



Workshop: Creating Your Circle of Support



Thursday, October 10, 2019

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Introduction



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TODAY



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Why Circles?

"Human beings have always sat in circles and councils to do their best thinking, and to develop strong and trusting relationships..."

"The very simple process of council takes us to a place of **deep connection** with each other..."

Meg Wheatley

The Joshua Committee



Judith Snow Oct. 29, 1949 – Sept. 5, 2015

6.20 When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and when the men gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so everyone charged straight in, and they took the city.



Let's get started

Share some information

Tell one Circle's story

Share some resources

Focus Person



- ◉ Center of all
- ◉ Driving force
- ◉ For one reason or another, is not getting what they want in life
- ◉ Wants support
- ◉ Wants help problem-solving

Champion

- ◉ Someone trusted
- ◉ Supportive
- ◉ Helps get the ball rolling . . .



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Build A Vision



- ◉ Create a clear picture of a “good life” for focus person
- ◉ Imagine the Circle working well

A Good Life...

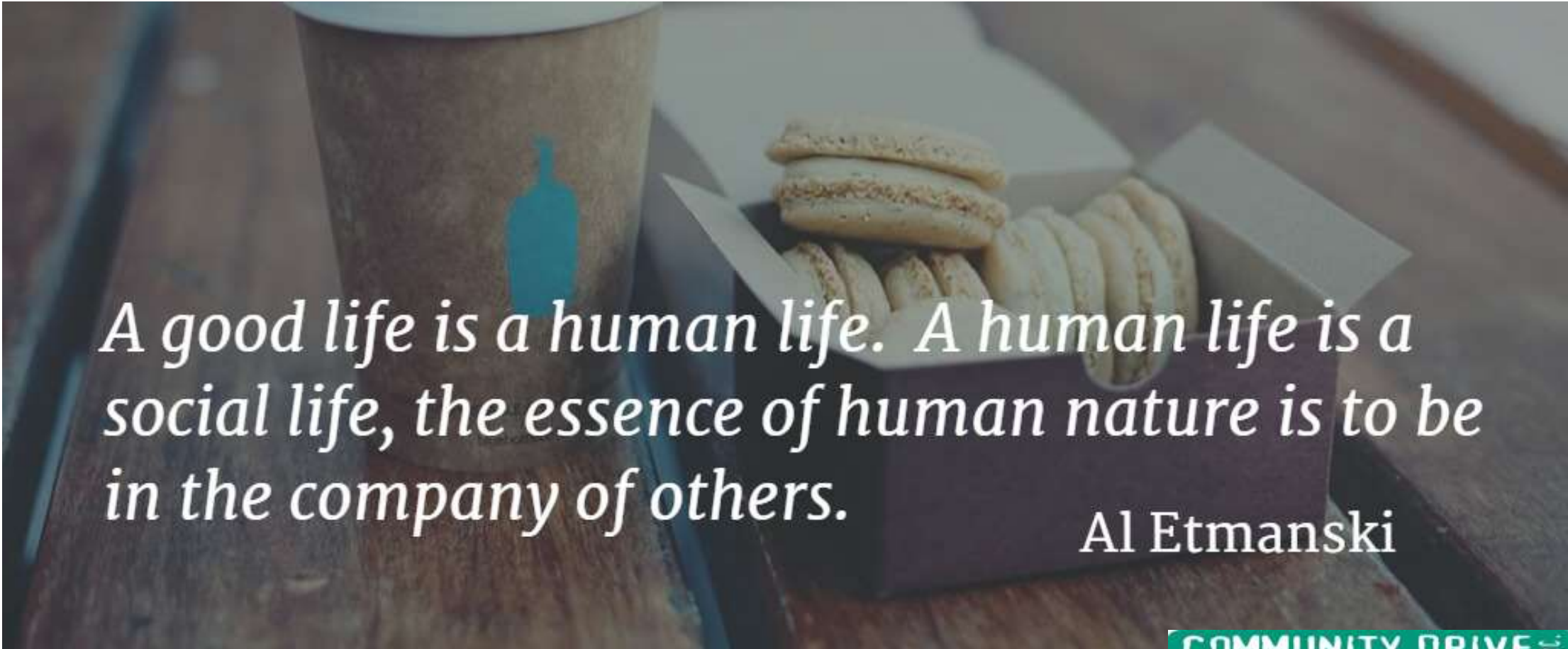
**I WANT
A LIFE
NOT A
SERVICE**



www.openfuturelearning.org

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Purpose of Circles



A good life is a human life. A human life is a social life, the essence of human nature is to be in the company of others.

