



Workshop: Creating Your Circle of Support



Thursday, October 10, 2019

COMMUNITY DRIVE INC.







“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



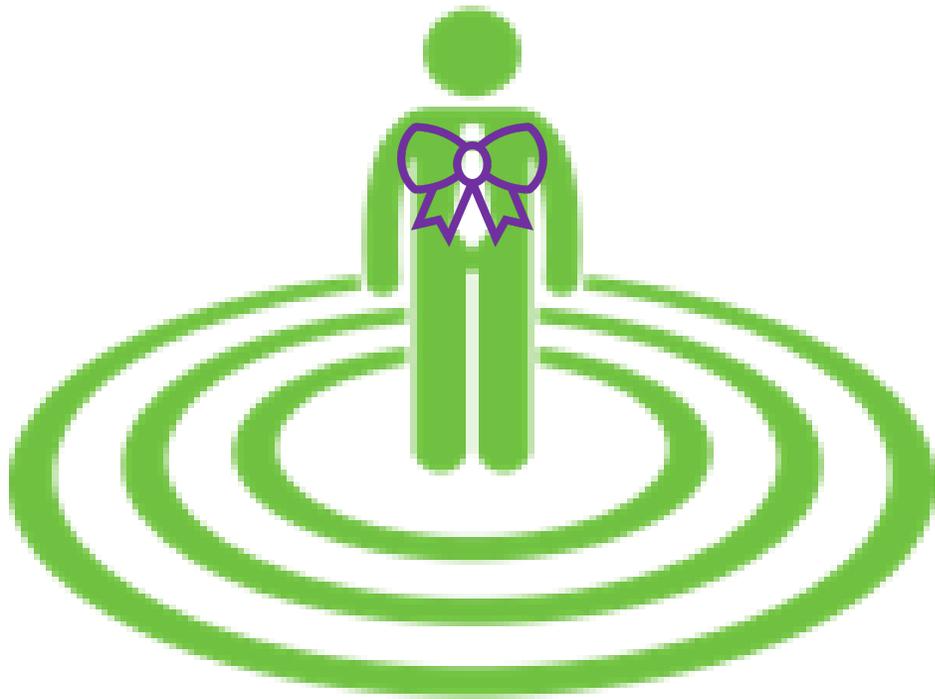
Judith Snow Oct. 29, 1949 – Sept. 5, 2015

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



Focus Person



- Driving force
- For one reason or another, is not getting what they want in life
- Wants support
- Wants help probl



