



Provider Power Moves

Practical Steps. Big Results.



United For People with
Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

Bored to Busy Blueprint

September 2026
Sara Sherman



Hello!

30+ years experience in the DD field...

- **Lead Medicaid Policy Developer** - Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (Dep Director)
- **Section Chief HomeCare Waiver Clinical Services** – Ohio Department of Medicaid
 - Created Ohio's Private Duty Nursing Program
- **Managed Care Contract Manager** – Ohio Department of Medicaid
- **Director of Vocational Rehabilitation** – Licking/Knox Goodwill
- **ICF/IDD Administrator/Director** – 2 Agencies
- **Director of Residential Facilities Waiver Homes**
- **Director of Services and Supports Administrator** – 2 County Boards of Developmental Disabilities
- **Metropolitan Authority Housing Director**
- **Project Manager for Ohio Department of Medicaid** - MMIS Managed Care System
- **Managed Care Oversight** – Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG)
- **Director of Provider Oversight - Ohio Medicaid HomeCare Waiver** – Public Consulting Group
- **ASI – Fiscal Management Services** in Missouri and Georgia
- **Advocacy & Protective Services (APSI)** Representative (Guardian Agency)
- **Community Employment Coordinator**
- **County Case Manager**
- **Activity Therapist** – Developmental Center



As we know, America's IDD System is required to provide:

Meaningful, Integrated,
Community-Based Services



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We care about activities because:

- They are fun
- Stimulating
- Enriching
- Educational
- Occupy our time
- Keep staff busy
- Relationship building
- Keep minds and bodies active
- Connect us to our world



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And...

*They are
Required*



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The truth of the matter is...

As a system, we struggle to create
individualized, meaningful,
integrated, relationship building,
community-based activities



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And this means...

The people we serve don't have
the lives they deserve, the lives
they desire, or the lives we have.

They have less.



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That is both...

Not fair

And illegal



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The Olmstead Decision:

On *June 22, 1999*, the United States Supreme Court held in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that unjustified segregation of persons with disabilities constitutes discrimination in violation of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Learn more about Olmstead here: https://youtu.be/IJ61X_lml50

Institutional placement for people who can benefit from and handle community settings *perpetuates the idea that the people being isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life.*



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That confinement in an institution severely diminishes the every day activity of those individuals.

Including their ability to
maintain family relations,
have social contacts,
have employment options,
economic independence,
educational advancement,
and experience cultural enrichment.



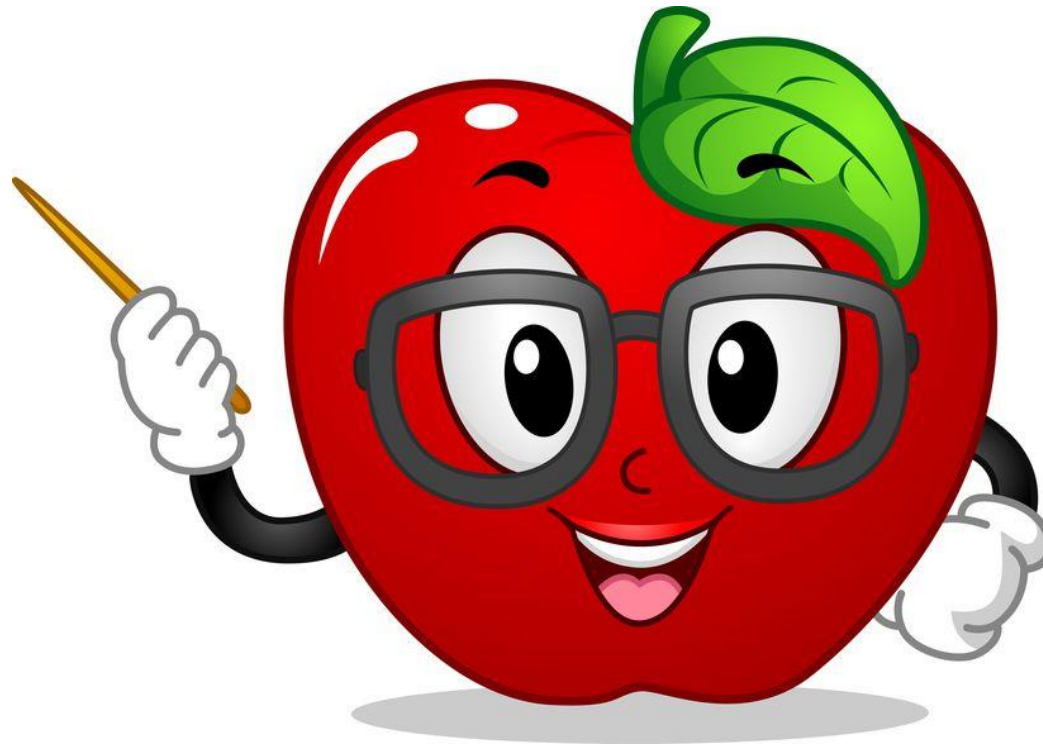
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Meaningful, Integrated, Community-Based Services



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Let's look at some definitions:



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CMS defines Meaningful Activity as:

Engagement in **discretionary behavior, either active activity or passive observation**, that the individual finds **interesting, stimulating, or worthwhile**.

Conversely, they are not bored. Agency policies and practices as well as the behavior of staff should encourage individuals to engage in tasks and activities that interest or stimulate them.



