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Unique and Individual Work

Do

Develop opportunities and support arrangements that are tailored to the person and like no-one else's.

Story

Greg want to do oil painting, so as well as looking at the usual resources such as painting groups in day centres and college courses, staff assisted him to look for his own studio space. Although Greg now has his own studio, he shares a building with other artists with whom he can spend time when he chooses to do so.

'In more than half the homes we visited, residents with learning disabilities went out in groups of two or more on a regular basis. Typically on these trips the group would congregate and have very little interaction with others in the community.' (Lord & Pedlar 1991, p218)

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Hints & Hazards

Do not assume that inclusion means extrovert! Some people prefer to be more sociable than others. Where the host organisation welcomes a person with a disability, there is sometimes a temptation to introduce other disabled people to the same organisation, rather than maintaining the commitment to person centred and individualised arrangements. Wolfensberger (1972) spelled out the reasons why work should be done with individuals rather than groups to minimise labelling and facilitate the formation relationships with other citizens.

Unique solutions demand imagination and flexibility and this can be hard for staff who work in organisations that support conformity rather than creativity.

Marc Gold (<http://www.marcgold.com>) urged people to maintain a creative approach when he flippantly advised that if you find a successful way of assisting someone, don't use it again!