



# Hands

## The Use of Touch

Our hands as a tool can include many uses – from a wave, a thumbs up, how we use them as we talk, simply how we ‘hold’ our hands (open palm, clenched fist, etc.) Every way that we use our hands sends a message and informs others about who we are and impacts how safe and loved they may feel with us. However, most of us think about touch when we consider this tool. Our touch is a powerful tool that can teach and reinforce feeling safe and loved.

When considering our use of touch with others, we need to consider many factors, including how to touch (soft or firm), when to touch, where to touch, etc. We also need to consider things such as our own boundaries regarding personal space and comfort with touch and being touched, the others boundaries, any known trauma related to touch, any concerns regarding the touch being romanticized, etc. With that said, and considered, it is critical that, whenever possible, we plan for ways and times to use our touch with others. We all know that being touched is essential to humans thriving!

## What Did John Say?

*“...our touch is very important because it can send a direct and concrete message to the person that he/she is safe with us and loved by us.*

*It is not always possible to use touch as a tool, but when we can it is powerful because it can give a clear message of being safe and loved.*

*We must be aware that our hands begin to give a new memory- safe and loving, slow and gentle, warm and nurturing. Instead of fear, they need to signify warmth, affection, support, uplifting, kindness, and welcoming.”*

Q1

How do *you* currently use touch with those you support? Go around the room and share with your team.

How do the people you support prefer to be touched?

Q2

Q3

How can we, individually and as a team, increase our use of touch?

## Connecting to Our Purpose

Our 'Central Purpose' in the lives of others is to Nurture, Teach & Sustain the experiences of Connectedness, Companionship & Community

- **Nurturing Safe and Trust:** Gentle touch communicates care and non-violence, fostering a sense of safety and trust, which is foundational for connectedness.
- **Building Companionship:** Using hands in a warm and welcoming way symbolizes an invitation to companionship and shared moments of presence.
- **Creating Connection:** Physical gestures, such as holding hands or a soft touch, reinforce emotional connection and mutual respect.