Merriam-Webster defines **Discretionary** as:

“Left to
individual
choice or
judgment.”

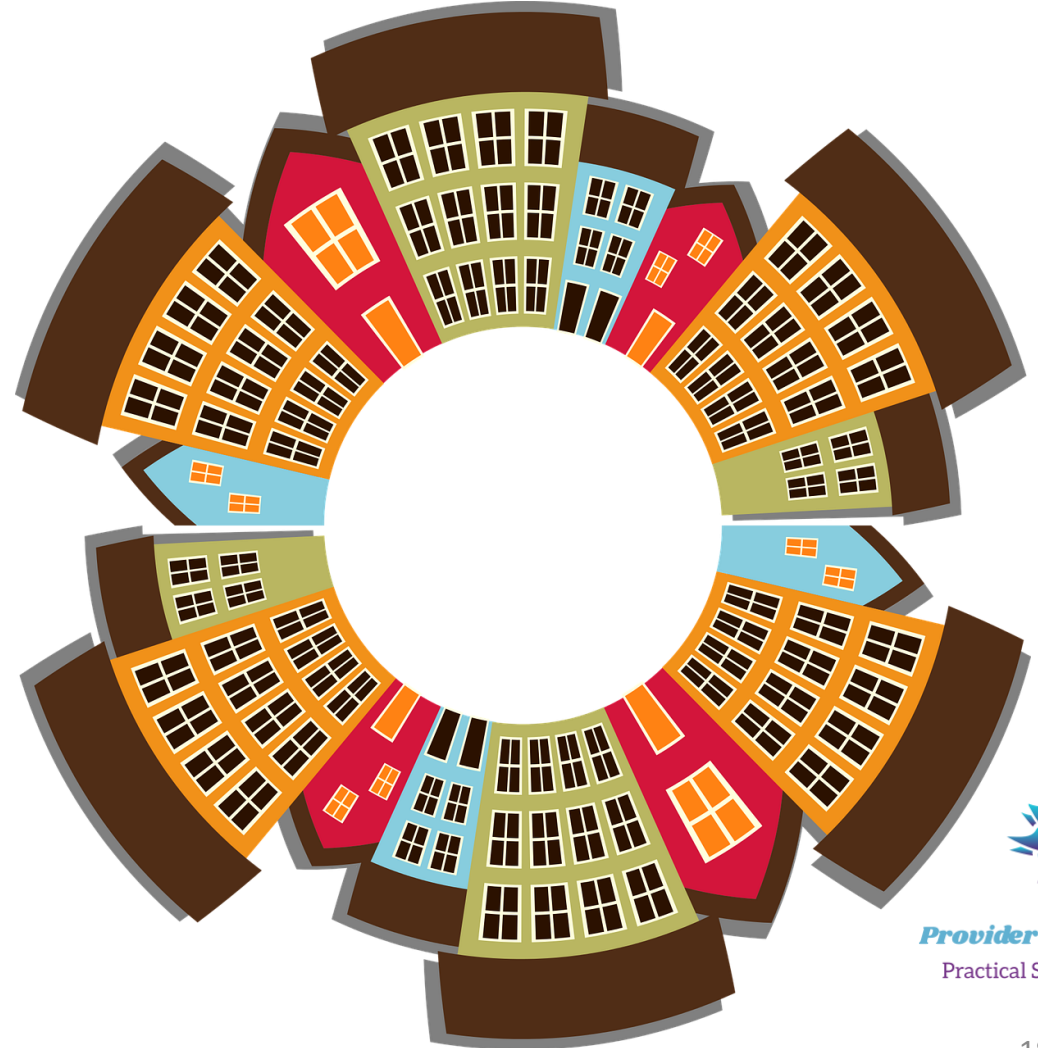


Moves

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CMS defines Integrated as:

“Full access to the benefits of community living.”



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We also know that...

Services are to be **Individualized/person-centered**

Person-centered is a process that results in a person-centered plan with individually identified goals and preferences.

This planning process, and the resulting person-centered service plan, will assist the individual **in achieving personally defined outcomes in the most integrated community setting, ensure delivery of services in a manner that reflects personal preferences and choices, and contribute to the assurance of health and welfare.**



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CMS Integrated Focus...

Settings Rule:

Promoting community integration for older adults and people with disabilities remains a high priority for CMS.

CMS HCBS Fact Sheet:

In addition, this rule reflects CMS' intent to ensure that individuals receiving services and supports through Medicaid's HCBS programs have full access to the benefits of community living and are able to receive services in the most integrated setting.



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These are our values....

- Life
- Liberty
- Pursuit of Happiness



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How do we usually plan activities?

- “What do you want to do?”
- “Where do you want to go?”
- “Do you want to _____ again?”
- “Do you want to go _____ or _____?”
- We’re going _____
- We’re doing _____



Move our focus from...

What...

To...

HOW



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Big Brainstorming Blitz Method

Start with: An *INTEREST*



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Secret Failproof Blitz-Launch Question:

What do you *like*?