Champion

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



Build A Vision





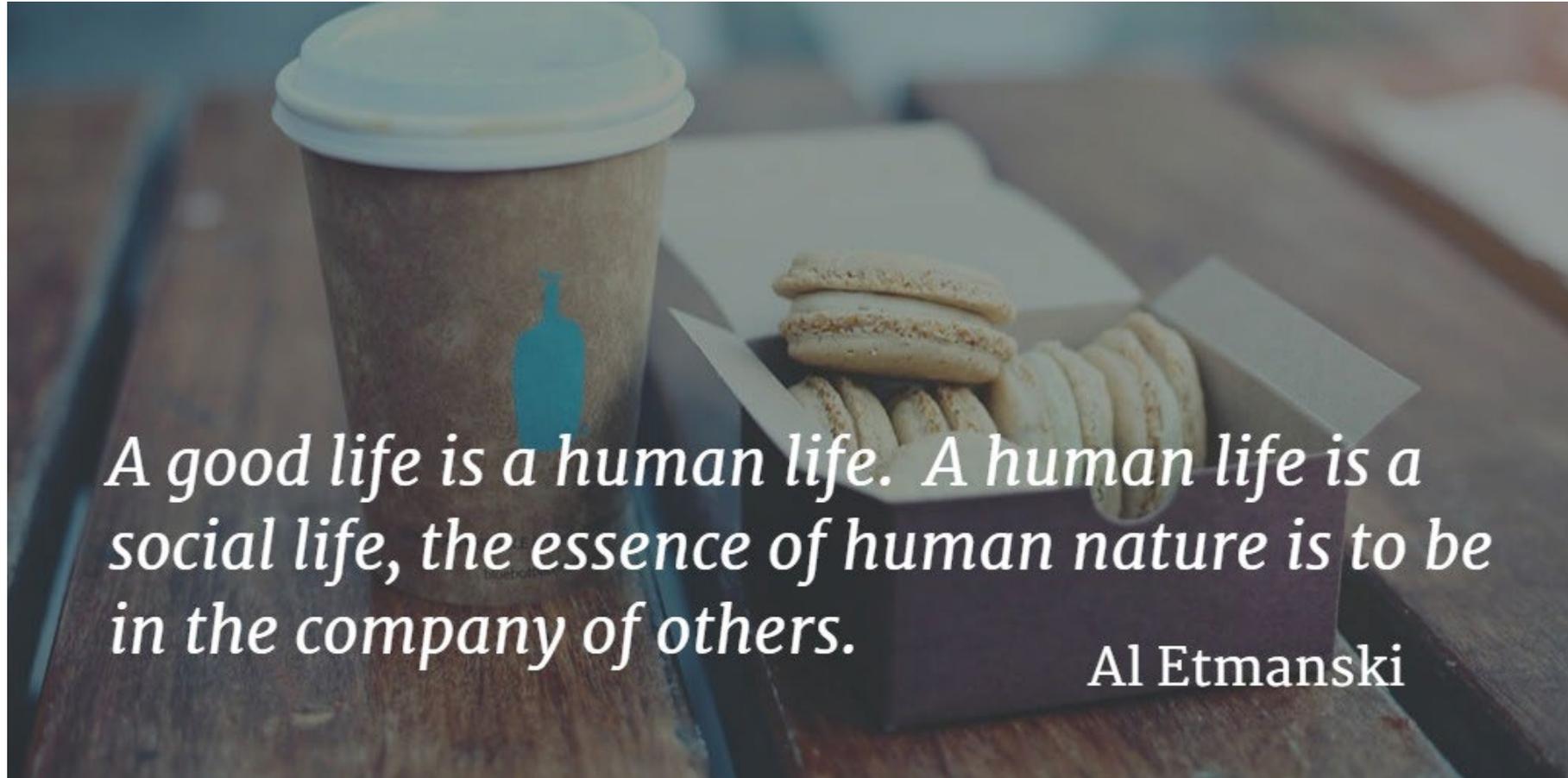
A Good Life...



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Purpose of Circles





