Creating Capabilities: Taking the Capabilities Approach to Aged Care

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‘Global communities coming together’
ACSA IAHSA2015 Joint International Conference
Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre, WA
31 August – 4 September 2015
‘...what next? Post 2015’

Jane Barratt’s challenges to ACSA 2014

• Are current models of aged care practice consistent with the life preferences of older adults?
  – now?
  – for the future?

• Do they protect the rights of older adults?

• Is the language we use in the aged services industry creating a problem?

Answers: No, no and yes
Jane’s suggested solution

Reframe our thinking
from
Active ageing
to

The Capabilities Approach
Reframing our thinking

The capabilities approach at BSL
– a five-year journey
From research to transformative practice

• Our research
• Our questions
• The Enhancing Capabilities pilot project
• The pilot project and the pilot team
• The new thinking
• The Enhancing Capabilities model
• The Enhancing Capabilities Training Program
• Incorporating CDC
• Outcomes
The Capability Approach – foundational values

The capability approach

• *Opportunities to do and be what constitutes a life one has reason to value*

• *The measure of a just society is the opportunities it offers its citizens to live valued lives*

(Amartya Sen 1999)
The Capability Approach – first principles

- Agency
- Opportunity
- Freedom
- Choice
We began with some research

We asked older adults what they value

• Our methodological framework
  – Nussbaum’s 10 Central Human Capabilities
  – Nussbaum’s 4 kinds of capabilities

• Survey
  – We constructed a questionnaire based on Nussbaum’s 10 central human capabilities
The 10 Central Human Capabilities

1. Life. Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length
2. Bodily health.
3. Bodily integrity.
4. Senses, imagination, thought.
5. Emotions.
6. Practical reason.
7. Affiliation.
8. Other species.
10. Control over one's environment.
   (A) Political
   (B) Material

Nussbaum 20039
Methodology

• Our sample
  – The questionnaire was administered to 600+ users of BSL aged services (220 responses across residential care, community care, social programs)
  – Nine focus groups (40 participants)

• Analysis
  – Quantitative analysis of survey responses
  – Transcription and thematic analysis of focus groups
## What our service users value in life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My health</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being safe</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making my own decisions</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The place where I live</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My independence</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling respected</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being well-informed</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being active</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting out &amp; about</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving my goals</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being with other people</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping others</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the community</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning new things</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The natural environment</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enhancing Capabilities
The BSL service role

- We asked, ‘If this is what is valued... what is the BSL sphere of influence? what role can our aged services play in enhancing capabilities?

- Drawing on Nussbaum’s 4 kinds of capabilities we developed the BSL aged services capability framework
4 Kinds of Capabilities

- **Basic capabilities**
  - the innate equipment of individuals
  - the foundation for developing more advanced capabilities

- **Internal capabilities**
  - The capabilities one develops through informal & formal education and community participation

- **External capabilities**
  - The freedoms or choices given or the constraints imposed by one’s living environment

- **Combined capabilities**
  - The interplay between internal and external capabilities

Nussbaum 1999
The BSL Aged Services Capability Framework

- Combined capabilities
- External capabilities: Other formal/informal institutions including family, community, and state
- Internal capabilities
- Basic capabilities

Enhancing Capabilities
We then asked ‘If this is BSL’s sphere of influence...’

• How can our services enhance capabilities?
• What opportunities can we create with our clients?

To seek answers, we created the

*Enhancing Capabilities Pilot Project*
Enhancing Capabilities Pilot Project

**Project objectives**

- To enhance the capabilities of BSL aged service users and staff
- To design, develop, implement and evaluate a capability model of service delivery
We set up a Pilot Team

Action research/action learning

10 practitioners from BSL residential aged care, community aged care & social programs met regularly over 2 years to

- Conceptualise a CA model
- Design and test the model
- Design a training program
- Design resources
- Train trainers
- Trial the training program
Challenging professional mind sets

Traditional aged services

– Success is measured by the quality of care provided

*The capability approach to aged services*

– Success is measured by the extent to which a person can *live a life they have reason to value*

*The OUTCOME*....
The BSL capability approach

Opportunity
to be and do what you value

Choice
to have multiple opportunities to choose from

Freedom
to live in an enabling environment

Agency
to decide what’s best for you
Enhancing Capabilities Principles

- Hope and Motivation
- Independence and Choice
- Empowerment
- Insight and Understanding
- Meaning and Aspiration
- Possibility and Opportunity
- Connectedness
- Respect and Dignity
- Creativity and Innovation

Enhancing Capabilities
Discovering capabilities

- Stories
- Possibilities
- Meanings
- Aspirations

Enhancing Capabilities
The New Model of Service
Seeing Abilities and Possibilities

Stories
My life
Past and Present
Stories about what has given my life value

Care is a tool for living
Care Assessment

Meaning
My life of value (past & present)
What has given my life meaning and made it worth living?