Al Etmanski

Think about membership

Committed citizens who believe in the Focus Person

Make a list of people who share the vision/purpose of the Circle

- ◉ Neighbors
- ◉ Extended Family
- ◉ Friends
- ◉ Shared interest
- ◉ Co-workers
- ◉ Former staff
- ◉ Classmates

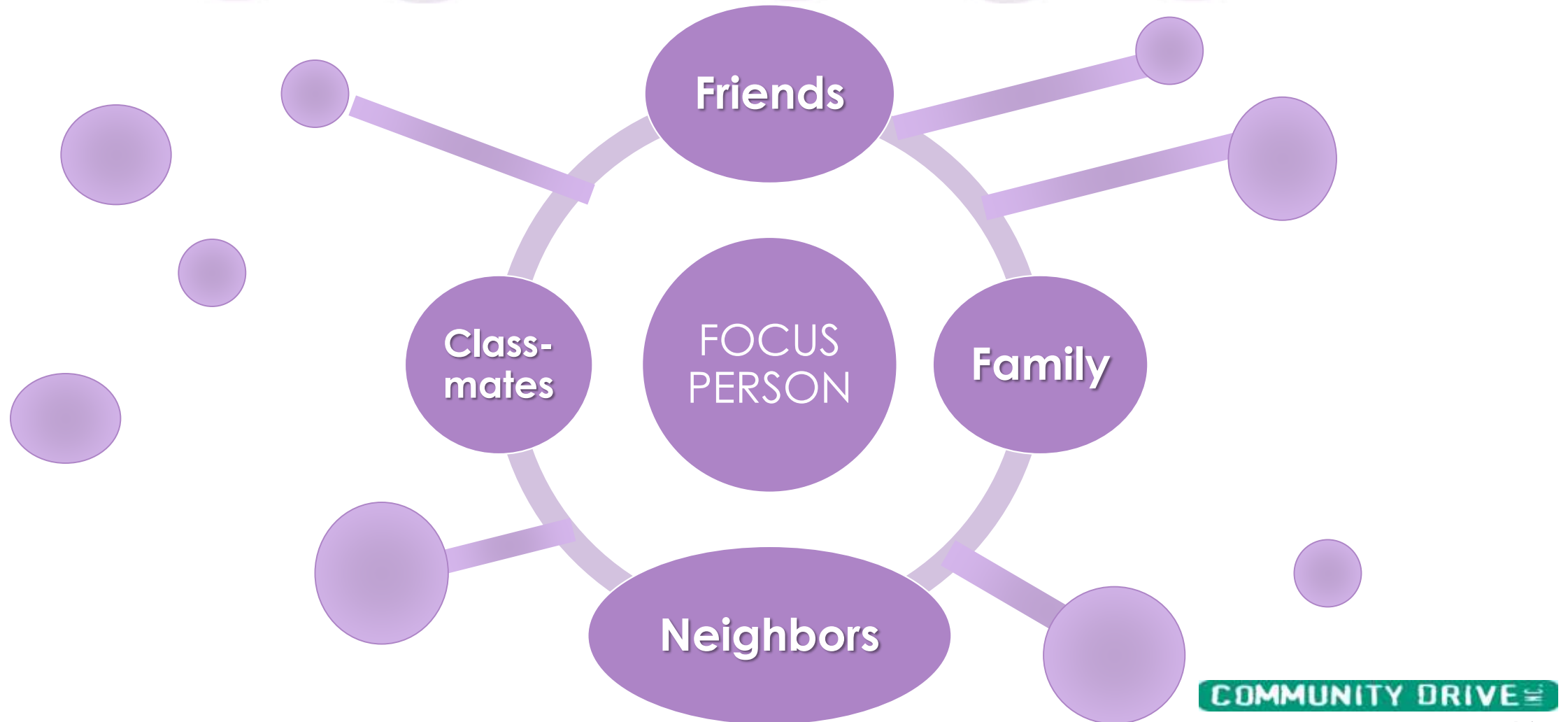


Potential Circle Members

- ◉ List the qualities & connections focus person would like members to have
- ◉ Who do you know? A 'relationship map' can help
- ◉ Avoid Gloomy Gus, Negative Nancy & Doubting Thomas



Relationship Mapping



You are cordially to...

- ◉ Simple & attractive
- ◉ Who, What, When, Where
- ◉ Personal is best

Whatcha
doing
Wednesday
at 5:00pm?



Secure Facilitation to

- ◉ make easier
- ◉ take care of the work required to keep the Circle running
- ◉ assure all members are included
- ◉ record
- ◉ be hospitable



Circle Facilitators

Snacks

Graphic design



Circle Facilitators

- ✓ Ask questions to help people find answers
- ✓ Inject humor & fun into get-togethers
- ✓ Keep meetings from getting stale or unpleasant especially to the focus person



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A Good Facilitator

- ◉ 100 Circles in 25 years
- ◉ Arc of Midland Executive
- ◉ Supported decision making
- ◉ Circle as A Midwife



“What we Believe about Circle Building”

- ◉ *The community is a place where hospitality is common.*
- ◉ *In order to live as we choose & enjoy life, we need other people to support us.*
- ◉ *We are interdependent in our support of each other & the circle gives us an avenue for our independence.*
- ◉ *Circles focus on the individual's life- the touch & feel of who they want to be & how they want to live - not on the service that an individual receives from the system. A circle creates a life, not a service plan.*

“What we Believe about Circle Building”

- ◉ *We don't ask people to be someone's friend when we invite them into a circle, we ask them to be a part of building a better community.*
- ◉ *We can't ask people to be someone's friend without diminishing the power of the circle. If we do that, the circle is a cheap trick on the individual.*
