

# Culture Change in Nursing Homes

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March 29, 2022

# What is Culture Change?

Culture change is a movement that seeks to transform nursing homes from institutional medical-model settings to homelike, comfortable environments that promote residents' quality of life and choices.

Number of nursing homes in  
U.S.: 15,600 (CDC, 2016)

Number of nursing home  
residents:  
1.3 million (CDC, 2015)



# The Eden Alternative (1992)

Eden Alternative network founded as solution to “the three plagues” of institutionalized elders: loneliness, helplessness and boredom. 270 registered Eden Alternative nursing homes in U.S., Canada, Europe, & Australia.

“Ten Principles” emphasizing community, companionship, purpose in life, spontaneity, empowerment, a collaborative culture, and leadership that supports lasting change. Homes often characterized by units of 10-12 private rooms, may be interconnected to make a larger community. Gardens, indoor plants in residents’ rooms, companion animals, intergenerational connections.

Caring for animals, gardens, and the children’s activity are meant to bring joy and spontaneity to the lives of residents, as well as purpose and responsibility.

# The Ten Principles - Eden Alternative

[www.edenalt.org](http://www.edenalt.org)

- ▶ 1. Loneliness, helplessness, and boredom are painful and destructive to our health and well-being.
- ▶ 2. A caring, inclusive and vibrant community enables all of us, regardless of age or ability, to experience well-being.
- ▶ 3. We thrive when we have easy access to the companionship we desire. This is the antidote to loneliness.
- ▶ 4. We thrive when we have purpose and the opportunity to give, as well as receive. This is the antidote to helplessness.
- ▶ 5. We thrive when we have variety, spontaneity, and unexpected happenings in our lives. This is the antidote to boredom.

# Ten Principles, cont'd:

- ▶ 6. Meaningless activity corrodes the human spirit. Meaning is unique to each of us and is essential to health and well-being.
- ▶ 7. We are more than our medical diagnoses. Medical treatment should support and empower us to experience a life worth living.
- ▶ 8. Decision-making must involve those most impacted by the decision. Empowerment activates choice, autonomy, and influence.
- ▶ 9. Building a collaborative and resilient culture is a never-ending process. We need to keep learning, developing, and adapting.
- ▶ 10. Wise leadership is the key to meaningful and lasting change. For it, there can be no substitute.

# The Eden Alternative Domains Of Well-Being

**Identity:** Being well-known, having personhood and individuality; wholeness; having a story.

**Growth:** Development, enrichment, expanding, self-actualization.

**Autonomy:** Choice and self-determination; freedom from the arbitrary exercise of authority.

**Security:** Freedom from fear, anxiety, and doubt; feeling safe; having privacy, dignity, and respect.

**Connectedness:** Belonging; feeling engaged and involved; having close, meaningful relationships.

**Meaning:** Purpose; activity that speaks to one's personal values; rituals, recognition, and self-esteem.

**Joy:** Happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, contentment.



# The Green House Project (2001)

Homes built from the ground up to create a homelike environment. Each home consists of private rooms with private baths located around a living area with a hearth and an open kitchen and dining room, and easy access to a courtyard. Elders decide on their daily schedules and care plan and are at the center of collaborative decision-making for the house.