Think about membership

Committed citizens who believe in the Focus Person

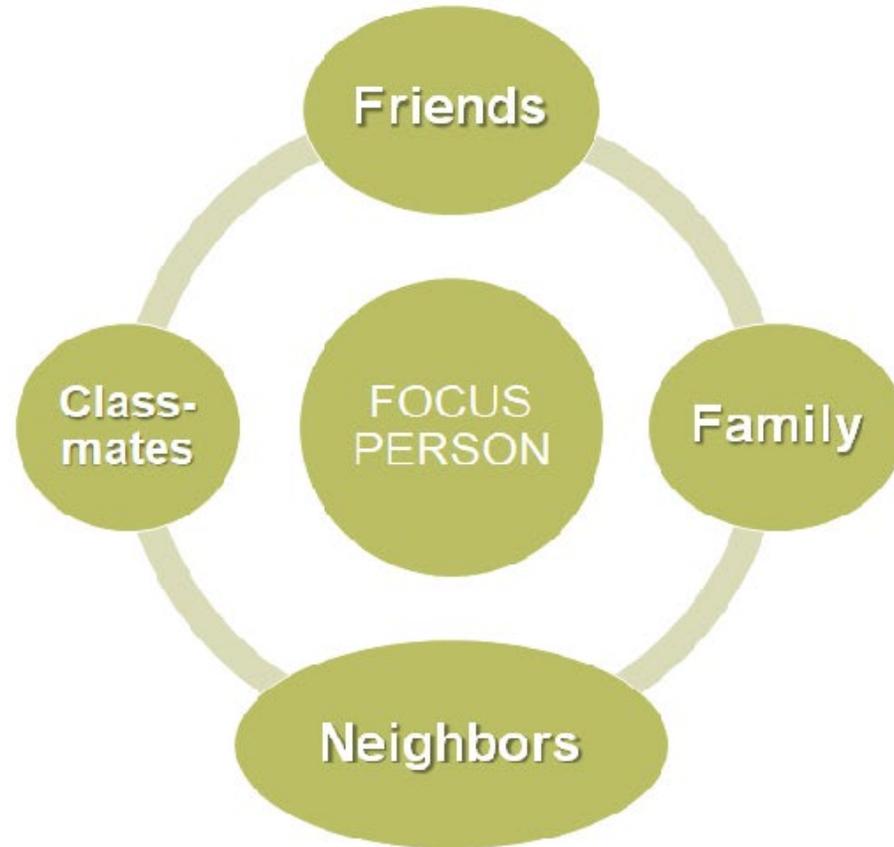
Make a list of people who share the vision/purpose of the Circle