- ◉ *The circle is an association for the individuals, through which friendship can grow.*
- ◉ *The work of connecting people to others in a community is very hard. The less connected the person is, the harder it is.*

“What we Believe about Circle Building”

- ◉ *Some people have only paid people in their lives. That is their circle. These paid people can build the circle from the outside if they work at connecting & supporting people in new relationships.*
- ◉ *A person in a service capacity relationship with individuals cannot facilitate the person's circle. The service person has other needs to meet, including the needs of the service system.*
- ◉ *No one should be required to be a part of a circle as a part of their job. No one should be required to have a circle.*

“What we Believe about Circle Building”

- ◉ *A facilitator for a circle acts as a midwife, letting the circle give birth to ideas and plans with support as needed, but the facilitator does not judge or interfere with the work of the circle.*



First Circle Gathering



What Happens at Circles



GATHER

To help you make decisions & have a good life.



ENGAGE

Ask & answer questions
A Circle should be enduring, and new members may join as needed so you always have someone in your life to help you when you need them.



RESPOND

With respect & listening with all senses to focus person.
Track the Circle's work & review purpose & point of gathering.
Reflect the activities & responsibility.

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Informal or formal circles



What Makes Circles Work

- **Informal:** Not too many rules: purpose of every rule is to enable inclusion
- **Mutual:** Everyone involved has influence
- **Diverse:** Bringing in people from different backgrounds and experiences makes circles stronger
- **Co-production:** Power with, not power over
- **Time:** A space to think together. Rounds give everyone equal opportunities to contribute
- **Appreciation:** Helps us feel able to share learning

