

Cedric Mfuranzima:

My name is Cedric Mfuranzima, I'm 26, I work in the Cumberland County. Been a DSP for a good two years. Becoming a DSP wasn't something of an accident to me, it was a conscious decision. I was curious and I had a heart to care for people. In counting, I've been working as a DSP and working with DSPs for about three years plus.

It's been a very rewarding process in many ways. The impact of a direct support professional in a residential care setting is best captured on a personal level. When you look at them and you see them smile, even if it's a small grin, for me, that's how I define success.

To see what you've been able to do for one person, obviously you can only do so much given the intensity of the job, but the best thing is to see what happened between you and one member. I remember this time, Jacob had to be moved to traditional area because of some level of bullying, some behavioral patterns we were noticing that were not safe for him. People trying to scam him, take away his pocket money, and we decided as a management team, it's the best thing to do is to move him to a different area where he could have a different set of friends and build a different community around himself. The best way to do it was to organize a boring event with all our residents, and Jacob was one of them. Seeing the way he was able to break away from his loneliness, seeing the way he was able to break free and be joyful for once, where he could put behind whatever had happened to him before, it was a very fulfilling moment. He came and he gave me a big hug and said, "You are my hero." I never set out to be called a hero DSP or direct support provider, but when Jacob called me that, I said, "Nobody can really pay me much money to make me feel this way." And that's how I measure the impact of a direct support professional.

My advice will be, be curious, try to improve other people's lives and welcome the challenge. You'll learn a lot about yourself and make a good living.

Speaker 1:

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