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Brainstorm the ideas:



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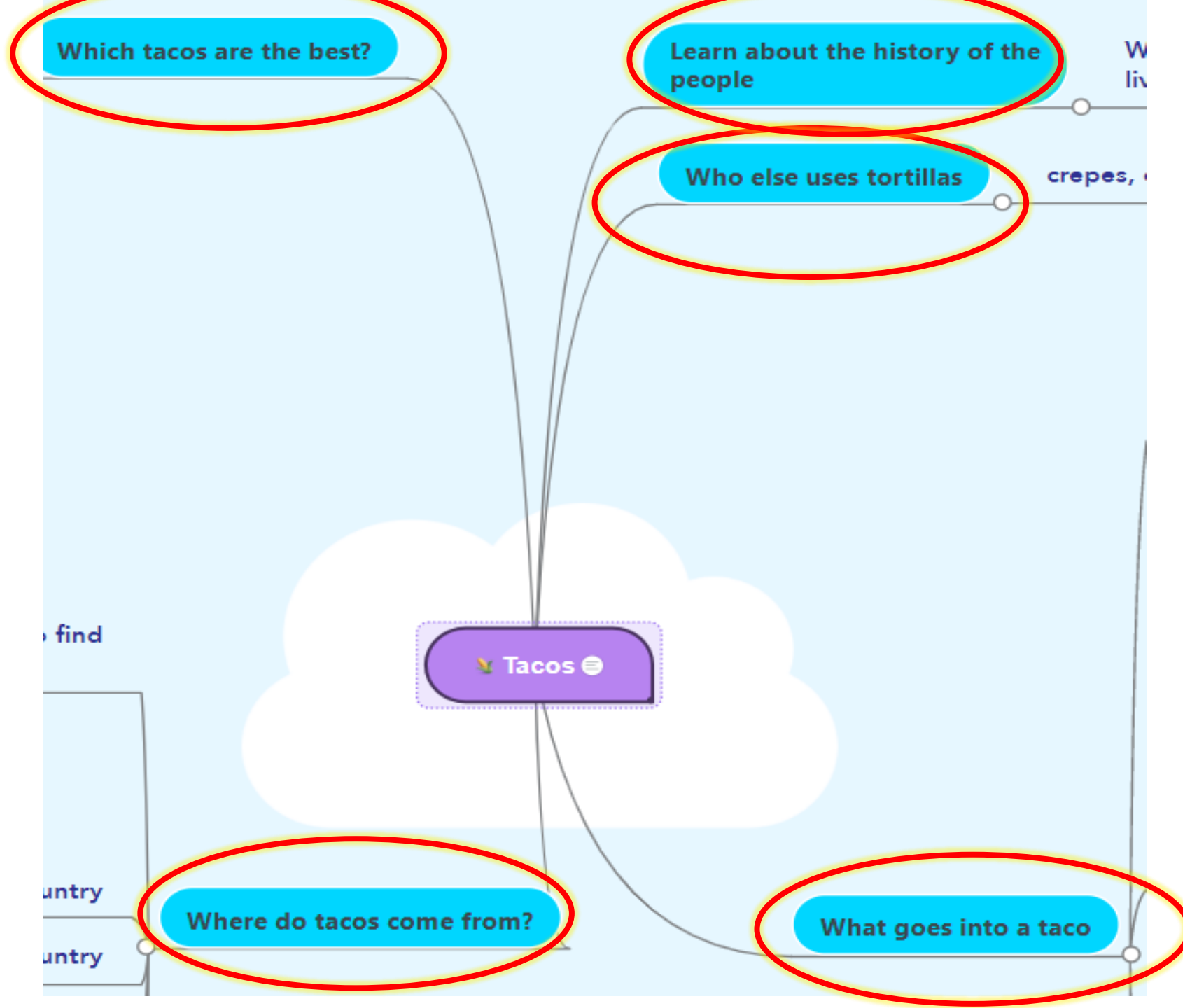
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Create Lots of Activities from 1 Favorite Food









Track the countries and cross them off your list

Connect the person's interest to the country - dance, religion, holiday customs, clothing, animals who live there, weather

Try things they do in each country - soccer, listen to music, try other foods, crafts

Go to library and ask librarian how to find info on where tacos come from

Learn about each country

Make other foods from each country

Make the tacos of each country

Learn some words from the language of the country

Why do we eat tacos? When did tacos become popular, how many people eat tacos.

