

Workshops

Wednesday, 17 September 2025
12.50-13.50



12.50-13.50 (60 mins.)

Theme:
Kaleidoscope of Change

Presenter(s):
Melanie Loroff – Executive Director
Heather Foster – Associate Executive Director
Saskatchewan Alternative Initiatives
Saskatoon, Canada
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Our presentation is targeted towards change management that creates personal growth and encourages those we encounter to be inspiring leaders. Gentle Teaching Practitioners will leave with a better understanding of cultivating a stronger organizational culture within the Gentle Teaching framework. The heart of this presentation will focus on the positive impact Gentle Teaching has using the pillars and tools to re-establish trust, inspire hope, promote resiliency, and guide change.

We will focus on building leadership skills during change through components of humility, transparency, compassion, and vulnerability using storytelling and research studies. There will be interactive participation to encourage connection and collaboration exploring the facets of gentle teaching and how it relates to leaders.



12.50-13.50 (60 mins.)

Theme:
“The many colours of Gentle Teaching Family Camps - Companionship building in practice.”

Presenter(s):
Monika Niewiarowska-Zych - Psychologist
Magdalena Grabowska - Special educator
Katarzyna Raabe – Special educator, Brainologist
Aleksandra Świerczek – Psychologist
People-to-People Association
Chelmno, Poland
psycholog.mnz@gmail.com

In our presentation, we would like to invite participants to watch a short (about 10 minutes) film in which we explain the idea behind the Gentle Teaching Camps we organize for families raising children with disabilities. Then, in a practical way, in the form of an interactive workshop, we want to show in which ways we can build companionship based on Gentle Teaching tools. It will be interactive, creative and fun!



12.50-13.50 (30-60 mins.)

Theme:
The Ikigai Framework – A Life of Meaning and Purpose

Presenter(s):
Joann Douziech, Independent Consultant
- Ikigai Consulting Inc.
Saskatchewan, Canada
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Joann challenges language that diminishes disabilities, emphasizing that intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are an intrinsic part of a person, shaping their experiences, talents, and interactions with the world. True person-centered support requires understanding both IDD and the individual's values, dreams, and goals.

Her Ikigai Lifespan Model of Support provides a structured approach to fostering safety, health, happiness, and growth. Rooted in the belief that individuals with IDD can learn and deserve to be taught, the model is built on three key pillars: engineering the environment, supporting skill development, and staff and caregiver approaches.

By shifting perspectives, we can create meaningful change and empower individuals to thrive. Change you lens and see a life transform!



12.50-13.50 (45-60 mins.)

Theme:
From Anxiety and Isolation to Security and Festival

Presenter(s):
Helle Jørgensen, Social worker
– Landsbyen Sølund
Josephine Bjerregaard Larsen
– Landsbyen Sølund
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This is the story of how a staff, over the course of five years, has worked patiently and purposefully to help a citizen break free from isolation and the fear of both fellow human beings and the outside world.

Over the past five years, a dedicated staff has patiently worked to help Dennis, a man with Fragile X syndrome, anxiety, and self-harming behaviour, overcome his deep fear of people and the outside world. His life-threatening illness in 2019 unexpectedly became the key to breaking his isolation—staff had to provide close care, which created opportunities to build trust. Through careful and gentle interaction, they focused on his passion for circus, clowns, and the Sølund bird, using these interests as anchors of security to ease his anxiety. Slowly, Dennis began to open up, allowing more staff to approach him, showing less frustration, and even engaging playfully with those around him.