



Friday Free for All

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In 100 words or less, briefly describe your Best Practice:

Development is an intrinsic part of living and conducive to what makes life worth living. Everyone, regardless of age or circumstance, must continually advance. Growth is imperative at any phase in life but is especially crucial in our midlife years. Our Best Practice, “**Friday Free for All**,” was inspired primarily by focusing on the seventh stage of *Erickson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development: Generativity versus Stagnation*. This period occurs during middle adulthood between the ages of 40-65. “**Friday Free for All**” is a weekly activity which promotes quality interaction between our younger residents and a variety of individuals within diverse settings.

What problem does your Best Practice address, and what is its primary purpose?

Erickson suggests that *generativity* is the necessity to “make our mark” on the world by creating and nurturing those things which advocate for making the world a better place. Those persons who take on the challenge and make an effort to promote the things and relationships that will outlast them generally feel more productive and satisfied as they continue to develop individually. However, *stagnation* refers to a sense of failure when we realize our lives have not contributed to society. These individuals may feel incomplete and also disconnected or uninvolved with their families, the greater community, and even themselves.

The biggest grievance among our younger residents is that of boredom. The primary purpose of our Best Practice is to help younger residents feel as if they are contributing to others within and outside our organization. “**Friday Free for All**” involves different ways to serve these residents by encouraging generativity and making a concentrated effort to avoid stagnation.

What group(s) of residents and others are involved in your Best Practice and how does it work? (Who and how many are helped, what are the benefits to these people, and what methods or procedures/protocols are used to get results?)

Although every resident in our facility is welcome to participate, this particular best practice is geared towards those who are between the ages of 40-65. Currently, there are ten (10) residents under our care who are within this middle adulthood juncture. “**Friday Free for All**” has many benefits which foster generativity for our residents by encouraging a commitment to invest time and energy into others. The residents are given an opportunity to pour valuable traits into their care givers and even the next generation as they celebrate fond memories and pass down traditions from their own.

Implementation of the practice routinely involves approximately ten (10) staff members from activities, nursing, and dietary as well as our therapy department. To love someone is to listen to them. “**Friday Free for All**” is a constant benefit to our staff simply because they can experience the enrichment that comes from being taught by the residents they care for on a daily basis. This only helps to improve communication, build strong bonds of friendship, and provide an endearing atmosphere of love and care between the staff and residents.

Volunteers from the community and other health care providers also play a substantial role in the program's execution. This is a valuable aspect to the best practice as it provides an extra dynamic to the relational features of bridging the gap that often exists between those who reside inside the facility and those in the local community.

“Friday Free for All” takes place every Friday afternoon in our facility Community Activity Room. The activity consists of a variety of interactive segments such as *“minute to win it”* games or dancing and singing to music from the 70's, 80's, or 90's while sipping on non-alcoholic beer and “mocktails”. Our staff and other contributors may learn how to do the *bump, twist, tootsie roll*, and maybe even the *shimmy* from Baby Boomers and/or Generation X. It might also include a *cooking class*, karaoke, or *baking and bagging cookies* for the local fire, EMS, and police departments.

What has your Best Practice accomplished and how have you been able to tell this?

For every resident, but especially for middle adult age residents, finding meaning within the daily struggles of needing long-term care can be perplexing to say the least. There are many added detriments to wellbeing, peace of mind, and quality of life that can accumulate over time if stagnation is not dealt with first hand. **“Friday Free for All”** has been effective in accomplishing the search for meaning in the lives of our younger residents. It has given them the venue and occasion to reach out beyond themselves and give to themselves by contributing to others, grow by cultivating others, and know more about who they are by knowing others.

This Best Practice has afforded our staff the great gift of distinctive interaction with these residents that transcends the typical paradigm which exists between care giver and resident. Thus it enhances the environment of care that our facility strives daily to provide. **“Friday Free for All”** also presents a unique approach to overcoming certain stigmas that can inhibit and even prevent interaction with residents of skilled nursing facilities and others on the outside.