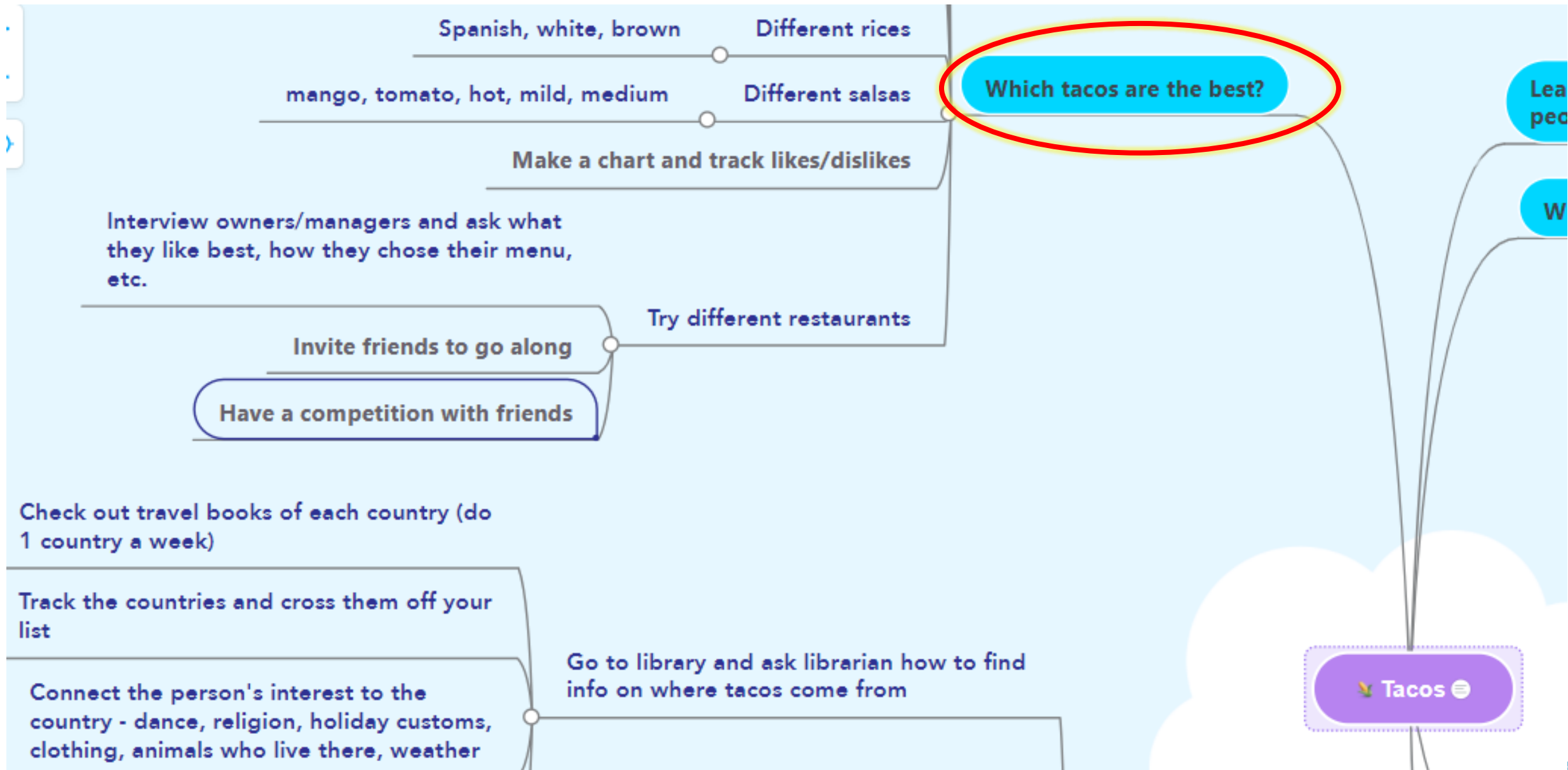
Do puzzles of foods, countries, landscapes, etc.

What desserts go best with tacos, make them!

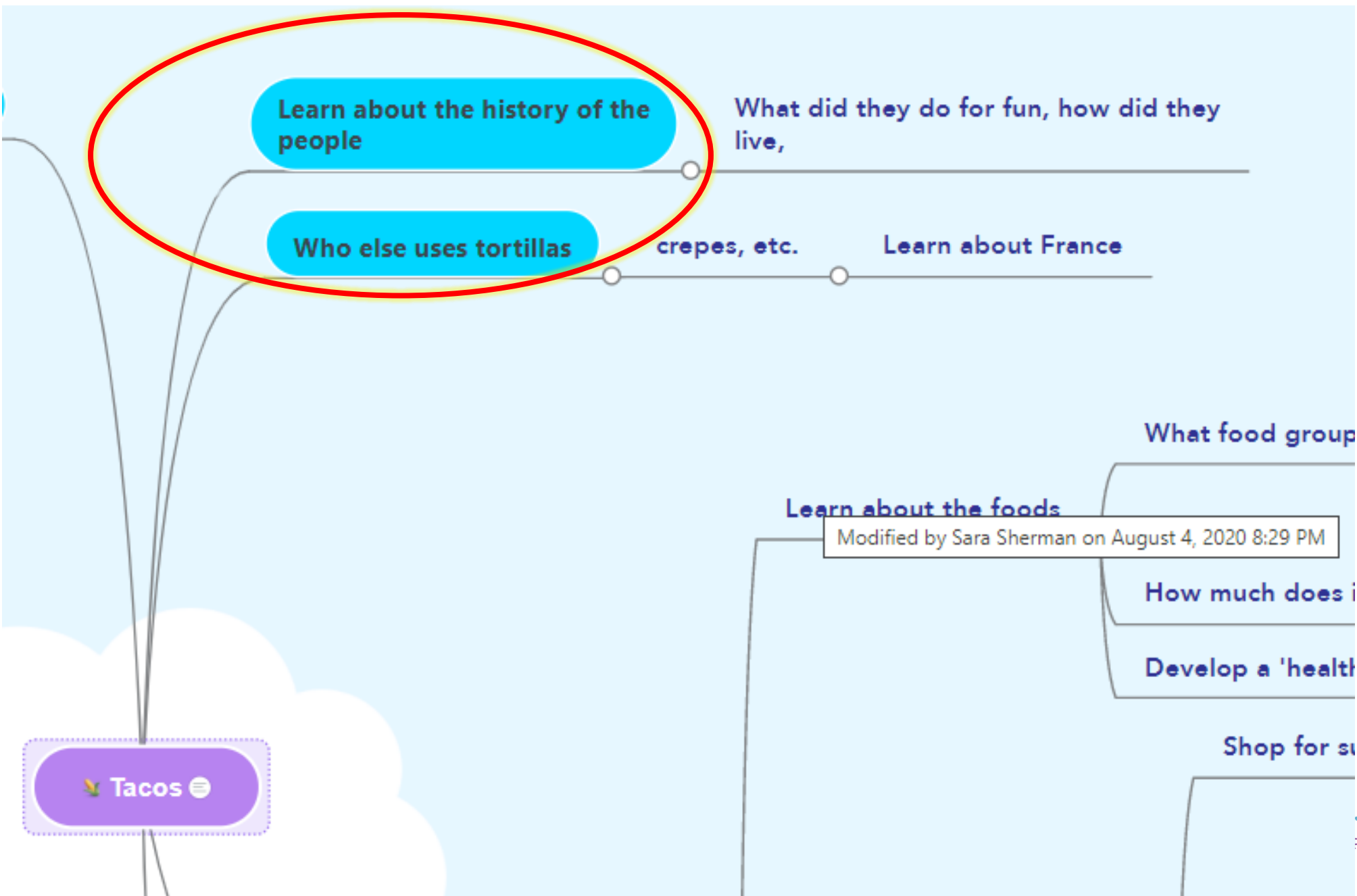
What else do they eat in these countries