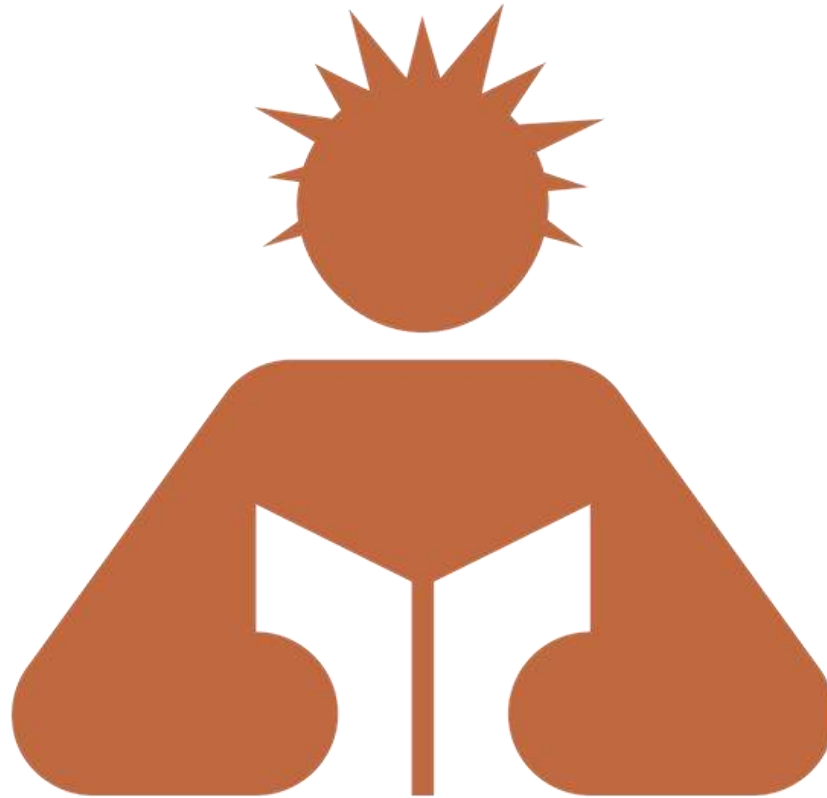
From Inclusion News



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MIKE'S CIRCLE STORY



1. Started with a PARTY!

Cousins

Acquaintances

Co-workers

Siblings' friends and
significant others

Classmates

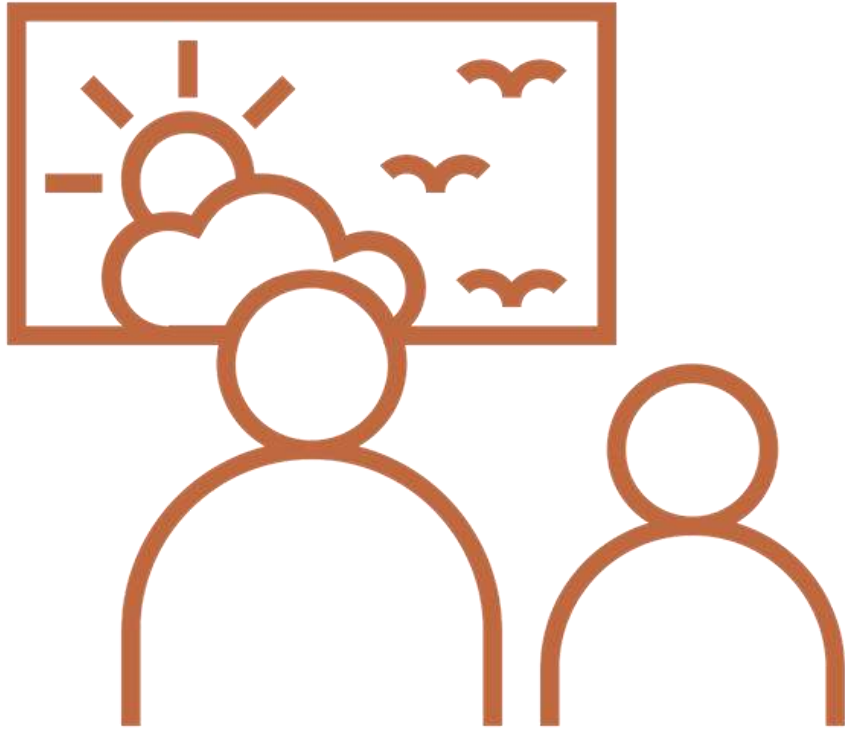
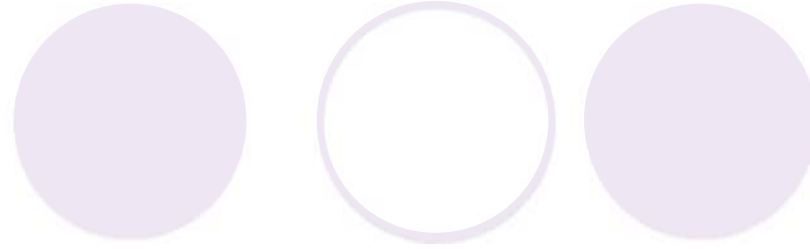
Neighbors

