

# THE FRAMEWORK OF TEACHING

## ✧ The Foundation ✧

Did you know that you are a teacher? In your role as a caregiver, you are in the perfect situation to assist individuals in learning new skills because you are directly involved in so many aspects of their lives. You can support individuals in building meaningful relationships, learning self-care skills, and participating in community activities.

Our goal at Globe Star is to enhance the quality of life of the individuals we serve. Instead of judging a person's independence, we focus on the **quality of one's life with help**. We want each individual to live as interdependently and enjoyably as possible.

As we work toward interdependence, our teaching framework has four components:

- Understanding the importance of building a relationship with the individual and learning how to **value** that person.
- Learning how to **teach** and helping the individual to learn.
- Learning how to **protect** the individual during the teaching process and during times of difficulty.
- The individual learning to **reciprocate** what we have taught.

Let's begin with how we value others.

### *Interdependency*

*Our goal is to help individuals live "interdependently." In fact, we all live interdependently. We all rely on others for some things just as others rely on us for other things. As caregivers, we support individuals in being part of this exchange. For example, John is learning how to make a sandwich. Through instruction and practice, he may learn to make the sandwich independently. However, this is part of interdependent life. Now when I visit John at lunchtime, he makes us each a sandwich, I make the koolaid, and then we sit down together to enjoy lunch. Helping individuals gain independence in certain skills allows them to participate more in interdependent life.*

*Consider the variety of skills you possess, and remember that someone taught you each of those skills. Do not overlook the importance of your role as a caregiver and how much you can do for the person by teaching.*

# ✧ How We Value ✧

Valuing means using our hands, eyes, words, and presence to honor and respect the individual. Valuing means recognizing that the individual is a person of worth and deserves to be treated as we would treat a close friend. We show this valuing through touches, words, gestures, and any other forms of expression. Valuing is not a reward for “good behavior,” but instead is recognition that the person himself is good. Our valuing is given unconditionally. This means our valuing is not dependent on one’s behavior, actions, or deeds. Valuing is given for who the person is, not for what the person does. We even value the person during times of difficulty, when he most needs our support. Unconditional valuing can be difficult, but it builds solidarity with the person and teaches him that he is safe with us.

Valuing can be expressed **physically**, where we use physical contact to honor and respect the person, **verbally**, where we use words to uplift the person, and **gesturally**, where we use gestures to express togetherness during an activity. The following table shows some examples of each of these types of valuing. Can you come up with some additional ways to value someone?

Type	Examples	Your Own Examples
Physical	Patting the individual’s shoulder Offering the individual a high-5	
Verbal	Telling the individual “I’m proud of you!” or “I had fun spending time with you!”	
Gestural	Sitting near the individual Nodding with approval	

---

### *Questions for Reflection:*

*What message would you convey by demanding that an individual make her bed while you observe? In contrast, what message would you convey by offering to help the individual make her bed? Which scenario would help the individual feel valued? Why?*

---

# ✧ How We Teach ✧

Teaching is how we as caregivers support the learning and growth of the individuals we serve. This manual will cover How We Teach in depth, beginning with why teaching is important.

## WHY WE TEACH

Teaching is the process through which we can improve an individual's quality of life. Teaching helps us address a variety of areas, such as providing the individual with opportunities for companionship, empowering him with new skills, and expanding his ability to communicate with others.

Consider the following examples:

- By teaching Sally to introduce herself to peers at the park, we enhanced her quality of life by improving her social skills. Now Sally has more opportunities for companionship in her life.
- By teaching Linda how to check out books from the library, we enhanced her quality of life by helping her access information about her favorite hobbies. Helping Linda pursue her interests shows that we value her and that her opinions matter.
- By teaching Jennifer how to tell someone when she feels frustrated, we enhanced her quality of life by improving her communication skills. Now that Jennifer can convey her needs and wants, she throws fewer tantrums than she did when her caregivers often misunderstood her.

In these three examples, each person's quality of life was improved when she gained new skills that empowered her in different situations. As you engage the individual in meaningful activities, you will also build a relationship with the person during the teaching process.

*"Until I can risk appearing imperfect in your eyes, without fear that it will cost me something, I can't really learn from you."*

*--Rudolph Dreikurs*

## BEFORE WE TEACH

Teaching is most effective when a trusting relationship has been established between the caregiver and the individual. Gentle Teaching recommends that we not enter a person's life and place demands on him, but rather that we value the person unconditionally as we build a relationship of mutual respect. We should not expect to see immediate results when we begin working with a new person because the individual must feel safe with us before any learning can occur.