Tacos

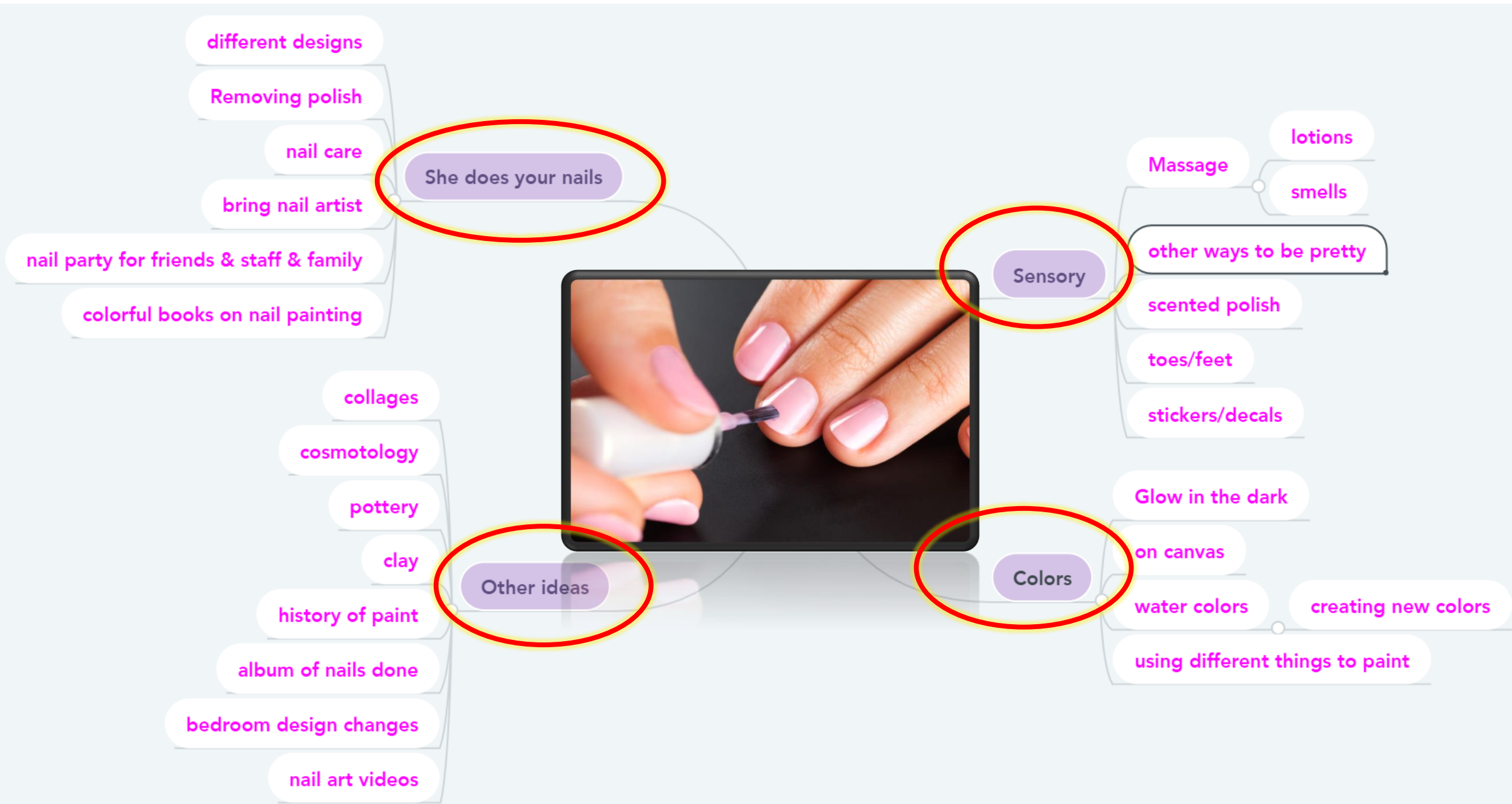
Where do tacos come from?



