



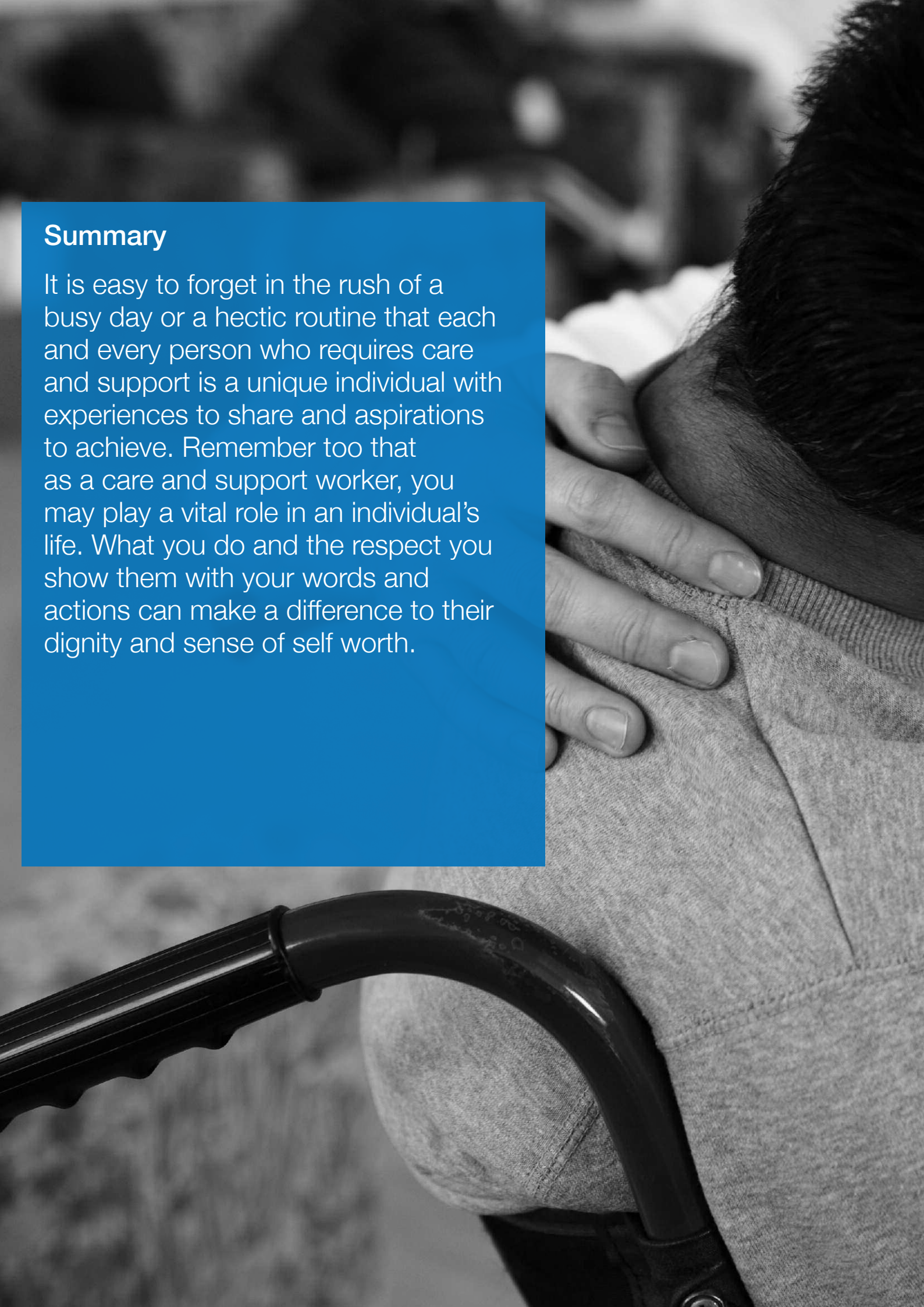
Principles to practice

Principle 1

Value the uniqueness of every individual

Summary

It is easy to forget in the rush of a busy day or a hectic routine that each and every person who requires care and support is a unique individual with experiences to share and aspirations to achieve. Remember too that as a care and support worker, you may play a vital role in an individual's life. What you do and the respect you show them with your words and actions can make a difference to their dignity and sense of self worth.



Good practice scenario

Situation

Supporting a man in his middle years who had moved into a supported living environment.

When supporting him to do his washing in the communal laundry area, it was noted that he was showing an interest in female items of clothing and later it was observed that some items were missing and these were found in his bedroom. Following discussions with the gentleman, it emerged that he enjoyed wearing female clothing on private occasions. After discussing with the gentleman the need to respect other people's property and not take items that did not belong to him, it was discussed how he could be supported with his individual needs, wishes and preferences around his sexuality. This included:

- Confidentiality and privacy – who the gentleman was prepared to share this information with.
- Discussing the sensibilities of fellow residents who may feel uncomfortable if the gentleman chose to be in communal areas in women's clothes.
- Supporting the gentleman to purchase his own items of female clothing and accessories. He didn't feel comfortable to go into a shop to buy these things, so he was supported to shop online allowing him to choose and try things on in comfort and privacy of his room.
- Discussing with the gentleman other support he may need from staff members.

Dilemma

You are supporting a woman who is very tactile and frequently wants to hold your hand or touch your arm when talking to you. You understand that this is important to her and reassures her. The mission statement of your employer is to value each individual but your organisation's policies discourage any physical contact except when carrying out personal and intimate care tasks.

- What would you do in this situation? Would you hold the woman's hand, or pull your hand away?
- Would you challenge the organisation's policy to enable you to deliver person centred care?
- If you challenge this policy, who would you go to and how would you go about this?

“Dignity focuses on the significance and value of every person as a unique individual”

Manager

“There is so much more to caring for people than following rules and care plans, care workers need time and space to really think and talk about what people want and need. Make sure you give all your staff this opportunity with everyone, every day”

Manager

“Delivering dignity in care and support is proven to improve individual’s independence and ability to cope through a hard time, it can make the difference between giving up and getting back to living life, no matter how hard the challenge is they are facing”

Dignity Champion, British Red Cross

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