When you first meet an individual, spend time getting comfortable with each other, and find out what the individual likes, dislikes, and wants to learn. Talk to other people who know the person well, such as

other caregivers, your Globe Star mentor, and the individual's family. Also, your mentor can familiarize you with resources such as the Individualized Support Plan (ISP) that is part of the state's guidelines for services and the Quality of Life (QoL) Plan that Globe Star develops. The individual may also have goals from school, previous Globe Star reports, or Person-Centered Planning notes, which the state uses for outlining goals. These resources will familiarize you with the person's past, present, and future.

## WHAT WE TEACH

The specific goals and objectives that we teach are identified in the person's ISP and QoL Plan. We want our teaching to be **meaningful** and to enhance the individual's quality of life.

Skills are meaningful if they:

- **Occur frequently** in the person's life, such as making a snack or purchasing an item at the store
- Are **intrinsically motivating** to the individual, such as hobbies, sports, and other leisure activities
- Have **positive natural consequences**, such as the joy of eating a pizza after you make it or sharing artwork that you created
- **Support interdependence** with others, such as introducing oneself to peers or calling a friend on the phone.

As we interact with the individual, we should work on the identified goals, but also teach the **value of learning** and the **value of being with others**. Our attitude and body language should convey to the individual that we enjoy interacting and learning together. Being aware of how we engage with the individual will help him to value the learning process, the relationship with his caregiver, and the skill being taught.

After each caregiving shift, it is important to document our teaching experience. The Daily Quality of Life Sheet provides us a place to write about our interactions and the meaningful activities that occurred. You will learn how to fill out that form elsewhere to record the progress of an individual's goals and to show the journey of improving the person's quality of life.

### *Intrinsic Motivation*

*Things that are intrinsically motivating are those toward which we are naturally drawn. In other words, we value the interest or hobby itself more than superficial rewards. Globe Star does not support the use of candy or other rewards to entice an individual to participate in an activity. Instead, we should focus on the interests that the individual values without the presence of a reward. The individuals we serve are passionate about certain topics and hobbies just as we all are. If we structure our teaching around a person's natural interests, the learning process will be easier and more valuable for her.*

---

### ***Question for Reflection:***

***Consider a program where adults with disabilities sort objects by color. When they have completed the task, a staff member re-combines the materials for other individuals to sort. Is this activity meaningful or is it just something to pass time? Why?***

---

## WHEN TO TEACH

Deciding when to teach must account for the needs of both the caregiver and the individual. It is important to find a time that works well for both parties and that makes sense for the skill being taught. Keep in mind that just because you are ready to teach does not mean the individual is ready to learn. Look for clues that might indicate an individual's readiness or receptiveness at a particular time. For example, if you normally practice reading skills in the evening, but Steve had a particularly difficult day at work, it may be helpful to wait until the next day. Or, if you find an individual is consistently drowsy in the evening, consider working together at an earlier time so that he will be alert. This respects the individual's needs and helps your teaching to be more effective.

There are countless opportunities for learning available throughout the day, and one of the first things you can do as a caregiver is to look for these opportunities in the individual's daily routine. Sometimes it makes sense to arrange **formal teaching sessions** in the individual's schedule. This means regularly devoting time to practicing a skill in a comfortable environment with minimal distractions, such as practicing ironing clothes with Linda right after school when her housemates have not yet returned.



Another way to incorporate teaching sessions into an individual's daily routine is to provide instructional support in the **natural setting** for the skill. This is often a more effective way to teach new skills. If you want Jim to recognize the "Men" sign on a bathroom door, it makes more sense to teach this out in the community where "Men" is posted on the door, rather than to practice reading a sign at home. In an artificial learning environment, the individual must learn how to generalize the skill to the natural setting. However, the natural setting provides a context for using the skill so that the skill appears more valuable to the individual. If the individual views the skill as important, he is more likely to learn and maintain it. Caregivers should seek opportunities to teach throughout the day and in all environments.

---

### *Question for Reflection:*

*Did you learn the following skills in a formal setting, a natural setting, or both?*

- *Tying your shoes*
  - *Making a sandwich*
  - *Multiplying numbers*
  - *Riding a bicycle*
-

## TASK ANALYSIS

Every activity is made up of several small steps. If we break down complex tasks into smaller steps when we are teaching, the individual is more likely to learn. Listing the sequence of actions or steps for completing an activity is called **Task Analysis**. The following is an example:

### *Task Analysis for Making Toast*

1. Get bread from cabinet.
2. Open bread package.
3. Remove two slices from loaf.
4. Place bread in toaster.
5. Push down toaster lever.
6. Wait until toast pops up.
7. Remove toast.
8. Place toast on plate.
9. Butter toast.
10. Eat toast!

