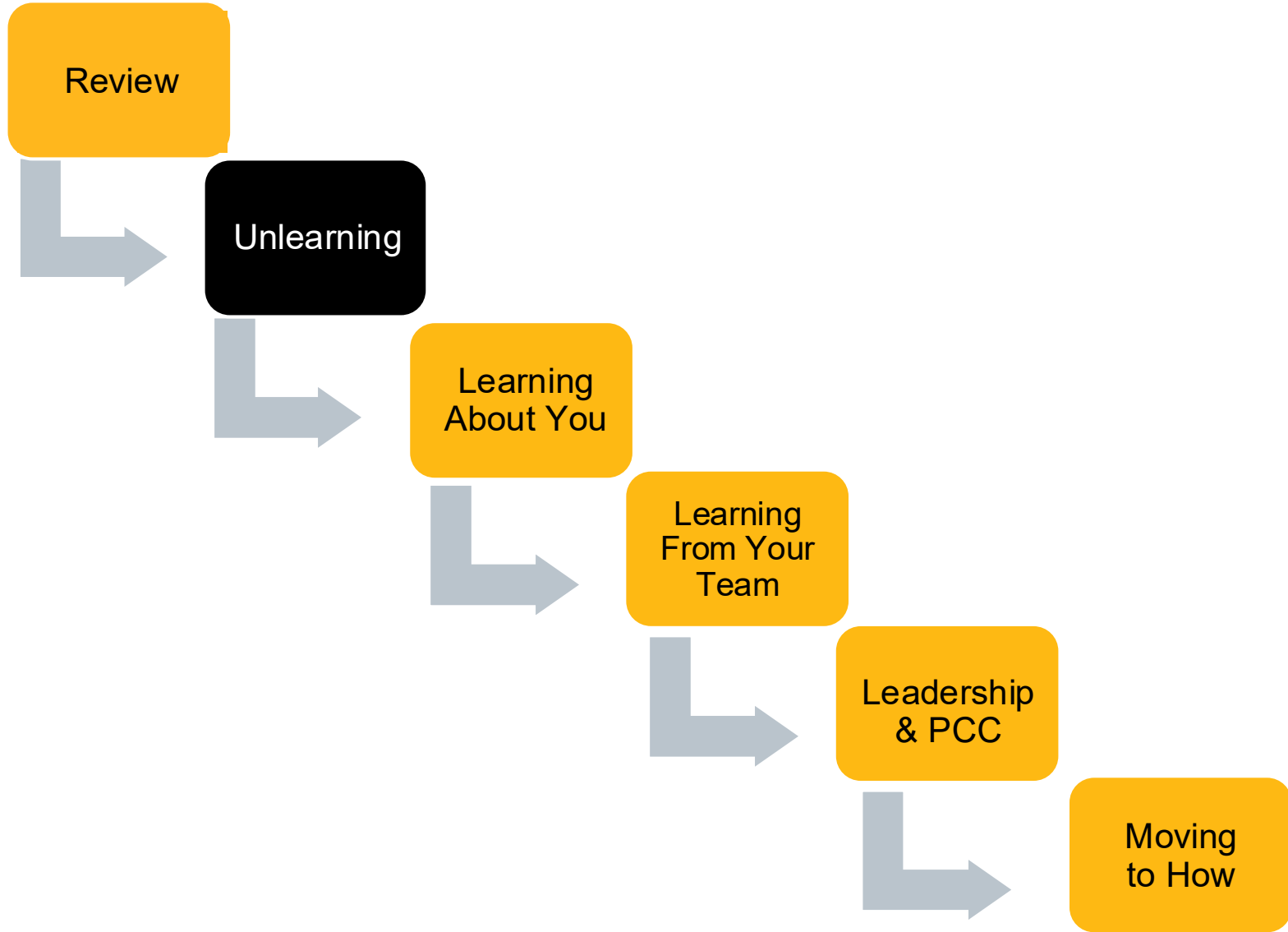
Rather than just focus on how to prevent or respond to “behaviors” let's overall focus on well-being and how a person's needs might not be met.



Goal: Person-Centered Dementia Care

- Seeing people living with dementia as individuals.
- Meeting their human needs.
- Honoring personhood.
- Supporting overall well-being.





If I am not hearing anyone complain,
everyone must be happy.

No feedback is good feedback



**If I am not hearing anyone praise,
everyone must be miserable.**

All feedback is good feedback



Leaders shouldn't
be vulnerable



“You measure vulnerability by the amount of courage it takes to show up and be seen, when you can’t control the outcome.”
– Brené Brown



A leader can only be a
person in management



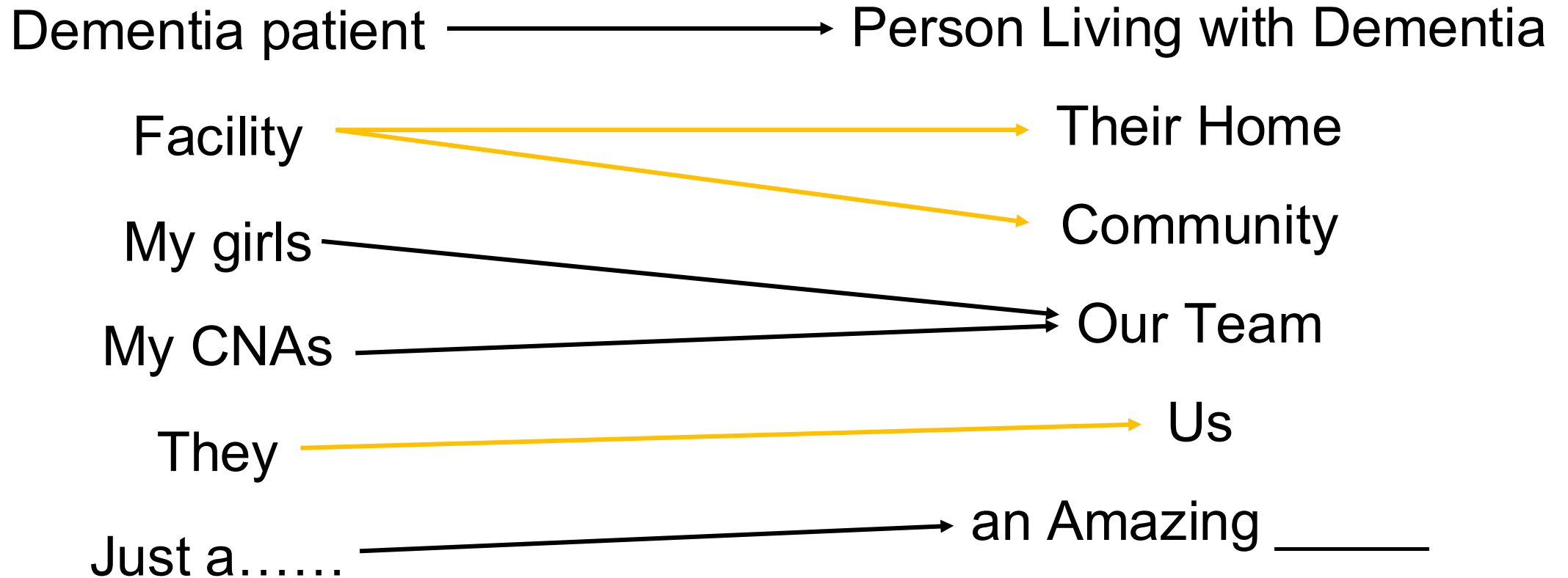
Leadership is based on influence, behavior, and inspiring others.