Customers

Advocates

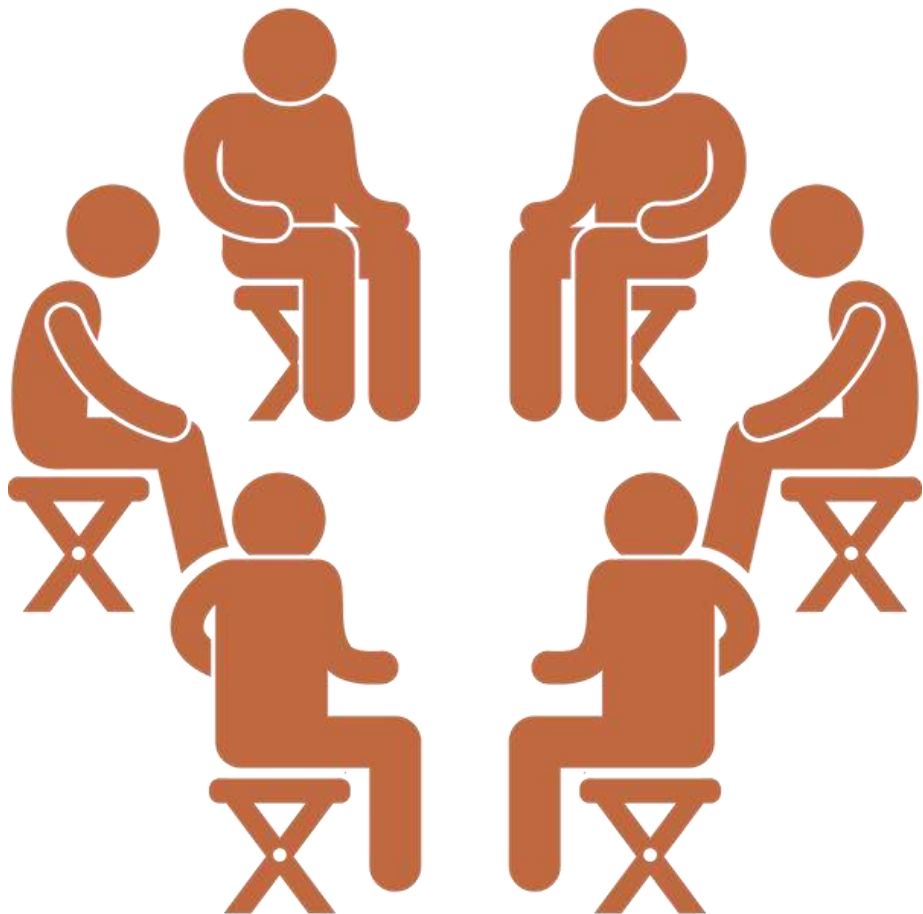
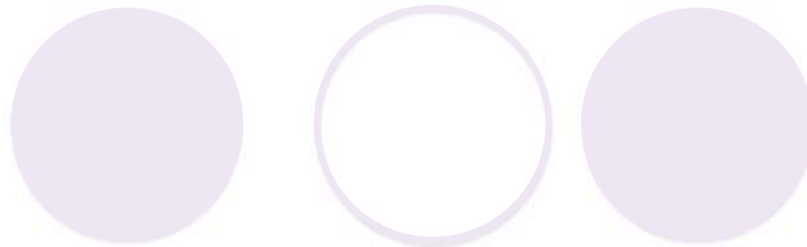


2. WHAT



- ◉ Pizza & pop
- ◉ Small presentation about Mike's life
- ◉ Tell what a Circle is
- ◉ Introduce Facilitator
- ◉ Open Invitation to Circle

3. WHEN



- First meeting 4 weeks later
- Mike's home
- Intro & icebreaker
- Dinner
- Listened to Mike's expectations of Circle
- Easygoing
- Lots of Questions

4.

