day two:

Addressing Social Devaluation Through Valued Social Roles
The most common “wounds” of devalued (especially impaired) people

1. physical impairment
2. functional impairment
3. relegation to low status
4. rejection, by family, community members, service workers
5. cast into one or more devalued roles
6. being stigmatized, surrounded by negative images
7. being multiply jeopardized, scapegoated
8. distantiation, usually by segregation and congregation
9. loss of autonomy, even total loss of freedom
10. discontinuity with the physical environment / objects
11. social and relationship discontinuity
12. loss of freely given relationships/boughten relationships
13. deindividualization
14. involuntary material poverty
15. impoverishment of experience
16. exclusion from participation in higher order value systems
17. having one’s life wasted
18. being brutalized / the object of deathmaking

What makes SRV different?

clearly spells out the problem we are seeking to address: devaluation

acknowledges the part human services has to play in the problem

oriented toward development of valued roles as a change strategy

NOT activity oriented, but roles based
Social Role
(as defined by Talcott Parsons)

a social role is a
socially expected pattern of
- behaviors
- responsibilities
- expectations
- privileges

Some Reasons Why Social Roles are so Important

roles give a person a “place” in society
roles affect all aspects of a person’s life
the more “big” roles, and the more valued they are, the better chance for “the benefit of the doubt”
the more valued roles, the more likely the person will have ready access to “the good things of life”
Roles

Powerfully Impact Upon

status and reputation
self image
acceptance and belonging
associations and relationships
autonomy and freedom
personal growth and development
opportunities for contribution
lifestyle
material gain

Social Role Valorization

- first order goal: the “good things of life”
- second order goal: social valuation
- third order goal: valued social roles
feedback loop between role expectancy and role performance

Five Role Communicators

the physical environment
the people associated with one
the behaviors that are expected, shaped
the language that is used
other miscellaneous images
Some of what constitutes the “good things of life”

- good health
- home
- family, friends, loved ones
- being welcomed
- having a say
- freedom of movement
- security, protection
- belonging
- respect
- work
- fair treatment
- contributing

ready access to the places where ordinary everyday life is conducted, in ordinary ways, doing ordinary things with typical people

some important SRV concepts:

- relevance and potency
- heightened vulnerability and the conservatism corollary
- cultural valued analogue
principles of relevance and potency

relevance:
the program meets the needs of the people precisely and in order of priority

potency:
and in ways that are effective, intense and powerful

“heightened vulnerability”
bad things are much more likely to happen to devalued people, and when they do, they have a much more devastating effect
The Conservatism Corollary

the more a party is vulnerable, devalued, impaired
and the longer it has been the case
the more important is:
  prevention (don’t add bricks)
  remediation (reduce wounding, take bricks away)
  compensation (enhance image and competency)

how social judgements are formed

A  B  C  D
observer's own characteristics & experiences, including expectations formed in childhood and/or from previous contact with observed person/group
characteristics of observer's physical environment e.g. stresses
characteristics of observer's social environment including prevailing values, norms, conventions
what is actually observed, the "facts" about the person/group being observed
Culturally Valued Analogue
“CVA”

a practice that is well known in the society,
is easily understood by most of its members,
has positive expectations and images attached to it,
and is readily identifiable

Some potential pitfalls in SRV implementation

pursuing social contacts but without social roles, (fostering an orientation to activity rather than roles)
failure to take into account role complementarity
allowing easier attributive roles to drive out the harder competency based ones
failure to understand that roles must be communicated to others
not appreciating that not every valued role is appropriate for a particular devalued party
some important ideas to keep in mind while in service to another

How we talk about people and treat them, reflects what we think of them. How we think of them reflects what we believe about them.

Seek to deeply identify with those you serve. Ask: how are we alike? What do we share?

Appreciate the damage done by devaluation / devalued roles to the person's image, competency, reputation, relationships.

Make yourself aware of the heightened vulnerability of service recipients and think in terms of safeguards.

Consider what the person you serve offers you in terms of your personal development.