Leadership is ultimately a learned behavior—a continuous process of growth, self-awareness, and helping others reach shared goals.

Anyone can be a leader regardless of job title.



Language



Unlearning



Us vs. Them



Unlearning

It's never “those people”.

It starts with us.



Being a Boss vs Being a Leader



BEING A BOSS

VS

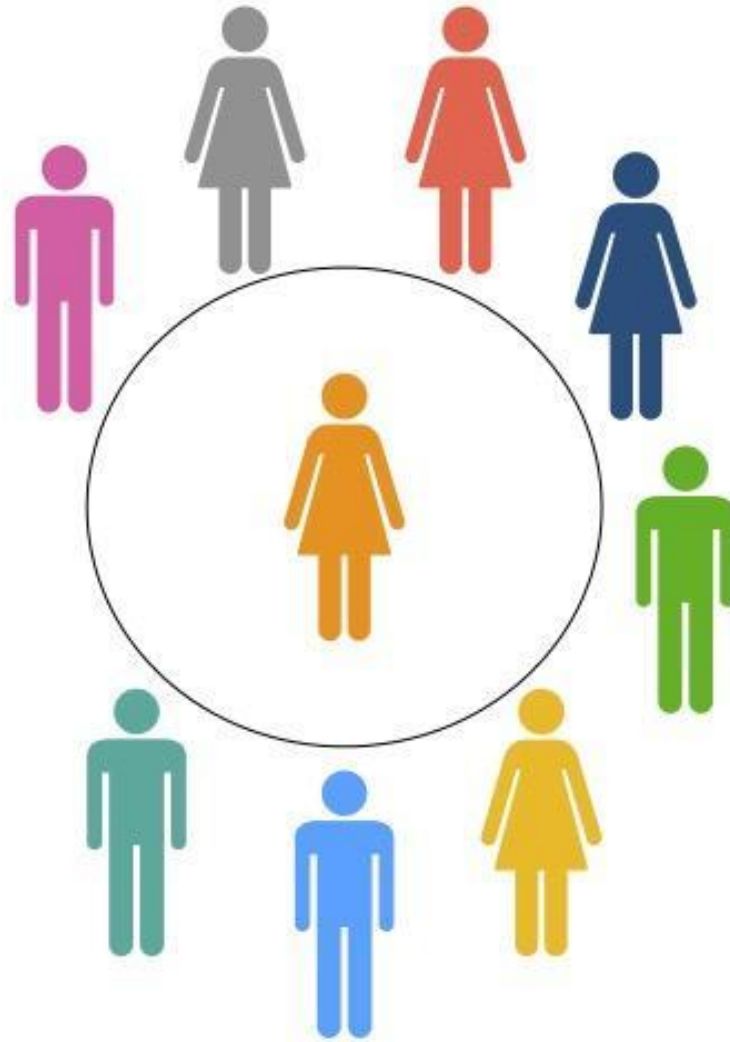
BEING A LEADER

- ✗ Commands
- ✗ Demands respect
- ✗ Says "I"
- ✗ Blames others
- ✗ Oversees people

- ✓ Inspires
- ✓ Earns respect
- ✓ Says "We"
- ✓ Takes responsibility
- ✓ Guides people



Unlearning



Being a Manager vs Being a Leader

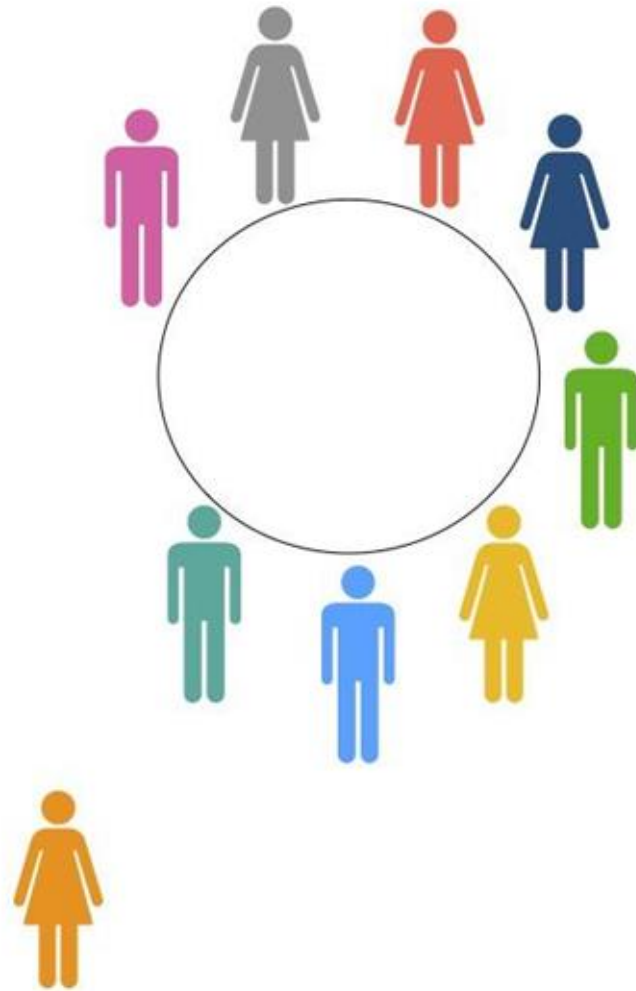


The illustration is split into two parts. On the left, a woman in a business suit sits at a desk with a laptop, holding a document, representing a manager. On the right, a man in a suit stands with his arms outstretched, addressing a diverse group of people, representing a leader. Above the leader are icons for an eye, a handshake, a star, and an upward-pointing arrow.