What Mike wanted



MAKE SOME FRIENDS HIS AGE

JOB FOR INCOME

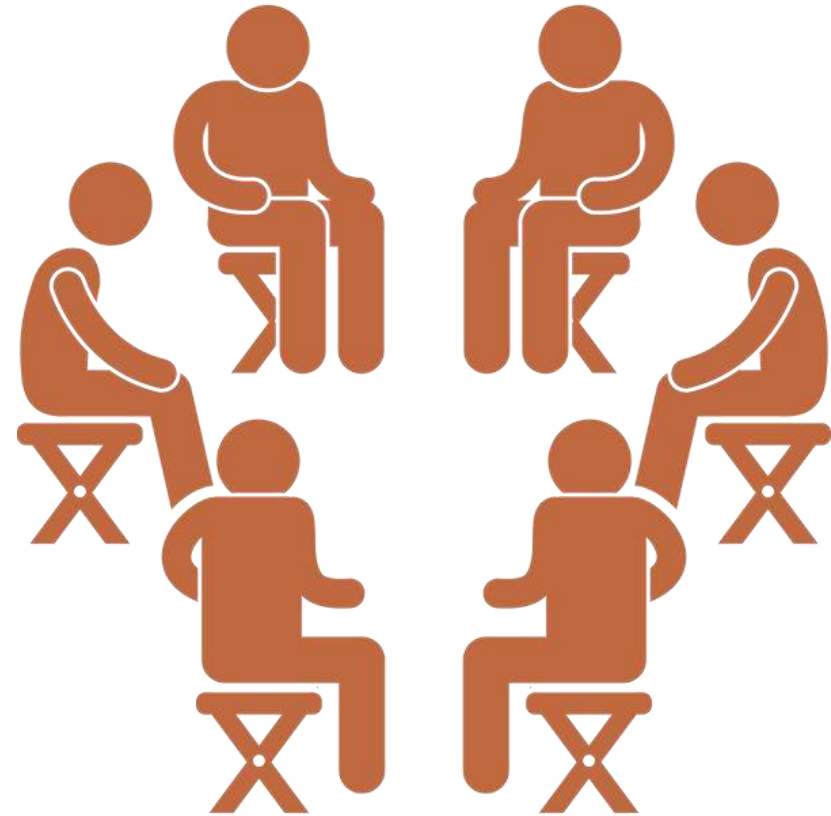
TAKE TOASTMASTER COURSE

LIVE IN OWN CONDO

MORE PHOTOGRAPHY

5. What the Circle did

- ◉ Brainstorm places to meet others
- ◉ Check on employment services for outcomes
- ◉ Explored small business ideas
- ◉ Dug deep re: condo
- ◉ Staying on track with person-centered plans