In the above example, you might decide that some steps are not needed if the individual already knows how to toast the bread or how to butter it. Or, you might decide to include additional steps, such as closing the bread package or getting the butter out of the refrigerator. That's the nice thing about a Task Analysis. You can make the sequence **as detailed or simple as necessary** to support the individual's abilities and learning needs. A Task Analysis for making a phone call might have eight steps or 25.

One key reason for listing the steps in a Task Analysis is to define exactly what the individual is learning to do so that the skill can be taught the same way every time. This helps the individual learn more quickly and avoids confusion because everyone's teaching is **consistent**.

It is important for you and the other caregivers to practice the steps before attempting to teach the skill. This ensures that the sequence is complete and arranged in a **logical order**. Remember to write the steps in the order the individual would complete the task, not necessarily how you would do it. For example, some people wet their toothbrush before putting on the toothpaste, while others do it after.

A Task Analysis is not necessary for skills the individual already knows, but is useful when teaching a new skill. We must prepare a Task Analysis for every skill that is a formal goal for the individual.

## HOW WE INTERACT

It is important to consider that how you interact during the teaching process may be just as influential as what you are teaching. If you look visibly bored during the activity, the individual may also lose enthusiasm. The teaching process requires active participation on our part. As we interact, we should not be overly focused on the skill itself, but rather on our **relationship with the person** during the activity. The individual is more likely to learn the skill if your interaction is one of trust and mutual enjoyment.

Teaching is a combination of encouraging the person's participation and providing any needed support during the activity. We must be aware of our interactions so that our support is seen as warm and nurturing. The caregiver must be patient, model the activity, give clear instructions, and genuinely value the person as they do the activity together. Through our unconditional valuing, the individual learns that being with and participating with the caregiver are good. We teach to support the individual in learning new skills, but also to help her value engagement in meaningful activities and being with her caregiver and others.

Teaching can be expressed **physically**, where we use physical contact to encourage participation and give help during an activity, **verbally**, where we use words to encourage participation and give clear instructions during the activity, and **gesturally**, where we use gestures to express togetherness and model how to do the activity. The following table shows some examples of each of these types of teaching. Can you come up with some additional ways to teach someone?

*What's your learning style?*  
*Do you learn best through touching, hearing, or seeing? Remember that the individual you work with may learn best in a different way. Respecting the individual's preferences will help you work better together and shows that you value him.*

Type	Examples	Your Own Examples
Physical	Guiding the person's hands through the steps of the activity Offering your hand as an invitation to participate	
Verbal	Giving concrete instructions about the activity Telling the person you value her participation	
Gestural	Modeling how to do the activity Moving the materials closer to the person	

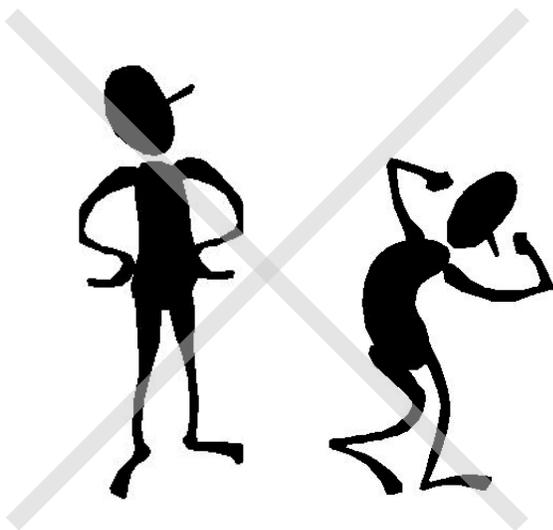
## ✧ How We Protect ✧

We protect by using our hands, eyes, words, and presence to help the individual feel safe and loved, while simultaneously recognizing and addressing situations where the person feels unsafe. Protecting is a combination of how we **prevent** crisis situations and how we **respond** if those situations occur.