BEING A MANAGER	VS	BEING A LEADER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Focuses on systems & structure✓ Administers, maintains✓ Directs, controls✓ Counts value✓ Has a short-term view		<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Focuses on people✓ Innovates, develops✓ Coaches, empowers✓ Creates value✓ Has a long-term view



Unlearning



Being a Judger vs Being a Learner



BEING A JUDGER

VS

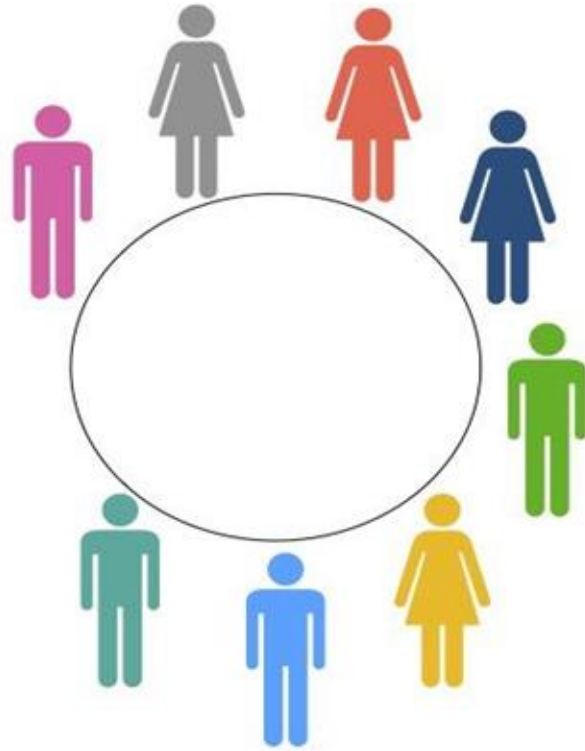
BEING A LEARNER

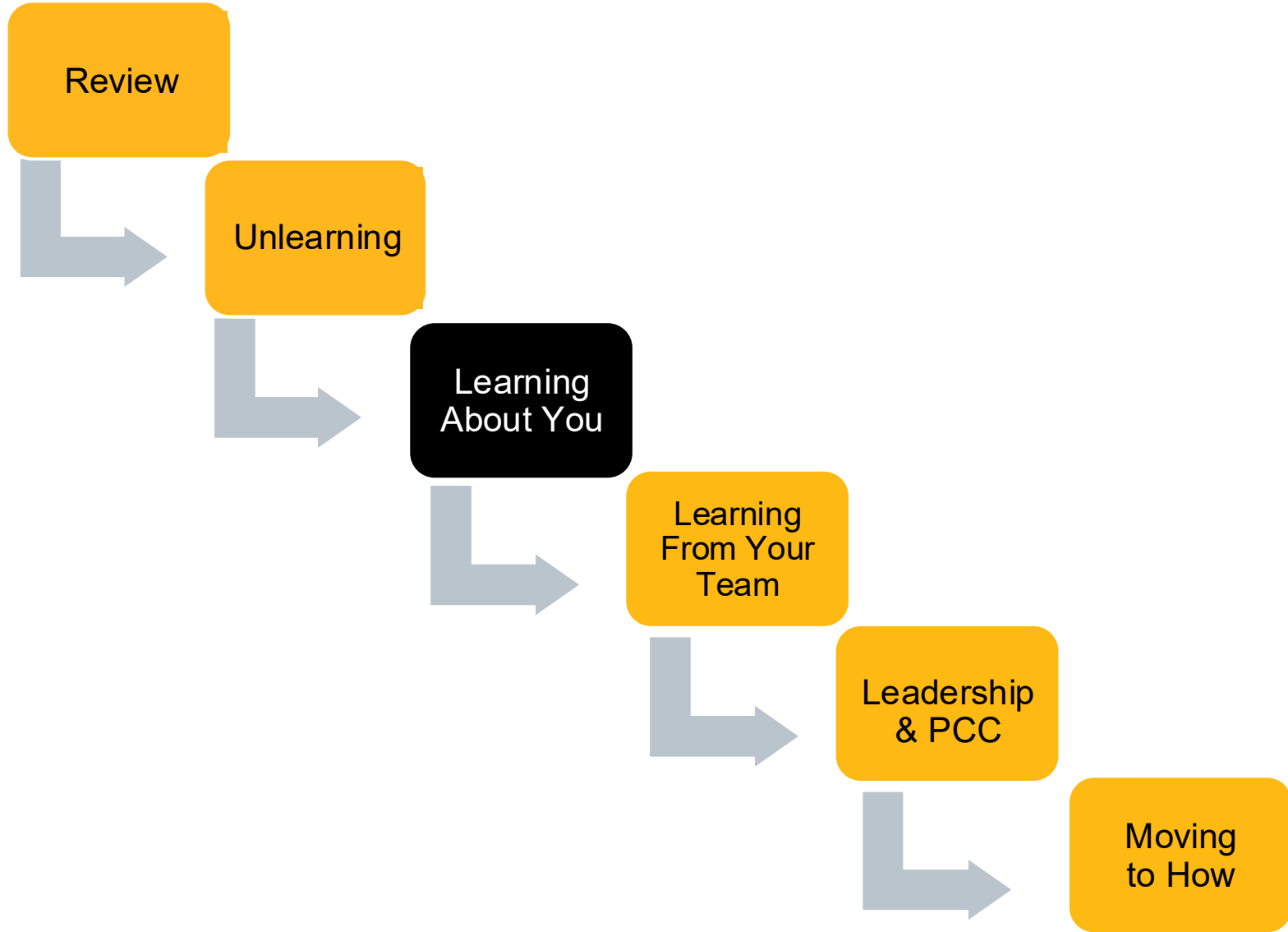
- ✓ Focuses on performance & results
- ✓ Finds errors, fixes mistakes
- ✓ Seeks certainty, is risk-averse
- ✓ Proves they are right
- ✓ Defends the status quo

- ✓ Focuses on process & growth
- ✓ Asks questions, seeks insights
- ✓ Embraces ambiguity, is curious
- ✓ Seeks to be effective
- ✓ Innovates and explores new paths



Unlearning





Judger vs. Learner Attitude

Adapted from *Change Your Questions, Change Your Life*, Dr. Marilee Adams



Learner Questions

What's good or useful about this?

