Whose Life is it Anyway?

UNDERSTANDING SELF-DETERMINATION

A Look Ahead Conference Series
Saturday, May 13, 2017 – Arlington, Texas
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SELF-DETERMINATION defined

Self-determination is believing you can control your own destiny. It is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead a person to create a meaningful life based on their own wants, needs, desires and dreams.

Self-determination is about being in charge, but is not necessarily the same thing as self-sufficiency or independence. It means taking control and responsibility for one’s life. Practicing self-determination also means one experiences the natural consequences of choices made.

What choices did you make before you got to the conference today?

• When & how did you wake up?
• What will you wear?
• Do you follow a morning routine?
• Do you have an important morning ritual?
• What time will you leave the house?
• Did you stop along the way?
SELF-DETERMINATION

VALUES
- respect
- choice
- ownership
- support
- opportunity

- is a process that differs from person to person
- is **NOT** a model or a program with a pre-determined menu of services and a set way of delivering them
- is person-centered and person-directed

FREEDOM

The ability for an individual together with freely chosen family and friends to plan a life based on personal dreams, interests and lifestyle with necessary supports.

Independence vs. Interdependence

Independence is not measured by the number of tasks we can do without assistance, but by the **quality of life** we can lead with **ASSISTANCE**.

- American’s with Disabilities Act of 1990
**AUTHORITY**
The ability to control resources available in order to purchase supports. This includes authority to decide what, who, when, where and how much.

**SUPPORT**
To organize resources – both formal and informal – that are life enhancing and assist an individual to live life in the community rich in community affiliations.

**RESPONSIBILITY**
The acceptance of a valued role in a person’s community through competitive employment, organizational affiliations, spiritual development and general caring for others in the community, as well as accountability for spending public dollars in ways that are life-enhancing.
CONFIRMATION

Individuals should play an important leadership role in a newly-designed system.

• Proof of your importance - the role you play in the lives of others.
• When we realize that we matter our lives take on a whole new meaning and significance.

SELF-DETERMINATION

• should begin in childhood and continue throughout one’s life, with many baby steps in the journey
• changes the conversation – from seeing persons with disabilities as having limitation/service recipients to seeing them as individuals with rights and responsibilities
• recognizes the dignity of risk – the ability to succeed and fail with grace and learn from our failures
a comfort zone is a beautiful place, but nothing ever grows there.

A Closer LOOK!

I’m Determined
http://www.imdetermined.org/

National Center for Secondary Education and Transition Research to Practice Brief - Self-Determination: Supporting Successful Transition
http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=962

The Center for Self-Determination
http://www.centerforself-determination.com/