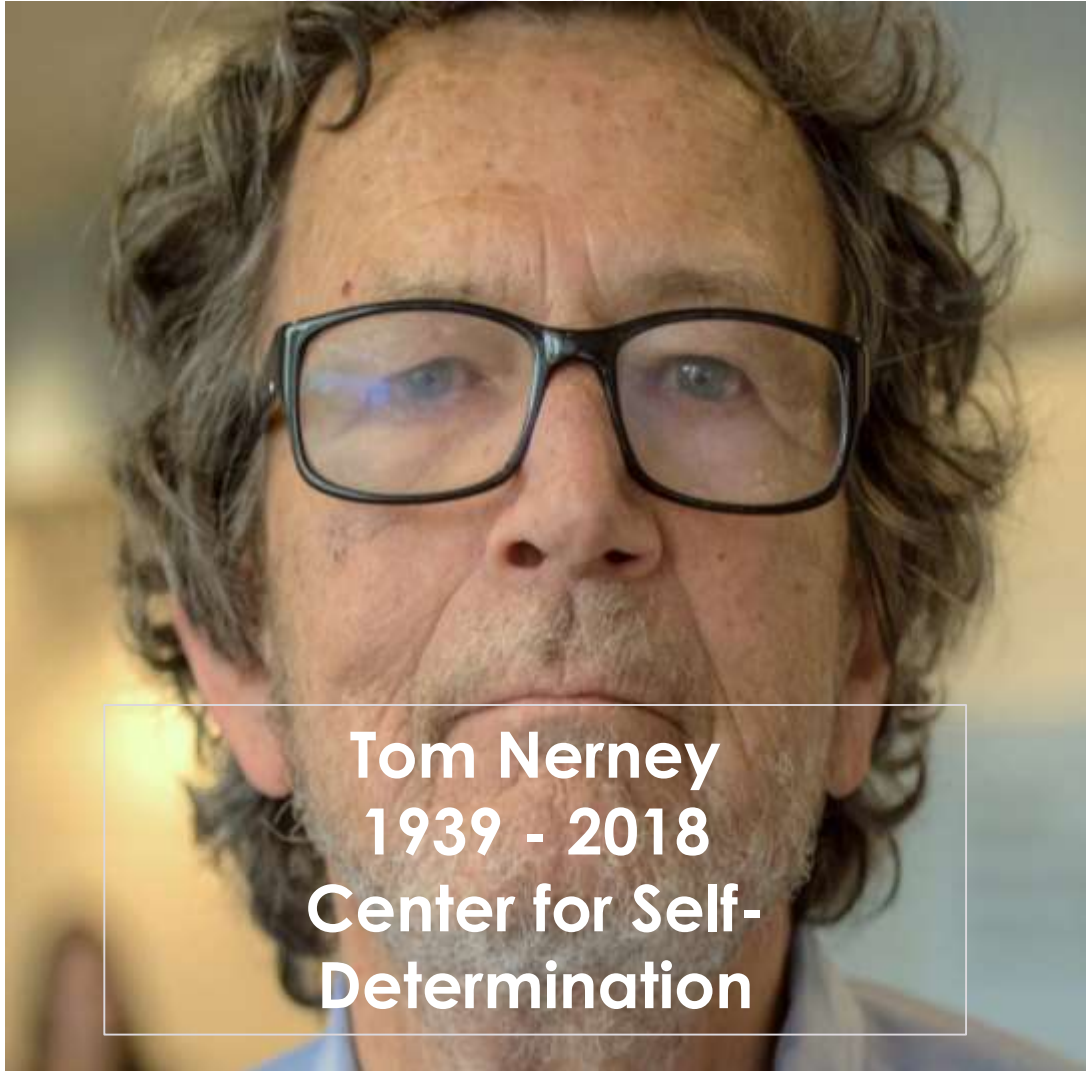


6. Mike

- ◉ I like to talk about my goals
- ◉ Feel better in making decisions
- ◉ I don't want my brother and mom making my choices
- ◉ Get more ideas from Circle

Circle

- ◉ I introduced Mike to my nephew who included him in some fraternity stuff
- ◉ I am proud to be a part of this Circle. I have learned much more than any formal structure would ever teach me about Mike.
- ◉ Mike is the expert on his life.



Tom Nerney
1939 - 2018
Center for Self-
Determination

*"We have to reject the idea of incompetence. We need to replace it with the idea of **"assisted competence"**. This will include a range of supports that will enable individual with disabilities to receive assistance in decision-making that will preserve their rights."*

1996

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Alternative to Guardianship

GUARDIANSHIP



SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING

- ◉ Supports & services that help an adult with a disability make his or her own decisions, by using friends, family members, professionals, & other people he or she trusts: (Dinerstein, 2012; Blanck and Martinis, 2015).

Supported Decision making

The individual with a disability chooses who they would like to support them & determines when & for what reason they would like the assistance of a Supporter.