What possibilities does this open up?

What can we do about this?

How can we stay on track?

What can we learn from this?



Learner Mindset

The **learner mindset** is characterized by **openness, curiosity,** and a **hunger for growth.** It encourages constructive self-questioning, such as “What can I learn from this?” or “How can I turn this into an opportunity?” This mindset views challenges not as barriers but as **gateways to new knowledge and skills.**



The Foundation of the Learner Mindset

Curiosity: A natural inclination to explore and understand.

Adaptability: An eagerness to adjust to new circumstances.

Growth Orientation: A belief that abilities can improve through effort and experience.



Judger Questions

Why is this a failure?

What's wrong with you?

Whose fault is it?

Why can't you get it right?



Mary is a person living with dementia who lives in your memory care neighborhood.

Over the weekend, when you were not working,

Mary left through the side door. She is safe.

It is Monday and you pull together the team to talk about what happened.



Who was assigned to Mary
on Saturday night?

Who left the door #6 unlocked?



Who was assigned to Mary
on Saturday night?

Judger Attitude

Who left the door #6 unlocked?



I know we are all glad Mary is safe.
Let's go through and talk about what
happened so we can learn from it and
see how we can support Mary
in the future.



Can someone run through the facts of what happened, so we are all on the same page?

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, HOW?

And then we can get to WHY?



What does Mary need?

Are we missing something that
we can do better at?

What steps can we take to do better?



What does **Mary need**?

Are we missing something that
we can do better at?

What steps can **we take to do better**?



Judger Attitude

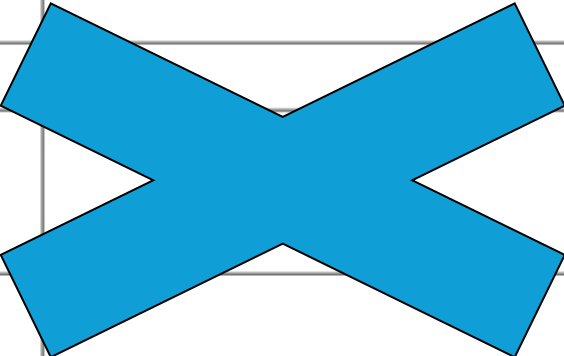


Action/Reaction Worksheet

Resident:

Your Name:

Date/Time?	
Location?	
Who was present?	
Action of the Person	
Has this occurred before? If so, when?	
What was happening right before the Action? (be specific)	



Judger Attitude



Traditional Problem Solving

Focus on what's wrong

Identify the problems

Search for root cause of failure

Fix the past

Obstacles are treated as barriers

Appreciative Inquiry

Focus on what works

Valuing the best of 'what is'

Search for root causes of success

Create the future

Obstacles treated as ramps



A leader is anyone, regardless of title and position, who holds themselves accountable for finding potential in people and ideas, and who has the courage to develop that potential.

- Brene Brown



Armored Leadership

- Being a 'knower' and being right.
- Tapping out off hard conversations.
- Using shame and blame to manage.
- Professing values.
- Driving a 'fitting in' culture.

Daring Leadership

- Being a learner and getting it right.
- Leaning into vulnerability and skilling up for hard conversations.
- Coming from a place of empathy, accountability and learning.
- Practicing values.
- Cultivating a belonging culture.



Armored Leadership

- Leading for compliance and control.
- Leading reactively.
- Resisting change
- Getting stuck in and owned by failures, setbacks and disappointments

Daring Leadership

- Leading for commitment and shared purpose.
- Leading proactively & strategically.
- Accepting and embracing change, including productive urgency, strategic risk taking, and agility.
- Owning our failures, setbacks and disappointments through open discussion, learning from them and embedding the learning in our work and culture.



Poll

**What are the top five qualities you
have as a leader?**



Learning About You

1. Accountability
2. Adaptability
3. Admit mistakes
4. Belief/Believe in what you do
5. Clear expectations
6. Collaboration
7. Communication
8. Compassion
9. Consistency
10. Courage
11. Creativity
12. Curiosity
13. Direct
14. Empathy
15. Empowers
16. Encourage input
17. Follow through
18. Gratitude
19. Growth mindset
20. Inspire
21. Integrity
22. Know each person
23. Listen Fully
24. Lives Values
25. Model behavior
26. Optimistic
27. Patience
28. Potential Cultivator
29. Proactive
30. Problem Solver
31. Risk taking
32. Respect
33. Steps back
34. Supports
35. Transparency
36. Trust
37. Vision
38. Welcome change