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 invited to...

- Use an invitation that is simple & attractive
- Tells Who, What, When, Where
- Personal is best



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



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





A Good Facilitator

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



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.

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.

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.*



FAMILY



FRIENDS

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.

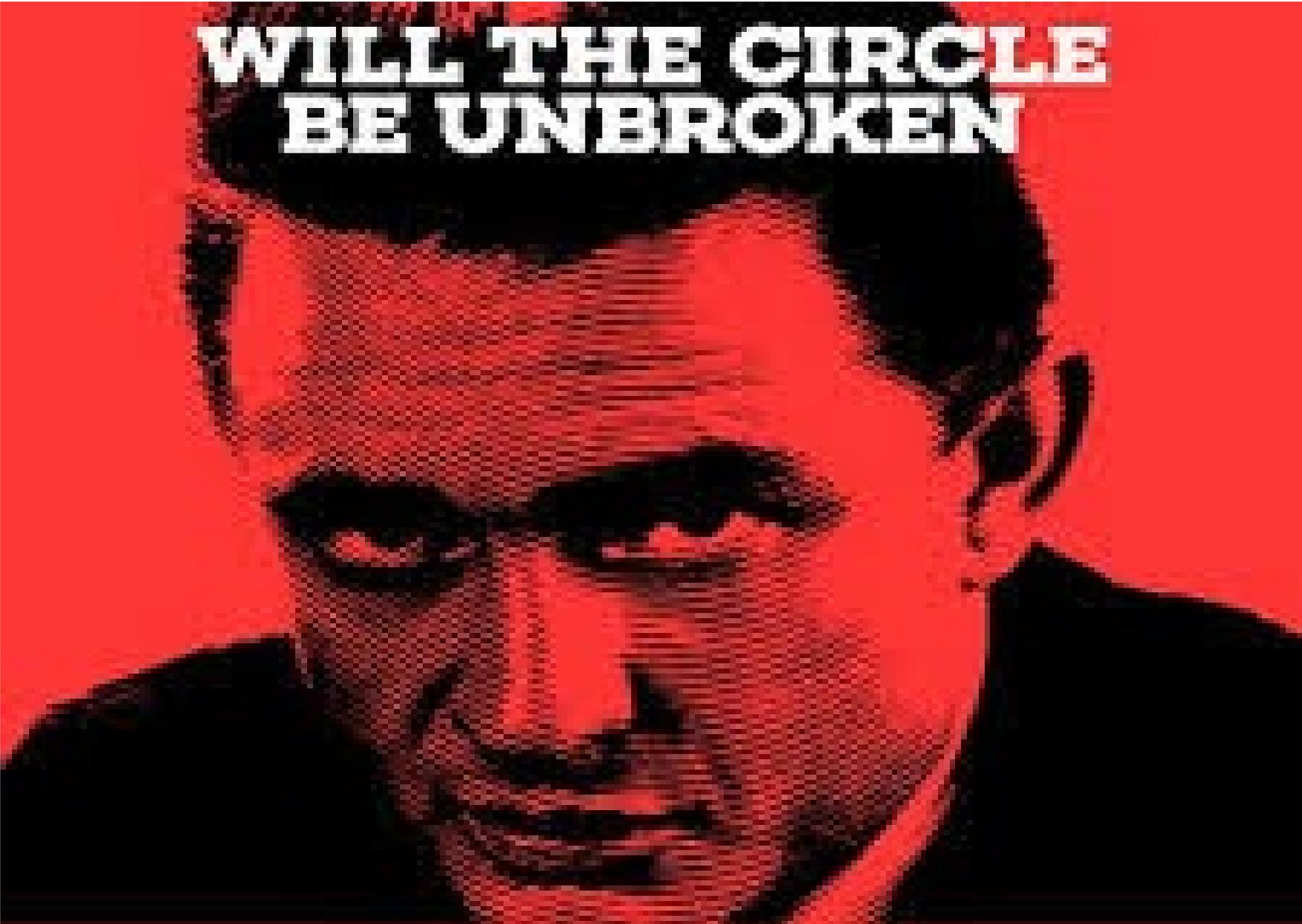
Informal or formal circles



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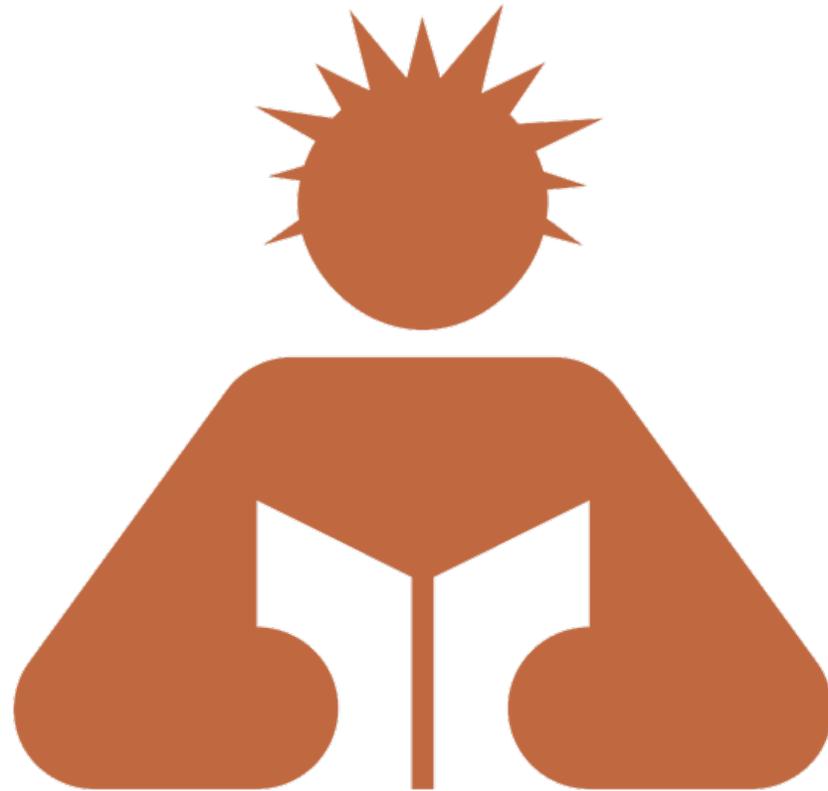
What Makes Circles Work

- **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





MIKE'S CIRCLE STORY



Started with a PARTY!

