# Relationship Circles – Transcript

We're going to talk about the relationship circle and its role in learning about the important people in someone's life. What is important to someone will always include people—family, friends, neighbors, colleagues. By having conversations and using the person-centered thinking tool called the relationship circle, we can learn about and record the important people in someone's life. This tool is the starting point for thinking about ways to deepen or create opportunities for relationships.

A relationship circle is particularly useful for exploring who a person knows, how they know them, who knows the person, how those networks can help the person find opportunities and support to live the life they want, and who gets on best with the person. This information is vital for ensuring the best staff or volunteer match.

Let's consider the case of Olive, who is supported by the home care service within an extra care housing scheme. Olive's son, Brian, found it crucial for his mother to stay connected with family and friends. He also believed that the staff supporting her should be able to chat with her about the people in her life, considering Olive had always been a people person.

To this end, he completed a relationship circle for Olive, with the assistance of the admiral nurse who was supporting her. This helped identify all the people in Olive's life and the range of different relationships she had with others. Brian felt that understanding Olive's network of relationships would enable family and friends to continue being involved in her life by ensuring that those providing support were aware of and facilitated these relationships to thrive.

This was especially important given that Olive's dementia was progressing. It also provided a much fuller picture of Olive's life, as conversations about the many people she knew helped paint a picture of who she was and what her life had been like prior to the onset of her dementia.