Possibilities
My living
Present and Future
How I can live the life I value?

Aspirations
My life of value (future)
What will give my life meaning and make it worth living?

My Plan
planning for living a life I value

Enhancing Capabilities
The BSL Enhancing Capabilities Model

**Stories**
- My life
- Past and Present
- Stories about what has given my life value

**Meaning**
- My life of value (past)
- What has given your life meaning and made it worth living?

**Aspirations**
- My life of value (future)
- What will give your life meaning and make it worth living?

**Possibilities**
- My living
- Present and Future
- My vision for enabling me to live the life I value

**Care is a tool for living**
- Care Assessment

**Care is a tool for living**

**My Plan**
- Enhancing Capabilities to achieve my goals and aspirations
- Planning for living a life I value

**My Plan Summary**
- Stories, meaning, aspirations, possibilities, care needs
- In clients’ language

**Regular Review**
- 3/6/12 mths
- Revise plan and program/schedule
- Revise summary

**Enhancing Capabilities**
Maintaining the balance

Social/Emotional Needs

Functional/Physical needs

Flourishing living a life of value

Care is a tool that enables people to flourish through living lives they have reason to value
Developing a training model

Three Core Conceptual Frameworks

• Living a life one values (the capabilities approach)
  Sen 1999; Nussbaum 2011

• Flourishing & the PERMA model (positive psychology)
  Seligman 2012

• Storying (narrative psychology)
  McAdams & McLean, 2013
Flourishing – PERMA

- **Positive emotions**: feeling good
- **Engagement**: being completely absorbed in activities
- **Relationships**: being authentically connected to others
- **Meaning**: purposeful existence
- **Achievement**: a sense of accomplishment and success
Why a narrative approach?

Stories are

– literal & metaphorical
– rich and multi-layered

Stories embody and reveal

– identity and self concept
– meaning and coherence
– unarticulated or latent interests and aspirations
Enhancing staff capabilities

Interactive learning

Reflect on practice

Apply learning

Monthly x 3 sessions
All BSL staff (community, residential, day & respite) are training in 2015
15 participants per course
Mentoring & reflective practice program

• Developed alongside Enhancing Capabilities project
• Mentor training
• Regular ongoing reflective practice embedded in professional service delivery
Reflective practice and capabilities

Planning → Possibilities → Aspirations → Reflecting → Meaning → Acting → Stories → Planning
Anticipating self directed care

People at Centre Stage project 2009-2012 (Australian Research Council Linkage Grant)

- Deakin University
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Uniting Care Community Options

• Aim:

Development and implementation of a self-directed care pilot service model employing an action research methodology.
The advent of Consumer Directed Care


*Home Care Packages Program Guidelines.* August 2013

Consumer Directed Care mandated

- 1 August 2013 – all new packages
- 1 July 2015 – all packages
Opportunity to be and do what you value
Choice to have multiple opportunities to choose from
Freedom to live in an enabling environment
Agency to decide what’s best for you

CDC integration
Outcomes for BSL aged services delivery

The Enhancing Capabilities model

– reconceptualises the meaning of ‘care’
– redirects focus of services to ‘living a life of value’
– underpins mandatory care plans
– underpins BSL CDC model
– is embedded in systems and processes
Outcomes for users of BSL aged services

- Empowers consumers
- Creates a plan for living the life one values
- Enhances capabilities to achieve goals and aspirations
- Enhances capabilities in all 10 dimensions
- Addresses interdependencies among capabilities
- Expands possibilities and opportunities for citizenship and participation
- Incorporates CDC principles:
  - choice, control, respect, partnership, re-ablement
Tools & resources

- The Enhancing Capabilities Practice Overview
- The Enhancing Capabilities Practice Guide
- The Mentoring & Reflective Practice Overview
- The Mentoring & Reflective Practice Guide
- MyPlan template
- Online resources for staff
Kimberley H, Gruhn, R & Huggins, S 2012, *Valuing capabilities in later life: the capability approach and Brotherhood of St Laurence aged services*, Fitzroy, Brotherhood of St St Laurence.  

McAdams, D & McLean, K 2013 'Narrative Identity.' *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, vol. 22 no. 3 pp. 233-238 .


Questions & Discussion

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