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Let's try something different



👉 Nails Painting

Sensory

Massage

lotions

smells

other ways to be pretty

scented polish

toes/feet

stickers/decals

Chew in the dark

🦁 Nails Painting

Colors

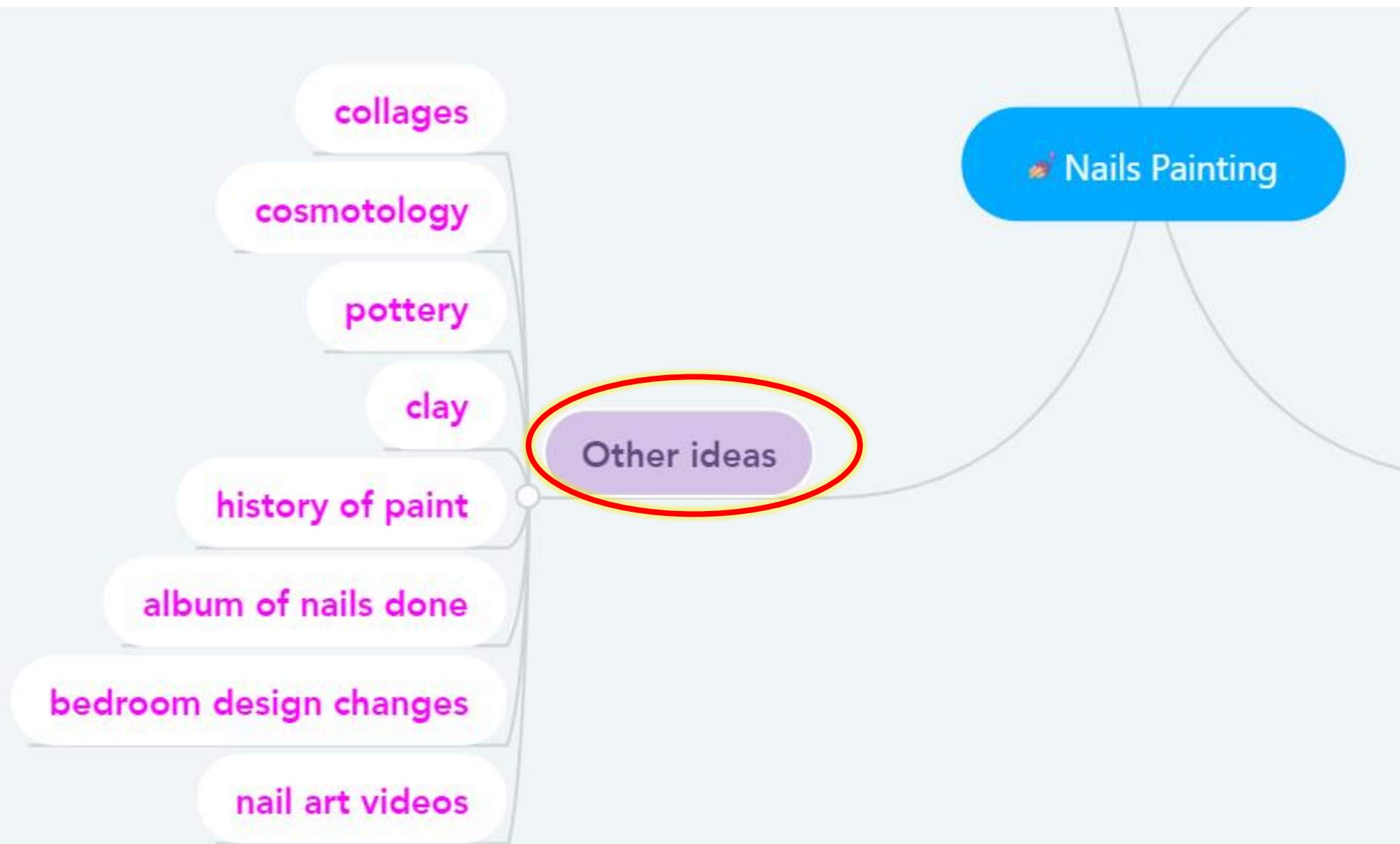
Glow in the dark

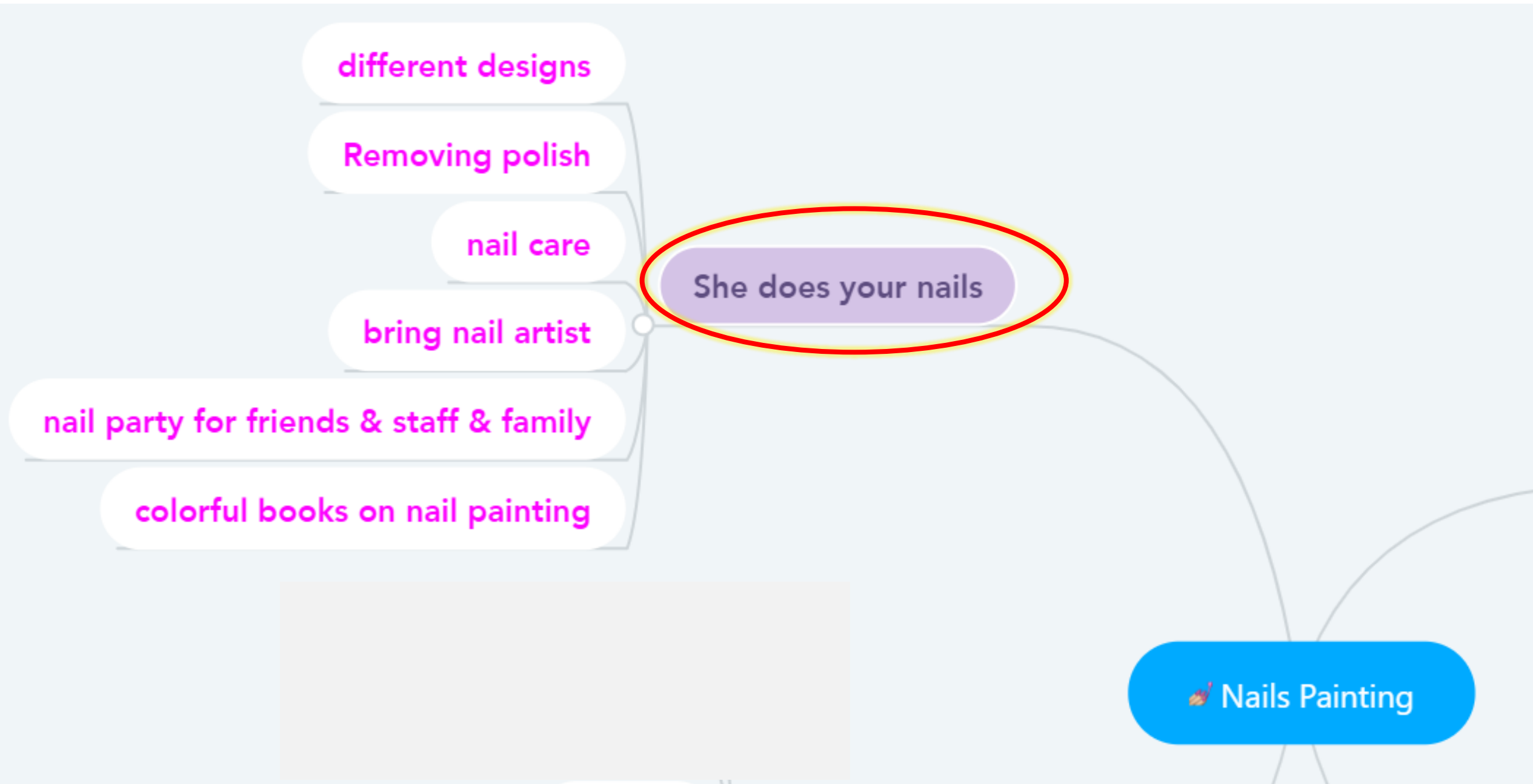
on canvas

water colors

creating new colors

using different things to paint





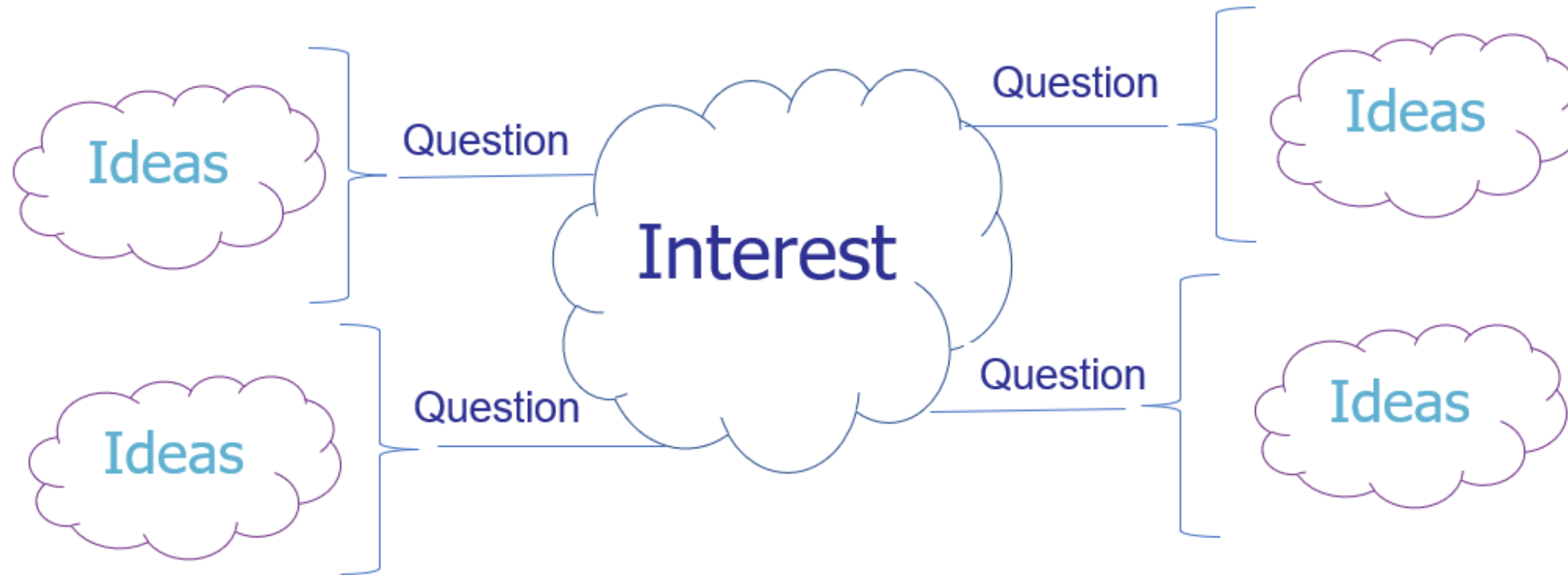
Your turn...



