

Family Compass: Guiding Care and Connection

Discovering Purpose & Valued Roles Workshop Resources



Purpose is Personal

Your purpose is your “why.” It is having a personal sense of direction, meaning, and reason to look forward to something. Purpose helps us understand what makes our journey meaningful.

What matters?

Who matters?

How do they let us know what they like, dislike, choose, or care about?

Purpose may include:

- Being helpful to others.
- Learning or mastering something.
- Making, creating, or caring for something.
- Being part of a group.
- Having responsibilities.
- Being recognized for a talent, interest, or contribution.
- Building relationships.
- Advocating, participating, or having a voice in decisions.

How can we create more moments where our family member can have influence, connection, belonging, and a meaningful place in somebody else’s life?

Why Does It Matter That I’m Here?



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Valued Social Roles

A **social role** is simply a recognizable place a person has in the lives of other people. It is a way people know us: neighbour, friend, employee, volunteer, teammate, student, artist, customer, mentor, club member, tenant, sibling, or community member.

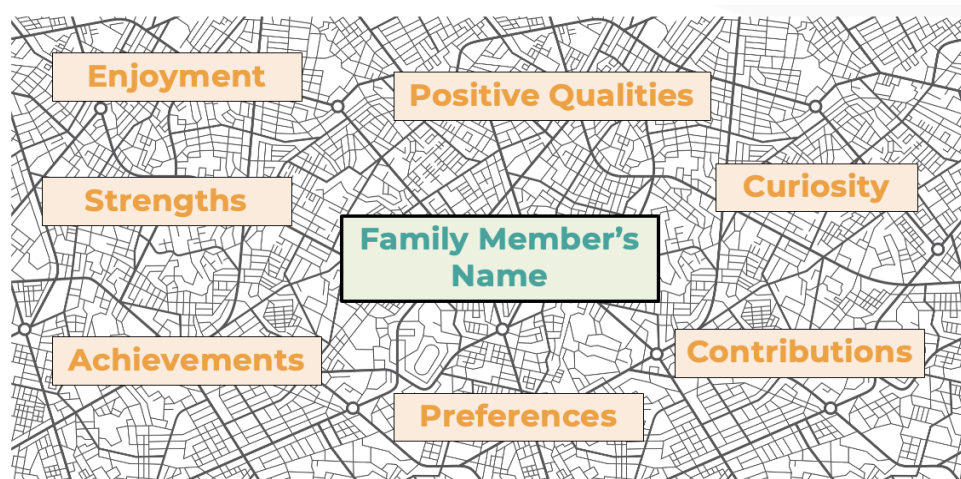
A **valued social role** is one that is welcomed and respected by other people. It is active, real, and current. It gives a person opportunities to contribute, be seen positively, form relationships, learn, and be counted on.

From Activity to Valued Role

There are many possibilities!

Activity	Valued Role
Waters the plants	Gardener
Makes cards or artwork	Artist
Helps with technology	Tech expert
Welcomes visitors	Host / greeter
Assists with making food	Cook / chef / baker
Shares music with someone	DJ
Has a regular routine with someone	Companion
Spends time with family	Child / niece / nephew / aunt / uncle / sibling
Loves to recycle	Environmentalist
Enjoys answering the phone and keeping in touch	Receptionist / friend

Discover Gifts, Interests, and Contributions Using a Strengths Map



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Area	Prompts
Strengths	What are they good at? What comes naturally to them, or what have they learned through effort and experience?
Positive qualities	How do they affect other people? Are they funny, loyal, observant, determined, kind, welcoming, creative, honest, patient, or caring?
Pride/accomplishment	What achievements, tasks, or experiences make them feel proud? What do they enjoy showing others?
Preferences	What environments, routines, people, communication styles, and sensory experiences help them feel comfortable and thrive?
Contributions	How do they help, encourage, create, care for, organize, teach, entertain, or contribute to others?
Curiosity	What would they like to learn, try, visit, experience, or know more about?

From Interests to Valued Roles

An interest is a clue, but a valued role grows when there is a real place, real people, and a contribution that matters. We are not looking for a perfect job or a grand purpose. We are looking for small, genuine opportunities that can grow.”



Use the above equation to turn interests into potential valued roles!

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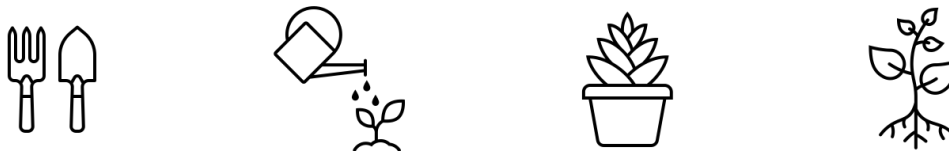


Here are some questions that can help make roles more meaningful:

Does this connect with something the person <u>actually</u> enjoys or values?	Is there a real contribution, responsibility, or membership?	Would someone notice if the person were absent?
Is there an opportunity for relationships beyond paid staff and family?	What support would make participation possible without taking over?	Could the role start small and build over time?

Choose a Role Experiment to Explore What Fits

A Gardening Example



QUESTION	EXAMPLE
What is one role or setting to explore?	Volunteer helper at the neighbourhood garden
Why might it fit?	Our family member enjoys being outdoors, watering plants, and talking to people
What is the first small step?	Visit the garden on Saturday and meet the coordinator
Who could help?	Parent, support worker, garden coordinator, or another trusted person
What support may be needed?	Transportation, visual schedule, communication support, introduction, or quiet breaks
When will we do it?	Contact the coordinator by next Friday
What will we notice?	Does our family member seem engaged, comfortable, proud, interested, or eager to return?

Each small experiment gives us more information about what feels meaningful, what supports are helpful, and what might be worth exploring next.

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Additional Activities

My Best Possible Week

Invite your family member and family to create a picture of a good ordinary week. Use photos, drawings, magazine images, words, or an online collage to represent that are meaningful to your family member.

Include:

- Places they enjoy.
- People they want to see.
- Things they want to learn.
- Ways they want to contribute.
- Roles they already have.
- Roles they would like to try.

Purpose Clues

Keep a simple record for one or two weeks. You can write, take photos, use symbols, or record voice notes.

Notice:

- When does the person seem most engaged, peaceful, energetic, or proud?
- What are they doing?
- Who is with them?
- What skill, gift, or positive quality are they using?
- Are they helping, creating, learning, belonging, or being recognized?
- What might be a next small opportunity to explore?

Conversation Starters

Use your family member's preferred communication method to ask:

- What was the best part of your day?

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- What do you want to do again?
- Who did you like seeing today?
- What are you proud of?
- Would you like to try this?
- How can you help with this?
- What do you want people to know you are good at?