

Tree of Life



Susan's Treasures

Let's go shopping! Even though it was a gray and rather wet Roseburg afternoon, that didn't dampen Susan's enthusiasm. Her love for shopping and finding that perfect item is such a fun adventure. Whether it's for a new colorful blanket or a lovely new purse to add to her collection, Susan looks forward to her shopping trips.



Recently, she went on a shopping trip to Eugene. She was up early before all her housemates in anticipation of her day trip to find a new watch. We checked each store in the mall. Thanks to the assistance of a helpful store clerk, Susan was able to try on watches to her heart's content.



When the selection was made, the watch was sized, instead of being boxed up, Susan requested to put it on right away. On another mission, Susan helped shop for Valentine's gifts. The gift was personal to the person and quite thoughtful. It's inspiring to see her love for shopping and her self-determination as she picks out each new treasure.

Let's Talk Motivation

Extrinsic Motivation is when you are driven by external factors. This arises from outside of an individual and involves external rewards. For example, when you are doing something for money, praise, social recognition, or bonuses and promotions, you are motivated because it personally benefits you.

Intrinsic Motivation is when you are driven by internal factors. This arises from within an individual. For example, doing a complicated puzzle purely for the gratification of solving a problem. Another example is asking a friend to join you. After all, having a partner in crime is always more enjoyable.

Now ask yourself, which one is your motivation style? If we advocate for person-centered, then we shall adopt the intrinsic type of motivation and focus on our goal-oriented behavior toward the people we support. They can be our partners in crime, even sharing activities we love to do. But... how can I find motivation myself? Just think for a moment. Motivation is important because it serves us as a guiding force for all human behavior. Understanding how motivation works, and the factors that may impact your motivation, can be important for several reasons. It can increase the efficiency of your goals, drive you to take action or initiate change, help you to feel more in control of your life, or improve your overall well-being and happiness.

Here are some ideas to motivate you at work:

1. Meet with your team/co-workers to discuss supported individuals' goals
2. Design a calendar of fun activities and assign teams of 2 for each person to achieve their goals.
3. Plan fun and happiness for all.
4. Think about what you have planned for yourself and try to incorporate those supported for things like birthday parties, ball games, movie nights, picnics, music/movies at the park, etc.
5. And for yourself as well, inviting your friend or best friend, best cousin, best fun person to go to the gym, go hiking, form a foodie club, attend a concert, talk about future plans or take a class. Human nature proves we always need a partner in crime to motivate us, support and encourage each other.

Get To Know Mika Shantie

Mika is a kind and supportive leader whose warm personality and listening ear have made her a valuable part of UHI. Her dedication to the organization and the people she works with is evident in every role she's taken on over the years.



Mika started with UHI in August 2009. Her journey began as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). The work was challenging, but Mika found fulfillment in providing one-on-one care. Over time, her passion for helping others and her desire to grow led her to take on new roles at UHI. She moved from DSP to Med Tech, Program Manager and trainer before landing in her current role as one of the Directors of Residential and Operations. When reflecting on her career path, Mika emphasized the importance of being driven and willing to learn. She believes growth comes from constantly striving to expand your skills and embracing new challenges. "It's about moving forward and applying what you learn to new roles," she shared.

Looking ahead, Mika is eager to provide more training and resources for UHI team members. She's also interested in becoming a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner to help others understand how food can be a powerful tool for healing.

For those aspiring to grow within UHI, Mika's advice is clear: take every opportunity to learn and speak up when you see something that needs

improvement. Don't hesitate to create new roles if you see a need. "If you have a skill, share it, and take the initiative. People will notice your drive," she encouraged. Throughout her career, Mika has had many rewarding experiences.

She finds joy in helping others succeed and in reconnecting people with their families. But she also knows the hardships of the work. The most difficult moments come when individuals pass away. "It's heartbreaking, but it's incredibly rewarding to support the family during those times," she said. As a director, Mika loves working with her team to solve problems and find solutions. While leadership changes can sometimes present challenges, she values the growth that comes from navigating these situations. "It's tough, but I appreciate the opportunities to learn from it," she explained. When asked about regrets, Mika had a strong answer: "I don't believe in regrets. Everything that's happened has shaped who I am today, and I'm excited for what the future holds."

Mika's journey at UHI is a testament to her hard work, compassion, and unwavering commitment to helping others. Her leadership continues to inspire and empower those around her.

Day Support Activities

Day Support Activities, or DSA, is a type of support (including attendant care and skills training) delivered by a provider.

It focuses on a person's social and interpersonal support needs and is provided outside of a residential setting. Everyone employed at UHI is cross trained for DSP and DSA work, which means the responsibility for getting the people we support into the community is on all of us. Not just the DSA team. Many people with disabilities end up on waitlists for support services due to lack of funding. Some people are on those waitlists for decades before receiving support to simply be a part of their communities. As DSPs, it is our duty and pleasure to be able to offer time in the community to the people we support. We at UHI, are truly lucky to be able to offer DSA services to our supported individuals.

If you are struggling to find ways to help the people we support become active members in our community, please reach out to someone on the DSA team or in leadership. Someone will be more than happy to help you brainstorm ideas.

Human Trafficking Awareness

What is human trafficking, and how can you spot it in your community? UHI's entire leadership team was recently trained by Marion Pearson, Violence Prevention Program Manager of the Douglas County Human Trafficking Task Force.

This presentation was eye-opening. Here are the facts: Human trafficking is a person(s) forcing or coercing other humans into sex or labor work to make a personal profit or for power. These are people who are being exploited for someone else's gain. Unfortunately, 22-55% of this exploitation is committed by family or friends, while less than 3% of human trafficking is done through kidnapping.

There are currently 18 human trafficking task forces here in Oregon, with Douglas County having one of them. Some of these task forces are led by law enforcement, and others are community-led. Douglas County's Human Trafficking Task Force is currently community-led, with help from law enforcement, when necessary. This task force works to get victims back to their families.

What are signs that someone may be being trafficked? The following are red flags to consider: Someone else is speaking for the person. Person is not aware of his/her location. Person exhibits fear, anxiety, PTSD, submission, tension. Person shows signs of physical/sexual abuse, medical neglect or torture. Person is reluctant to provide explanation when injured.



Questions to ask if red flags are present: Have you been pressured to engage in sexual acts for money or favors? Is someone holding your ID, passport, or other documents? Has anyone threatened to hurt you or your family if you leave? Has anyone physically or sexually abused you? Do you have a debt to someone you cannot pay off and are made to "work it off"? Does anyone take all or part of the money you earn?

Tattoos can also be signs. Many human traffickers use tattoos to brand or mark ownership of a person. Men are trafficked just as often as women. Asking questions for clarification is highly suggested but it is not always possible. If you suspect someone is potentially a victim of human trafficking, call 911.

Near the end of training, Adam Willis, Assistant Manager at UHI, shared his story on the topic. It was moving to hear the stories of healing from some that have been affected by human trafficking. (See photo of Adam & Marion above).

Resources: Peace at Home: 541-673-7867 or 800-464-6543, National Human Trafficking Hotline: 888-373-7888



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CEO/ Executive Director

Natasha leads with a heart that values every individual's journey.

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