



2.1 CREATING A CULTURE OF GENTLENESS

Gentle Teaching

The culture of gentleness concept begins with the philosophy of Gentle Teaching by John McGee. LADD embraces this philosophy. Each and every person employed by LADD must make a commitment to follow our Mission, Vision, and Values while at work; it is part of our job requirements to be employed here at LADD. Additionally, following the Mission, Vision, and Values can help us to personally grow as positive, caring, and compassionate individuals in our own families and community. We are all here to make a positive difference in each other's lives!!

Remember employees are there to make a positive difference in people's lives. The people you are supporting must be shown that they are cared for, loved and respected. Employees are to create that environment to show you **C.A.R.E.**

This is done by using:

1. **Compassion,**
2. **Affirmations,**
3. Creating positive **Relationships,**
4. Having **Empathy** for the person.

Following the core values of the organization is also what helps create this culture of gentleness.

Employee should use S.O.U.L. when working with people served. Using S.O.U.L. help in finding solutions

Stop – take a deep breath,

Open – your mind and body to all the possible creative solutions,

Understand – that you must value P.E.O.P.L.E., say the values and know them,

Link – to the very best part of yourself; the part of you that has that compassion, caring, empathy, love.

Employees are to teach people how to make **G.O.O.D.** decisions. To do this review:

1. The **Goal** that the person is trying to achieve/what do they want?
2. Help them to look at their **Options** to achieve it. Help them answer the question “How can I get what I want?” and for each Option.
3. Examine what is the **Outcome** for each that is chosen; and
4. Help the person to make the best **Decision** now that their outcomes have been considered.

All employees must remember that it is the decision of the person supported and employees there to coach and guide them through the process; steering them towards achieving their goal, remembering that each person's safety must be assured at all times. Employees must go back through the process if Options being used are unsafe or are detrimental decisions. Employee will be “Making the Difference” in the people receiving supports lives. It is important to create an environment to show C.A.R.E.!

Also, unless a structured and approved goal/plan directly states otherwise, the following are rules for interacting with the people we serve:

1. Always invite or ask the person to do something, never tell them.
2. Do not tell someone to stop doing something; instead invite him or her to choose something else.
3. Always praise or ‘**affirm**’ appropriate behavior and try to be descriptive; for example, “Your hair looks great! You did a nice job combing it.” Use ‘affirmations’ to build their self-esteem; “You’re smart!”, “You are so funny!”, “I love being with you!”
4. Do not refer to a person's challenging behaviors as a way to praise; for example, do not say, “You haven’t been yelling, that’s really good”. Instead, praise and respond to the appropriate behaviors; “Wow, what great manners you have!”

5. Be sensitive when discussing someone's challenging behaviors in front of that person; talk with them, not about them. Try to involve the person in the discussion and "teach" a more acceptable behavior.
6. Use positive reinforcement; "you did a great job picking out your clothes today! "before telling someone that something needs improvement "and your shoes aren't quite right for the weather today, let's see if we can find something that will work a little better".
7. Positive attention should be given to everyone on a regular basis. Sometimes it may seem difficult, but we must always find positive and loving things to say to everyone. Remember that tone of voice and body language say even more than your words; they are extremely important parts of this communication. Your body language and tone should match the message you are trying to convey.

As part of Job Essential, it is important that employees routinely review the values of P.E.O.P.L.E. and demonstrate the tools of Gentle Teaching/Creating that culture of gentleness. To illustrate some concrete examples of the way to use Gentle Teaching while interacting, please keep in mind the following when asking a person to do something:

1. Ask the person to do the task and reinforce all movements towards it. For example, if a person appears reluctant to perform a task but looks in that direction, praise him or her for even this action.
2. If the person stops working on the task or begins to look frustrated, do not say anything negative. Attempt to re-engage to person in the task, perhaps by bringing the task to that person if they have walked away. Any involvement should be reinforced and praised, including a pat on the back or a "high five", etc.
3. Remember that all words and verbal interactions should be calm, positive, soothing and supportive. All physical interaction must be gentle and soft.

Gentle Teaching is a philosophy developed by John McGee of involvement and interaction based upon creating an atmosphere in which people feel safe, loved, loving and engaged. Training on Gentle Teaching will be provided throughout employment. However, the following is a rudimentary outline of Gentle Teaching and describes L.A.D.D., Inc.'s expectations of employee behavior. For more information: [See the Gentle Teaching Primer John McGee Document by clicking here.](#)

Gentle Teaching involves being "in tune" with a person's needs and is characterized by a welcoming and uplifting attitude, generous spirit, warm smile, caring gaze and kind words. We always strive to evoke a sense of peace. Employees will never allow their demeanor to provoke violence.

Gentle Teaching involves:

1. Substantial increase in our warm interactions
2. Establishing of a feeling of companionship
3. Forming an extended family "culture of life"
4. Teaching everyone to feel safe, engaged, loved and loving

Gentle Teaching reminds us that:

1. Each human being is made of mind, body and spirit
2. Personal change comes from within our own hearts
3. Each of us desires a feeling of "being with" others
4. Care giving relationships are based upon unconditional love
5. Community change occurs from the bottom up