

Diane Singleton

Better Communication and Understanding

Supervisor asked me if I was interested & I said yes. She enrolled me in the class. Have always been interested in the means and modes of communication. Working in the human service field has allowed me to meet many individuals with communication issues and I always felt the need to know how and what ways I could have been helping them and myself to better communicate and have an understanding.

The need for knowledge keeps me going. That desire to want to assist people in any way possible. Empowering someone to reach his or her highest potential no matter what that may be. Giving society a better understanding of individuals with disabilities and their so many possibilities. The love for mankind and the love of people keeps me going. I am more conscious of all people and always trying to find their means of communication. Things I took for granted or things I thought were behavioral issues, I look closer and see I have done some individuals I support an injustice by thinking there were behaviors when actually they were communicating. I am more aware and I do not take anything for face value anymore.

I am most proud of being able to have the tools now to better understand and assess the individuals I support. I am most proud of the fact that I realize I can admit I may have misjudged so many clients I have worked with, but I have been able to go back to many of them and say "I am sorry", I did not know, but I know now and it won't happen again if I can help it. I have learned and I will use these tools I have.

My biggest challenge is getting to the individuals I need to. Staff not utilizing the information I have given them to better understand the individual and his or her means of communication. Not enough time to get to all that needs the support. Time management!

The one experience I would share was the second day of my mentors' class and I had the opportunity to hear a speaker by the name of Jennifer McKeon. She was truly inspirational and I have told her story to anyone who would listen. Jennifer is one of the reasons I feel I want and need to go on. She has truly given individuals a voice.

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