We have witnessed firsthand that our younger residents receive great fulfillment in being blatantly recognized for who they are – younger! It's a wonderful thing to see a smile come across their faces as our Assistant Director of Nursing sings karaoke to one of their favorite songs from when they were back in high school. This is quickly outdone by the further gratification that comes from the residents themselves getting to sing karaoke either as soloists or with a group of other participants. It is quite a moving experience to watch a resident teach one of our CNA's how to dance. Yet, this is commonplace during **“Friday Free for All.”**

Our Activities Directors lead them in favorite games such as *trivial pursuit* by playing theme songs from popular movies in their childhood or adolescent years and giving them the satisfaction of correctly naming which movie it came from. We have watched delight come back into the eyes of our middle adult residents as they experience the competition of the *“minute to win it”* games. Laughter abounds as everyone enjoys the challenge of neatly stacking 25 pennies on a table without them falling to the floor before 60 seconds expires. The resident who can bounce the most ping-pong balls into a *Red Solo* cup in a minute wins the *“Pong Game”* and there's nothing like a *“mocktail”* or other beverage prepared by our dietary staff for the winning prize.

“Friday Free for All” as a best practice is really true to its name because it creates a free environment for the participants to simply be themselves. It serves to be a perpetual ice breaking activity! We've observed that some of our younger residents who don't say much or might be shy will often times break out of their shell during these activities. One such instance was the amazing moment a resident who is wheelchair bound (due to a bilateral trans-femoral amputation) taught our Activities Director the hand and arm movements to John Travolta's choreography in the 70's hit, *“Stayin' Alive,”* from the motion picture, *“Saturday Night Fever.”*

What problems, obstacles, or challenges might other facilities face in replicating part or all of your innovation? Were there any adverse effects or any ways that things turned out differently than you had planned? Do you know of any other facilities which have tried this or a similar Best Practice idea?

So far, there have been no obstacles or challenges. This best practice started out with a singular activity and blossomed into a whole variety of events. Although things did turn out differently, the outcomes have been very positive. As stated earlier, the idea of creating something special for our younger generation residents was inspired by *Erickson's Theory of Psychosocial Development*. This theory was a main point of consideration at an *AMDA - The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine* sponsored training event which was attended by our Administrator, Director of Nursing, and Social Service Designee and was explicitly aimed at "*The Younger Adult in The Long-Term Care Setting*." Some of the activities featured in "*Friday Free for All*" are not original and there's no doubt that other skilled nursing facilities conduct music therapy, games, etc. However, we are unaware of any facilities that are specifically reaching out to their younger residents.

What was the cost to implement your Best Practice (include dollars, staff supplies, equipment, etc.)? How did you pay for it?

As always, our staff is willing on multiple levels to contribute personally to the well-being of our residents. Costs have been kept to a minimum and equipment / supplies, when needed or used, have been donated:

Non-Alcoholic Beer	\$20.00 per month	Margarita Mix	\$20.00 per month
XM Radio	\$20.00 per month (donated by management)		
Food Items	(donated by our Dietary Contract Company)		
Misc. Supplies	(donated by staff)		

What are the reasons you consider this Best Practice to be excellent and innovative?

Excellent is defined as "*very good*." We all would agree that anything we can do to think of someone other than ourselves, or go beyond ourselves to give something that will last long after we're gone is an ultimate good. This is also true if we can encourage others to do the same! "**Friday Free for All**" is excellent by nature and stays true to the great aspiration of being good by making the world a better place. Our Best Practice solidifies its excellence in a wonderful way by allowing those who participate to experientially realize the wonder of it all presently as well as over time.

"**Friday Free for All**" is innovative because of its potential for growth. The same program meant to nurture development in others has the ability to expand! For instance, we are currently in the process of introducing a monthly program entitled "*Daycare to Eldercare*" in cooperation with "**Friday Free for All**." This structured activity will involve relationship building and mentorship between our residents and the children of a local pre-school and could potentially be a Best Practice in and of itself.

Additional topographies could continually supplement this Best Practice such as a *formal dance or prom, late night movies, educational seminars, the involvement of younger residents in quality improvement teams* or in *charities*, and even *makeover programs*. The amount of structured programs the innovation can support are as abundant as the opportunities it provides to overcome *stagnation* and promote *generativity* in our middle adulthood residents - truly endless!



Younger Residents and staff enjoy a free style dance to Van Morrison's *"Brown Eyed Girl"* during **"Friday Free for All."** Wish you could feel the energy and see the moves!





A younger resident sings “*Purple Rain*” in Tribute to **PRINCE** during Karaoke.



This resident enjoys a fresh “mocktail” as part of The “**Friday Free for All**” experience.



Residents engage in good conversation while shelling peas during a cooking class that is led by our QA nurse and Activities staff – a favorite feature of “**Friday Free for All.**”



Residents embrace the challenge of “*minute to win it*” and card games during “**Friday Free for All.**” Of course, there’s always time for a toast! Here are a few examples...





“As many years as I’ve worked here, I’ve never heard such laughter pouring from this room!” –
Facility Staff Member