Cousins

Acquaintances

Co-workers

Siblings' friends and
significant others

Classmates

Neighbors

Customers

Advocates



WHAT

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

WHEN

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



What Mike wanted

Make some friends his age

Get a Job for Income

Take a Toastmaster Course

Live in Own Condo

More Photography



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



Mike

I like to talk about my goals

Feel better in making decisions

I don't want my brother and mom making my choices

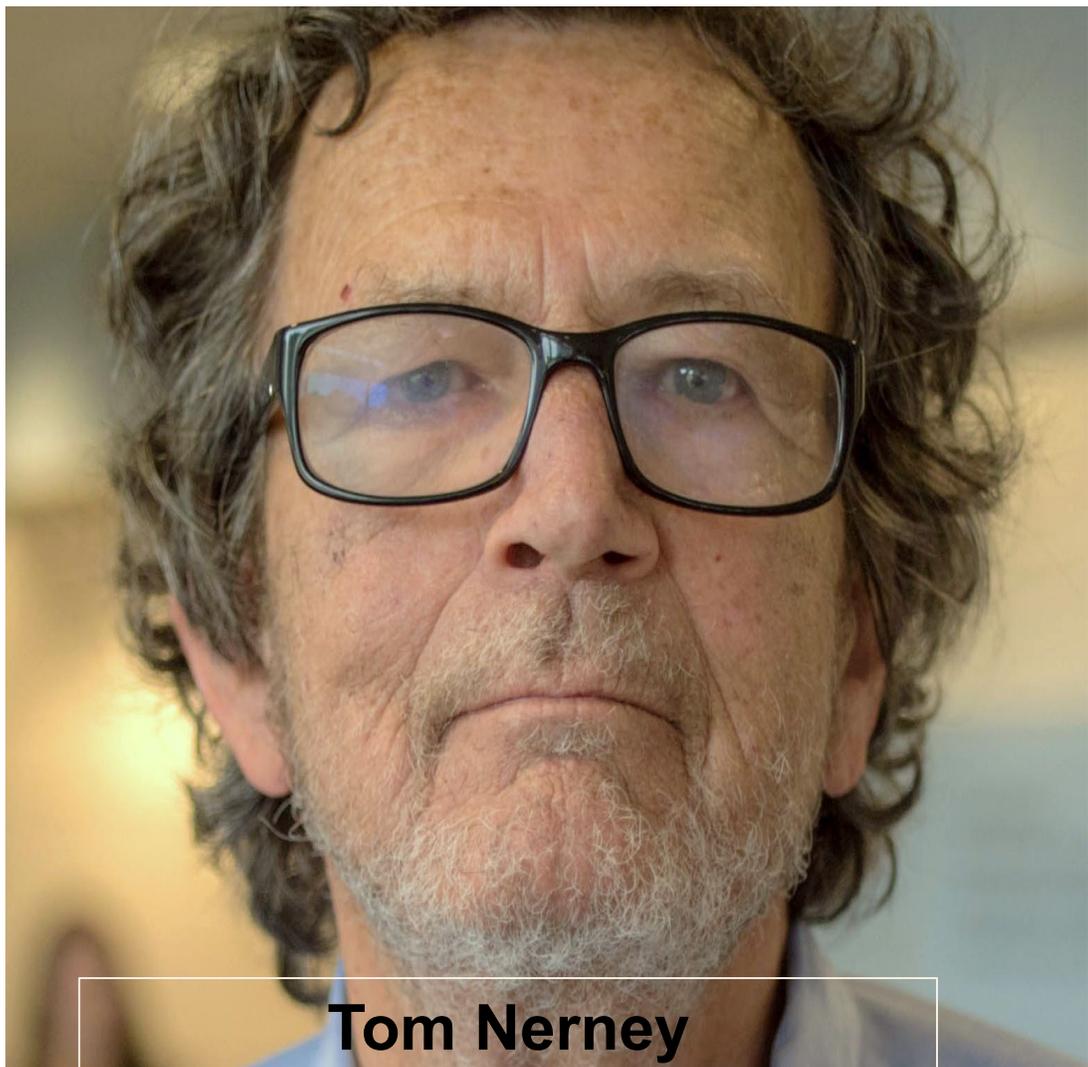
Get more ideas from Circle

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 [redacted]. 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

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

Book list:

All my Life's a Circle

Creating Circles of Friends

Circles of Support

Circles Network

Thinking About... Circles of Support

Circles of Support and Personalisation

SDM Resources

[National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making](#)

[Supported Decision-Making & the Problems of Guardianship Supported](#)

[Decision-Making American Bar Association Commission on Disability Rights](#)

QUESTIONS

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