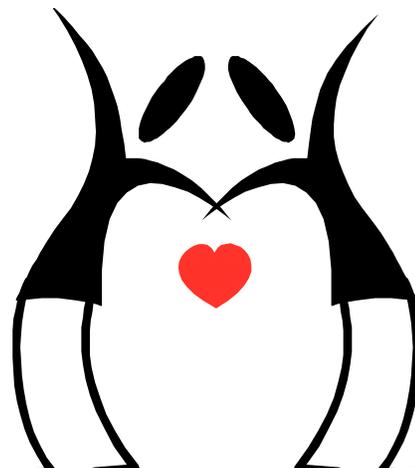
When we are with an individual, we can prevent crisis situations by avoiding sources of frustration and showing a readiness to provide any needed support. This requires being aware of situations and things that make the individual uncomfortable. For example, if you know that crowded stores make Jessica anxious, then plan to take her grocery shopping during off-peak times and consider finding a smaller, less overwhelming store. When sources of anxiety are unavoidable, then we can protect the individual by helping her prepare for the situation. This may mean talking to Jessica ahead of time about the presence of others at the store or bringing a favorite item that Jessica can hold for comfort.

If an individual has already escalated in frustration or violence, caregivers have a responsibility to do everything possible to **avoid harm** to everyone present, while simultaneously **valuing** the individual. Avoiding harm does not mean that the person is restrained, overpowered, humiliated, punished, or taught a “lesson.” Protection means ensuring everyone’s safety through nonviolent actions, such as blocking hits, redirecting the person to a different activity or setting, and staying with the person to help facilitate peace. Actions such as grabbing or immobilizing send a message that it is okay to use violence to combat violence. We must instead respond with warmth and gentleness. Responding without patience may escalate the crisis, so we must interact calmly. You will receive additional teaching about the crisis cycle and how to respond to difficulties.

### *Causing Fear and Humiliation*



### *Interacting with Warmth and Gentleness*



Protecting can be expressed **physically**, where we use physical interactions to prevent harm and to convey warmth, **verbally**, where we use words to encourage the individual and to prevent harm or frustration, and **gesturally**, where we use gestures to prevent harm and convey togetherness. The following table shows some examples of each of these types of protecting. Can you come up with some additional ways to protect someone?

Type	Examples	Your Own Examples
Physical	Gently redirecting the individual Staying close to the individual to show togetherness	
Verbal	Discussing sources of frustration with the individual Offering the individual choices	
Gestural	Modeling how to be calm and relaxed Showing a readiness to give help	

***Question for Reflection:***

*What protection might you offer if an individual attempts to hit his brother when the brother tries to take a toy?*

## ✧ How the Individual Reciprocates ✧

Recall that our goal in teaching is for the individual to value the learning process, the relationship with his caregiver, and the skill being taught. An individual demonstrates reciprocation when he shows excitement or pride at learning, enjoyment of the time with the caregiver, or progress toward one of his goals. If Harry has been practicing making his bed, one way he can reciprocate this is by learning each step of the bed-making process. Harry can also show that he values the activity by saying that he likes how clean his room looks after he makes his bed. Lastly, Harry can show that he values the relationship with his caregiver. If Harry and the caregiver always make Harry’s bed together, then they are building companionship during their teaching interaction. All of these examples are ways in which the individual shows that your time spent teaching has been valuable.

It is important to remember that each individual’s ability to express herself will be different. Our job is to value the person unconditionally so that she may learn to value herself, us, and others.

Reciprocation can be expressed **physically**, where the individual initiates physical contact to express valuing toward another, **verbally**, where the individual uses words or sounds to express valuing of the activity or of the caregiver, and **gesturally**, where the individual uses gestures to carry out a new skill or to express valuing of the activity or of the caregiver. The following table shows some examples of each of these types of reciprocation. Can you come up with some additional ways the individual might demonstrate learning a skill or valuing the activity or the caregiver?

Type	Examples	Your Own Examples
Physical	Initiating a hug with one's caregiver Taking caregiver's hand to make a snack together	
Verbal	Expressing pride in own accomplishments Telling caregiver thanks for being there	
Gestural	Demonstrating one's new ability to make a sandwich Showing joy during an activity	

***Question for Reflection:***

*Think of an example of when you have reciprocated valuing toward someone who taught you something meaningful. How did you express this valuing?*

## ✧ Conclusion ✧

In order to improve the quality of life of the individuals we serve, Globe Star uses the **Value, Teach, Protect, and Reciprocate** framework. As you work within this framework, hopefully you will become comfortable with each of these components separately, but also with how they work together. This framework gives us guidelines for how to interact, provides support for times of difficulty, and celebrates companionship as being essential to humanity.