Poll

**Which five of these qualities would
you like to work on more?**

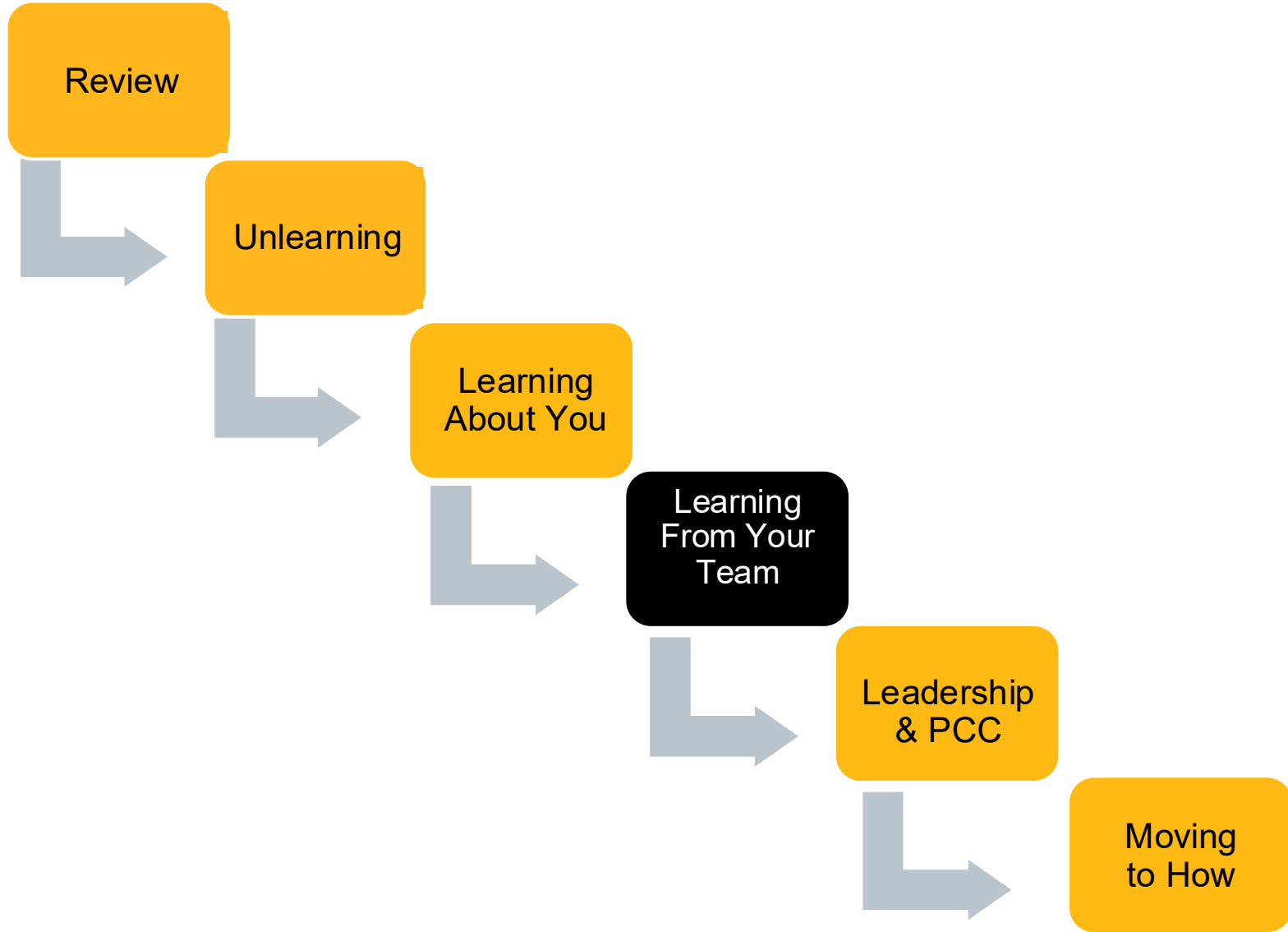


Learning About You

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38. Welcome change

Take a moment to reflect:

**What are the traits of a
person-centered team leader?**



How are you meeting the needs of your team?

Do you *know* what they need?



Have you asked your team what they need?



The 3 Biggest Complaints from Teams about their Leaders

Poor Communication
Unclear Expectations
Not Collaborating/Unavailable/Uninvolved



Poor Communication



Unclear Expectations



Not Collaborating/Unavailable/Uninvolved



“I am sure they have reasons for what they are doing but we don't know what they are.”



“The managers are on one hand bringing us cookies and on the other hand forcing us to work shifts, or take less hours, or work short staffed. This seems disingenuous to us.”



“How do I get feedback and
ideas from staff?”

We have meetings and
no one is willing to share ideas...”



“There seems to almost be a good cop bad cop thing going on with the administrator and DON.”



“It is shoved underneath the rug if people are not performing well.”



“You only hear from them when you are doing something wrong.”



Learning from Your Team



Lydia is in a team meeting where they are learning about Huntington's Disease, because they have a person living with Huntington's Disease who will be moving in to Grace's Place in two weeks. Lydia looks over to her team leader, Barb, who is sitting in the back of the room. Barb has a stack of documents in her lap, her laptop open and is not looking at the person who is facilitating the class.



What message is Barb sending to her team?

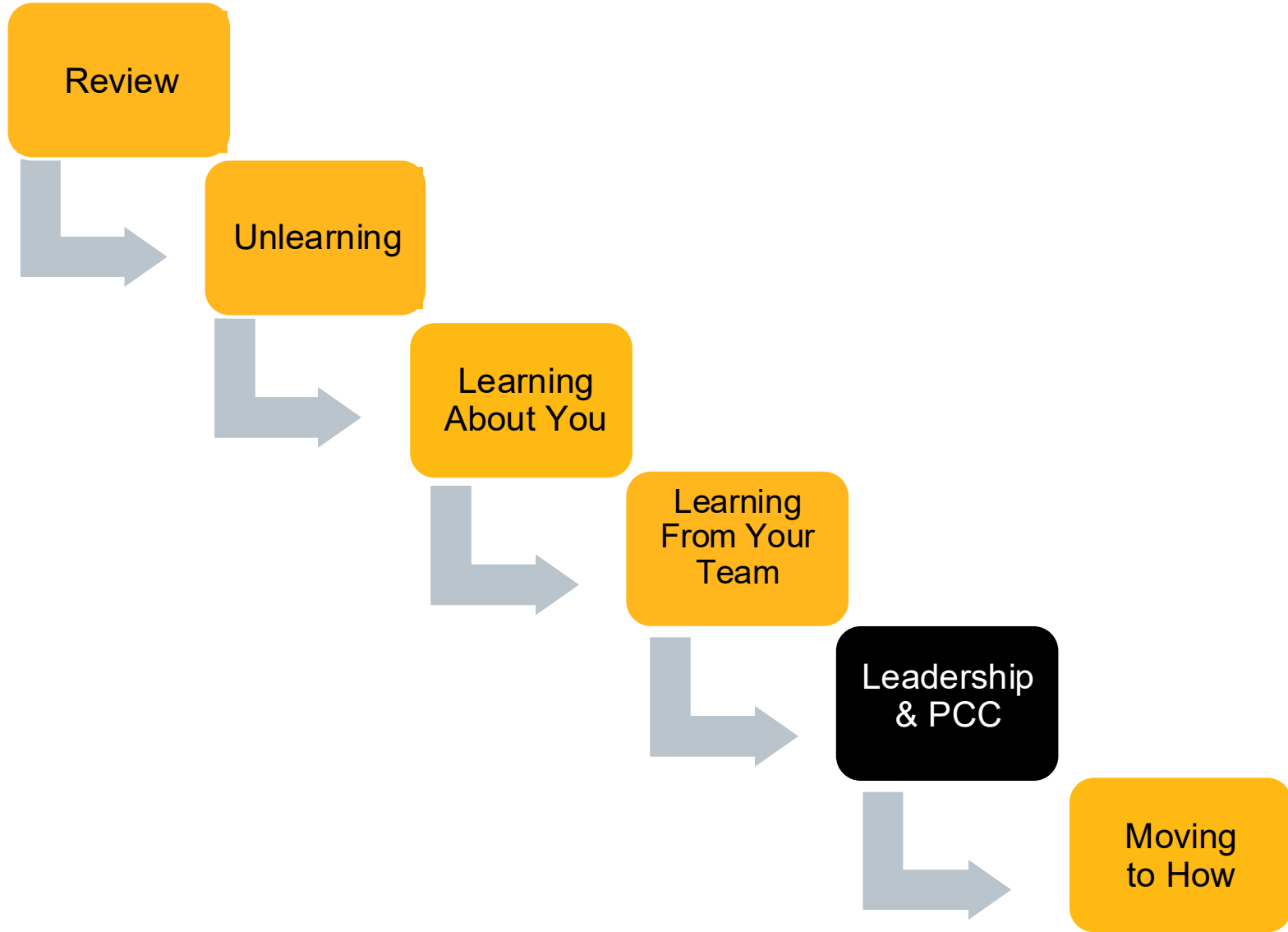
There is no message. Barb is quiet and getting her work done.