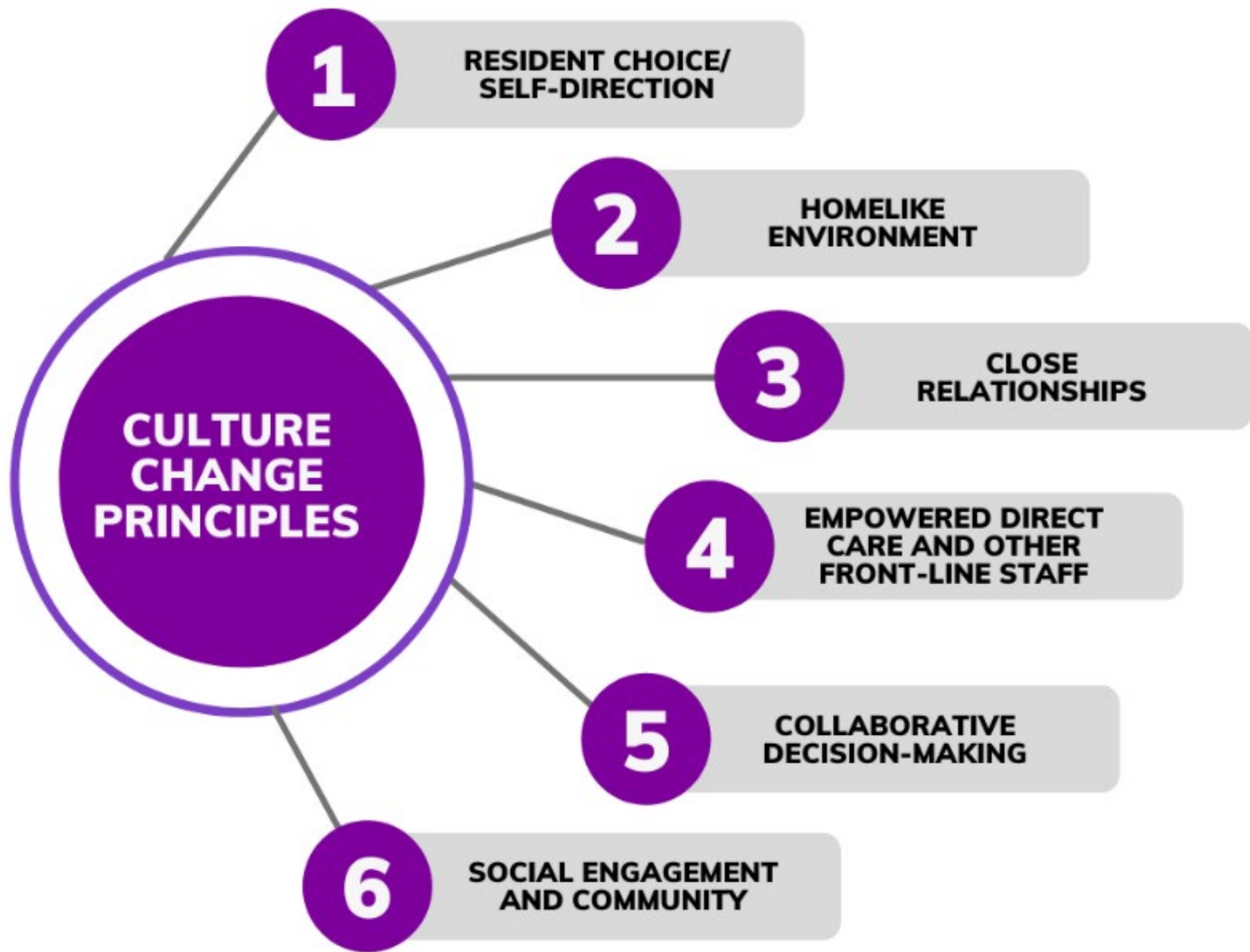
Direct care assistants (Shahbazim) work in self-managed teams. They have versatile duties, including personal care, meal planning and preparation, activities, and manage the daily operations of the home. Shahbazim have consistent assignment to residents and work collaboratively with the clinical team. A Guide works from outside the home and supervises the work of the Shahbazim that is not related to resident care, acting primarily as a coach.

# The Household Model (1996)

Based in Milwaukee, the first home opened in 1997 in Minnesota. More than 400 homes are part of the Household Model network. Ten to twenty residents live in each home. Homes have private bedrooms, each with bathroom and shower; shared living rooms; large tables for dining together; open kitchen areas, and easy access to the outdoors.

Direct caregivers are often referred to as care partners, since they support and uphold the philosophy of person-directed care. The elder/care partner relationship is at the heart of the household.

Action Pact provides consulting services, [www.actionpact.com](http://www.actionpact.com)



# The Pioneer Network

- ▶ Coalition of long-term care providers was founded in 1997 to promote and advocate for person-centered care and culture change in U.S. nursing homes. The Pioneer Network hosts an online resource library of toolkits and videos on culture changes topics, conferences on culture change, and conducts public policy advocacy.

<https://www.pioneernetwork.net/>



