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Interview with a PAC Trainer

Kasie Wimmer

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I had the pleasure of connecting with Kasie Wimmer recently. She is a Carlton University Instructor at Carlton Senior Living. Read on to see what she had to say about her recent experience at the PAC Trainer Certification event that she attended earlier this year.

There are still three opportunities to attend a [Trainer Certification in 2018](#). Picture yourself enjoying the warm weather in Phoenix, Arizona or Naples, Florida in November. Or how about getting your holiday shopping done in early December in Chicago, Illinois?

DS: How did you learn about Positive Approach® to Care?

KW: I was first introduced to Teepa Snow and the PAC training material when taking on a new role within Carlton Senior Living of developing and piloting a live initial clinical training for newly hired caregivers, med techs, and department managers within our company. I was provided with the Positive Approach to Care videos *The Art of Caregiving* and *Challenging Behaviors* and was blown away by the techniques shown in each video. Talk about "ah-ha" moments! The PAC philosophy on dementia changed much of my perspective and allowed me to create a more dynamic and successful training program.

DS: Why did you decide to attend a PAC Certification event to be trained as a PAC Certified Independent Trainer?

KW: As soon as our Director of Staff Education and Development became aware of this opportunity, she began making plans for me and two other regional trainers to attend. There was no hesitation on our end! The knowledge we gained from simply watching the two videos I listed above allowed us to evolve in our practices and improve the quality of care that we provide for our seniors living with dementia each and every day. The idea of becoming PAC Certified and further transforming our abilities as facilitators was certainly a well-received one!

DS: What happened when you went to the cert? What happened that day?

KW: I have participated in countless conference-style training courses, but none quite as passionate and multifaceted as what I encountered in Fort Worth with the PAC Team. There was a very obvious difference between the normal teacher/student relationship and that of a PAC mentor/learner. Yes, some of us were there for career-related goals, and others for personal ones, but we all came with a definite desire to learn. The PAC Trainers themselves seemed to have a goal of their own, and that was to ensure that we got what we came for! They truly set us up for success — and it comes across as though this is how they base *their* success. How unique is that?!

DS: What did you notice about PAC training compared to other learning opportunities you have had?

KW: I've been asked this question before! And this is always the first thing that comes to mind: I never knew I was a kinesthetic learner before PAC! One of the reasons I respect this particular style of training is due to how organized and well-researched it is. PAC Trainers explore different types of learning styles and how people actually learn as part of the two-day certification. As a facilitator — a successful one — not only do you need to understand the material, you also need to understand how people learn; and that this may look different for each person in a room full of twenty people. I always had the first part down, and PAC has taught me the second, which I now feel is far more valuable.

DS: What surprised you about the training?

KW: Aside from the above, I have to say that I was so pleasantly surprised by the idea of a mentor. Someone there for you to answer your questions, support you on your path toward certification, and even be a sort of coach to you — celebrate your successes, and help you work through your struggles.

DS: What is your current role?

KW: My title is Carlton University Instructor. The best way to describe this is that I facilitate the live orientation process for all new hires within my region (a total of four communities), as well as the initial live clinical ("caregiver") training required by the State of California. Carlton Senior Living is currently the only adult living facility (ALF) in California doing this live, as opposed to utilizing Care & Compliance or another computer-based training program.

DS: How do you utilize being a PAC Certified Independent Trainer in your daily interaction at work?

KW: This changed the game! This has nothing to do with me and everything to do with the PAC Team, but I certainly returned a fundamentally better facilitator than when I left. I utilized the skills introduced and practiced during that time every day and have seen a substantial change in the way our curriculum is received by larger groups. Our Curriculum incorporates AELCs (Adult Experimental Learning Cycles) on a consistent basis and has resulted in more participation and skill demonstrated by learners.

DS: How has what you have learned changed your job?

KW: It reignited a fire for training others in me that was there, but not quite as vibrant as it is now. I have many more tools to work with to better myself for the benefit of others.

DS: What will you do differently now that you're a PAC Certified Independent Trainer?

KW: One of the biggest personal takeaways for me was that I needed to acknowledge that my skill set and presentation play a major role in the success of our new hires. When I'm invested — and not just in those that have a more common learning style — our new hires are more invested. This definitely increases the probability that they will implement

these amazing techniques in the field — and hopefully teach others! The culture of memory care in our communities has already shown this.

DS: How has the PAC philosophy allowed you to do what you're doing in a different way?

KW: When I come across a new associate that (to me) is showing disinterest, I now consider that I may not be approaching them the way they need to be approached. I pull out one of my new PAC tools and implement it with them and tend to see more engagement afterward.