

# **OLA METHOD**

## **(Ordinary Living Assessment)**

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**HOW TO MEASURE "ORDINARY LIVING"**

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The purpose of the method is to objectively capture, as far as possible, the extent to which the person lives a "normal/ordinary" life. For a person who does not need support to live independently, such a definition is not important. However, for a person who does need support, it can very easily happen that the support pulls him or her into an institutional cycle that is far removed from how mainstream society lives.

To determine the extent to which a person, at any given time, is living a 'normal life', 8 criteria are used, each of which has a scale. On one side of each scale is a value describing normal life. On the other side of the scale is a value describing a fully institutionalised, controlled life. The other values of the scale try to differentiate between these two limits. Each scale also has a set threshold where a breakthrough occurs – still institutional X already close to normal life.

## 1. Housing

- ❗ Institutional building
- ❗ Humanized housing (also single rooms, but more people)
- ❗ Group housing – double rooms
- ✔ Group housing – single rooms
- ✔ Individual housing – flat

## 2. Family + friends

- ❗ Only people in the institution
- ❗ Institution – activities with volunteers, organised by the institution
- ❗ Regular contact with people outside the institution (family friend), still in the institution
- ✔ Regular contact with people outside the institution (family friend)
- ✔ Family friends wider group – activities based on person's decision

### 3. Relationships (partners, family, friends)

It doesn't have to be a regular cohabitation, just an opportunity for contacts of one's choice

- ❗ People do not have the opportunity and do not live partner relationships, their sexuality is not addressed
- ❗ They are in the role of children, their physical age is not accepted
- ✅ They have the opportunity, they live partner relationships + sexuality
- ✅ They are in the role of adults and their physical age and needs are accepted.

### 4. Leisure time, hobbies

- ❗ Excessive leisure time (when people are not involved in the activities of daily life and the institution does everything for them)
- ❗ Organised by institutions
- ❗ Group form
- ✅ Leisure time to the same extent as other people
- ✅ Used by the person according to his/her choices, interests, even with the support of a service
- ✅ Individually (fully according to one's decision)

### 5. Work

- ❗ No work
- ❗ Activation / work in an institution
- ❗ Unpaid work when people **have** the skills to engage in work for money.
- ✅ Regulated market / social employment
- ✅ Free labour market

## 6. Education (keep it for adults too and use it to encourage meeting other people...)

- ❗ No education
- ❗ In an institution
- ❗ Specialized school
- ✅ Inclusive education

## 7. Public services common to citizens (public transport, doctor, culture ...)

- ❗ Outside the normal environment, isolation
- ❗ Public services are replaced by institutions
- ✅ In the normal environment, community
- ✅ Public services are used routinely in the community

## 8. Self-determination, exercise of will, communication

- ❗ The person is the object of care
- ❗ The person is decided by other people in all areas of life without his/her involvement, presence
- ❗ One cannot exercise one's will
- ❗ If he does not communicate with words, the institution does not look for ways to support the person in understanding (we know what he wants, we understand him)
- ✅ Man is the subject of care
- ✅ The person decides or is supported in deciding for him/herself
- ✅ The person exercises his/her will
- ✅ If not communicating with words, the service supports the person to communicate and understand themselves (also with people outside the service, adequate form of AAC etc.)

### Legend

- ❗ Values in red indicate the institutional value of the criterion.
- ✅ Values in green express the value of the criterion as normal life or close to it.

# Possibilities of applying the OLA method in practice

## **- Human**

The basis of the method is to apply it to the situation of a specific person. It is a tool that helps to capture the state of the person, but also the changes in this state, with the aim that the person can live life as a peer in a normal environment, with normal roles. This can also provide information that can be aggregated for a specific service or provider.

## **- Service provider**

The service provider can use the OLA method when working with their clients. It can aggregate and further evaluate the data for the clients and use it for planning. This will allow him to more appropriately set up care for specific clients, but also for the service as a whole.

## **- Regional authority**

The regional authority can further aggregate data for services it sets up or that operate in its region. It can then better plan the need for services and their quality.

## **- National authority**

If the method is used by all social service providers in the country, the national authority (ministry) can have up-to-date and continuous information on the status and trends of the services provided. In this way, it can effectively determine social strategies and policies.