What message is Barb sending to her team?

1. This meeting is not important.
2. I am more important than the rest of you.
3. This information is important for the rest of you but not for me.
4. No one really has to listen to this.
5. I am not respectful of the time of the person giving the class.
6. I am not respectful of the time of everyone in the class.





How do we expect staff to give person-centered care if they are not treated with person-centered care?





Person Centered Values

Choice
Dignity
Respect
Individualized
Interdependent
Self-determination
Seeing the Whole Person
Providing Well-Being
Meaningful Living



Person Centered Values

Choice

Is your team given any choice in how, when,
and where they work or are they told?

Can your team members make choices in their daily routines?

Do your team members feel like their choices are honored?



Person Centered Values

Dignity

Does your team feel like they are *just* aides or *just* housekeeping?

Are team members treated as adults?

Are team members recognized for their unique contributions?

Do you create a culture where team members feel they can share their perspectives and ideas?



Person Centered Values

Respect

Does your team have your respect?

Do you look at them as behind you or down from you OR beside you?

Is there a culture of respect in your nursing home?

Do you cultivate a culture where team members respect each other?



Person Centered Values

Individualized

Do you treat each person on your team as individual-
with different needs, strengths and abilities?

Do you approach all members of a department as being the same?

Do you encourage team members to use their unique strengths in their work?



Person Centered Values

Inter-dependent

Do you encourage team members to develop relationships with each other and the residents?

Do you create a culture where people know they can rely on each other?

Do you create a culture of giving and receiving?



Person Centered Values

Self-determination

Are team members supported to make decisions?
About caring for residents? Their routines? Ideas?

Are team members included in decision-making of leadership?

Do you provide team members with the resources they need to make decisions and carry out decisions? Do you help them process outcomes of decisions?



Person Centered Values

Seeing the Whole Person

Do you see your team members as whole people who are more than their work roles?

Do you create a culture where team members are known for more than their roles - who they are?



Person Centered Values

Providing Well-Being

How do you support overall well-being for your team members?

Identity
Connectedness
Security
Autonomy
Meaning
Growth
Joy

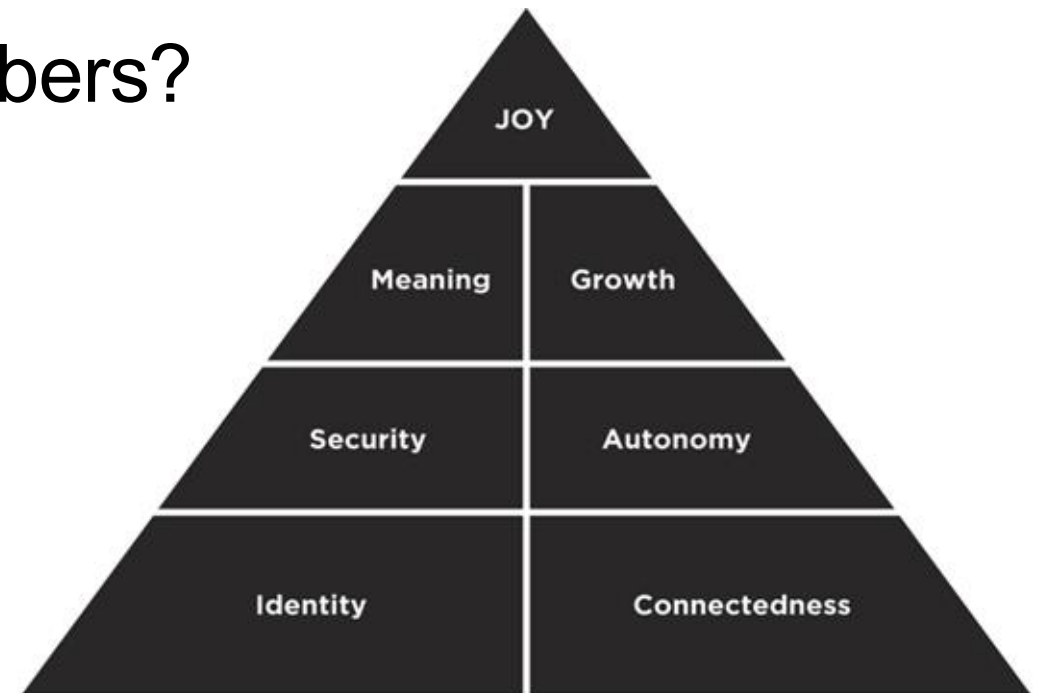


Figure 2. The well-being pyramid illustrates the hierarchy of domains to be addressed for restoring well-being. (From *Dementia Beyond Disease: Enhancing Well-Being*, by G. Allen Power. Published by Health Professions Press. Copyright (c) 2014 by Health Professions Press, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission.)



Person Centered Values

Meaningful Living

Do you know if team members find meaning in their work?

How do you support them to find meaning?

Do you support team members to create meaningful living for residents?



Person Centered Practices

Knowing the Person

How do you get to know your team members?

How do you encourage them to know each other?



Person Centered Practices

Clear Communication

Are you stopping everything and really listening when a member of your team is speaking with you?