A **Supporter** can:

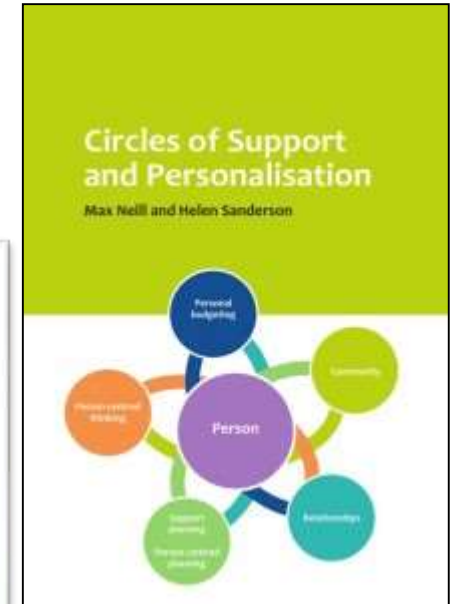
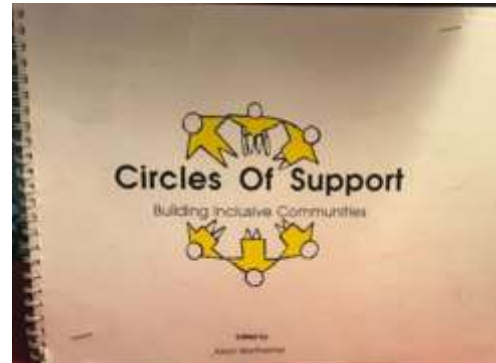
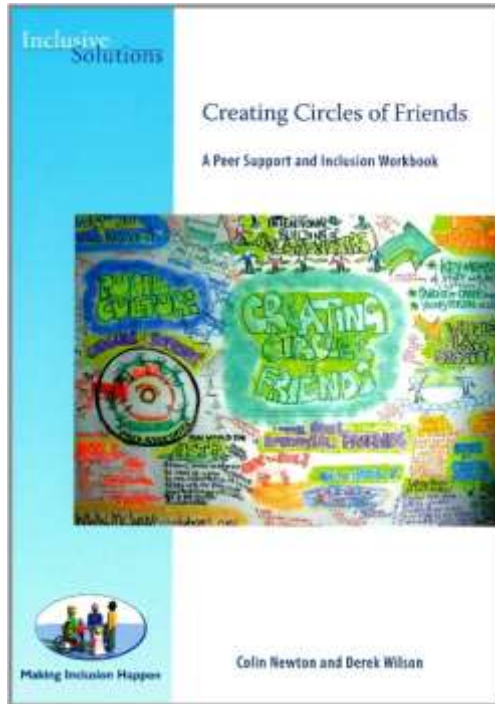
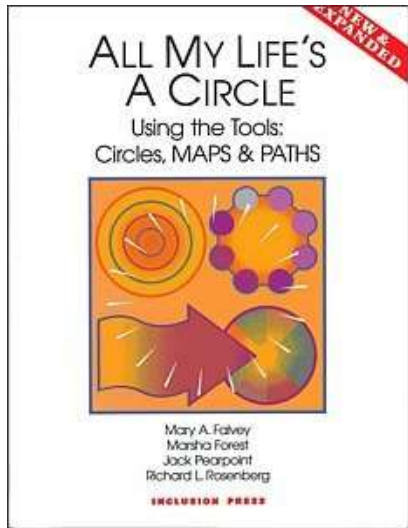
- ◉ Help read complicated documents & explain their meaning.
- ◉ Attend meetings & help share questions or concerns.
- ◉ Help communicate the person's decisions & preferences to others



Sounds like Circles of Support



Circle Resources



SDM Resources

- ◉ National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making
<http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org>
- ◉ Supported Decision-Making & the Problems of Guardianship <https://www.aclu.org/issues/disability-rights/integration-and-autonomy-people-disabilities/supported-decision-making>
- ◉ Supported Decision-Making American Bar Association Commission on Disability Rights
<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/disabilityrights/resources/article12.html>





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