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Big Brainstorming Blitz Method

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Naturally address additional topics:

- Employment
- Hygiene, grooming, and personal care
- Conversations with strangers/neighbors/friends/family
- Exploring romantic relationship – dating activities
- Connections with support professionals and adaptive supports
- Discussion of support needs and community resources
- Keeping/Scheduling medical appointments
- Arranging transportation
- Budgeting
- Reservations



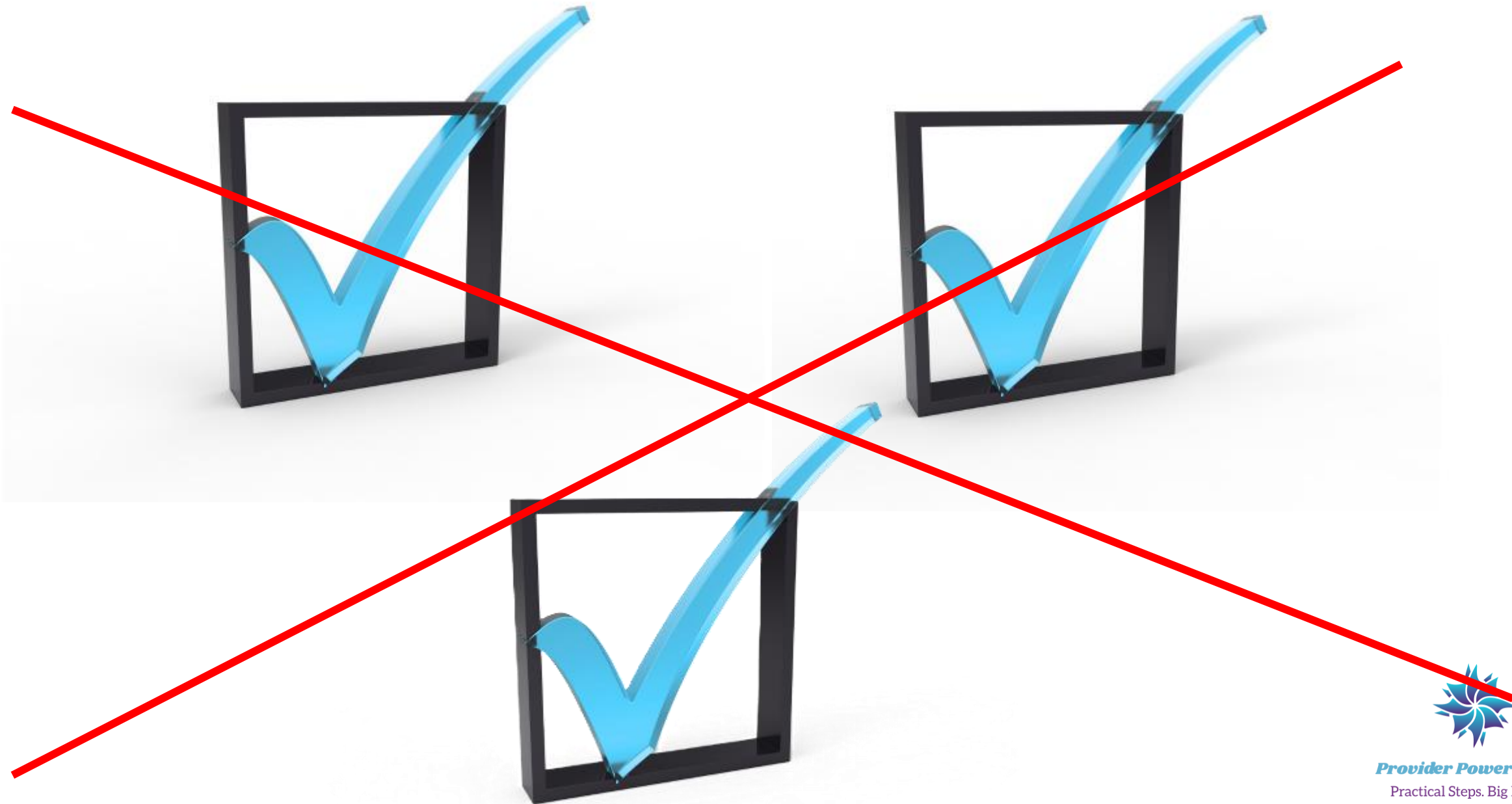
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In other words...

We want those we serve to have a good life, rich with meaningful experiences - that they direct and control to the fullest extent possible.



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Success is when...

- They feel excited about life
- They are making choices
- They are not bored
- They are learning new things
- The people we serve feel they enjoy meaningful lives.



Recap:

- Meaningful, community based, integrated activities are required.
- Start with an interest.
- Include the individual.
- Schedule specific times to build activity maps.
- Use this information to feed the service planning process.



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Contact Sara Sherman at sara@providerpowermoves.com for consent, or for additional training and resources.



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