Are you checking to make sure you understand the team and the team understands you?

Do you use any of these statements:

“So what you’re saying is...”

I understand...

I see you are _____ (insert emotion). How can I help?

Tell me how you see this.



Person Centered Practices

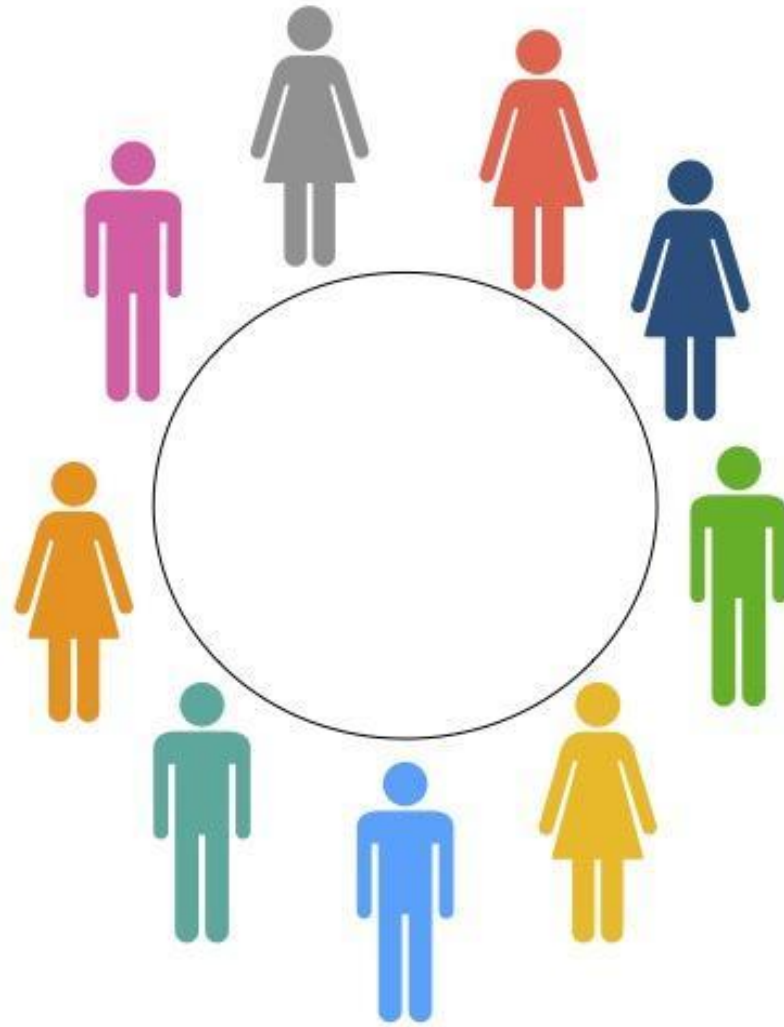
Looking for the WHY

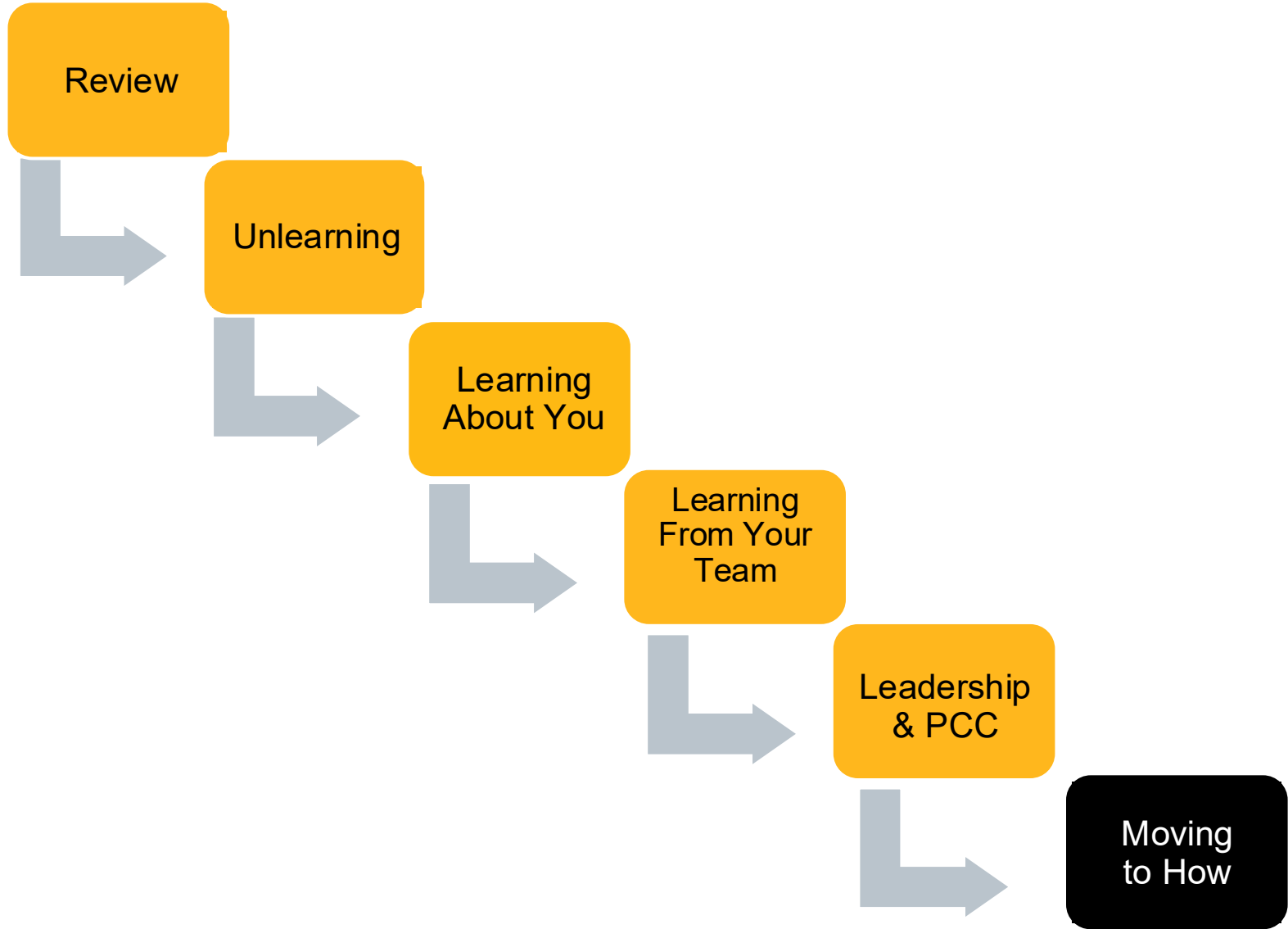
Are you trying to see things from their perspective?

Are you looking for the WHY
behind *their* actions and reactions?

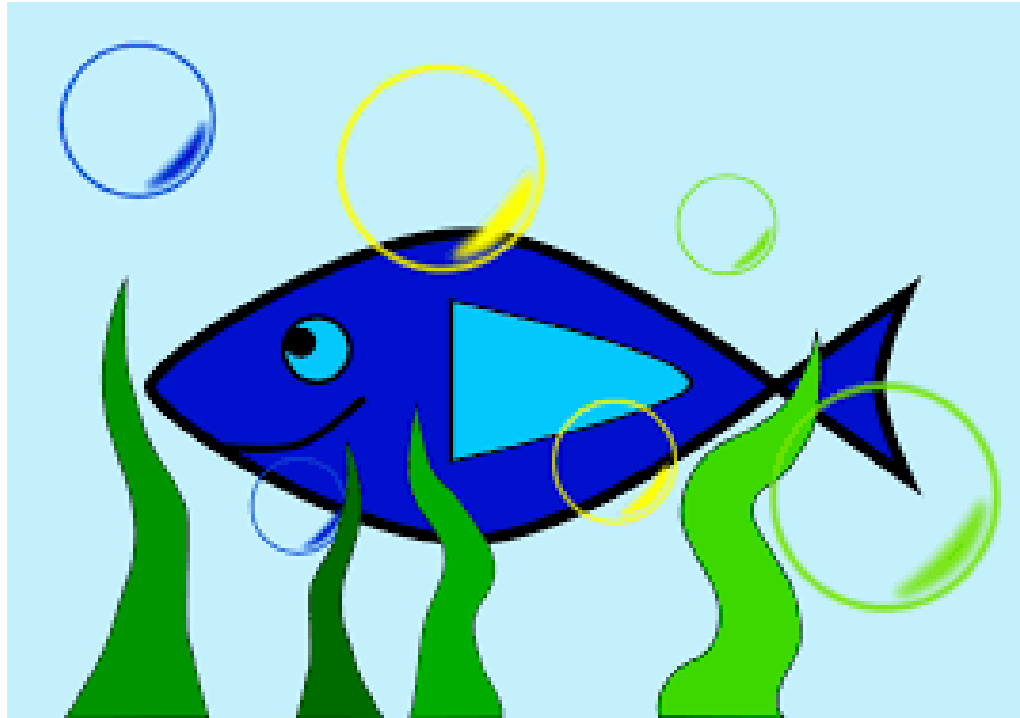


Leadership & PCC





Moving to How



Unconditional Positive Regard

The non-judgmental and complete acceptance and support of a person as a human being, regardless of their words or actions.



Taking the “Intentional Stance”

OPEN

CURIOUS

PERSONHOOD-SUPPORTING



Taking the “Intentional Stance”

I assume this person is
communicating
something important.



Taking the “Intentional Stance”

It is up to me to
find out what that is.



Taking the “Intentional Stance”

I have to enter into their world
and see their perspective to do that.



Taking the “Intentional Stance”

Be comfortable with silence
and taking it slow.



The Foundation of the Learner Mindset

Curiosity: A natural inclination to explore and understand.

Adaptability: An eagerness to adjust to new circumstances.

Growth Orientation: A belief that abilities can improve through effort and experience.



Adaptability

Staying calm under pressure

Viewing obstacles as ramps

Embrace change

Problem solving as a team

Open minded



Growth Mindset



Learn from mistakes attitude

Embrace 'yet'

As in "I can't do this" to "I can't do this *yet*."

Joy in the discovery

Deep listening



Curiosity

Have a sense of wonder.

Ask yourself WHY?

Learn about every one on the team

Open ended questions

Embrace I don't know

Perspective taking



Collaborate/Being Involved/Being Available



Follow through

Keep your word

Modeling the right way

Asking open ended questions

Checking in not checking up

Door open



Good Communication – especially listening

Honesty

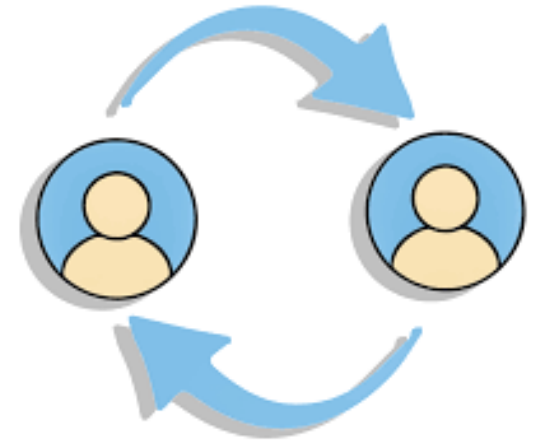
Trust

Be vulnerable – *“I don’t know, but I’ll find out.”*

Just listening

Encourage open dialogue

Kind and constructive feedback
on specific actions



Setting Clear Expectations

Be clear

Both of you repeat

Write it down

What does DONE look like

Explain the WHY



Key Takeaways

Being a Person-Centered Leader Means:



Evolving and growing so you can meet your team where they are.



Nurturing your team's leadership skills.



Giving your team opportunities for them to use their expertise.



Being an example. Get out on the floor. Be vulnerable. It's okay to make mistakes and admit them.



Key Takeaways Being Person-Centered



If you want persons living with dementia to be treated with person-centered care. All staff must be treated with person-centered care.



Not being a person-centered leader is a barrier to person-centered care.



YOU can be the facilitator of person-centered care.



A closing reflection question

What are 3 things you want to do differently as a leader?

Please write in Q&A



Thank You!

Let's continue this conversation.

Karen Stobbe — kstobbe1@gmail.com

Sonya Barsness — sonya@sbcgerontology.com

THANK YOU!



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REMINDERS



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Huddle-Up 5

May 20, 2026, 1:00pm - 2:00pm ET

Sonya Barsness & Karen Stobbe

Series Host and Moderator: Gigi Amateau, PhD



Gerontology

