

Toward Having a Good Life
National Federation of Voluntary Bodies

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The dream I'm working on

Communities grow more resourceful & more just through the struggle to include people with ID/DD as full & contributing citizens.

Requiring accommodation & assistance no longer sets people apart, excuses discrimination, or provides a reason to control people's lives.



Working on this dream calls for a shift from transactions based on *doing-to* or *doing for* to relationships based on *doing-with* others who share some of our purposes. Christine carries the burden of abuse, coercive treatment, repeated rejection and discontinuity as she was shunted between 16 institutions as a child and young woman. For the past 25 years, a stable circle of assistants has remained loyal to her through many difficult times as periods of stability and engagement in valued roles have slowly grown longer & longer. This is her advice on supporting a person whose behavior tempts service workers to meet their difficulties with increasing control, force & attempts at manipulation.

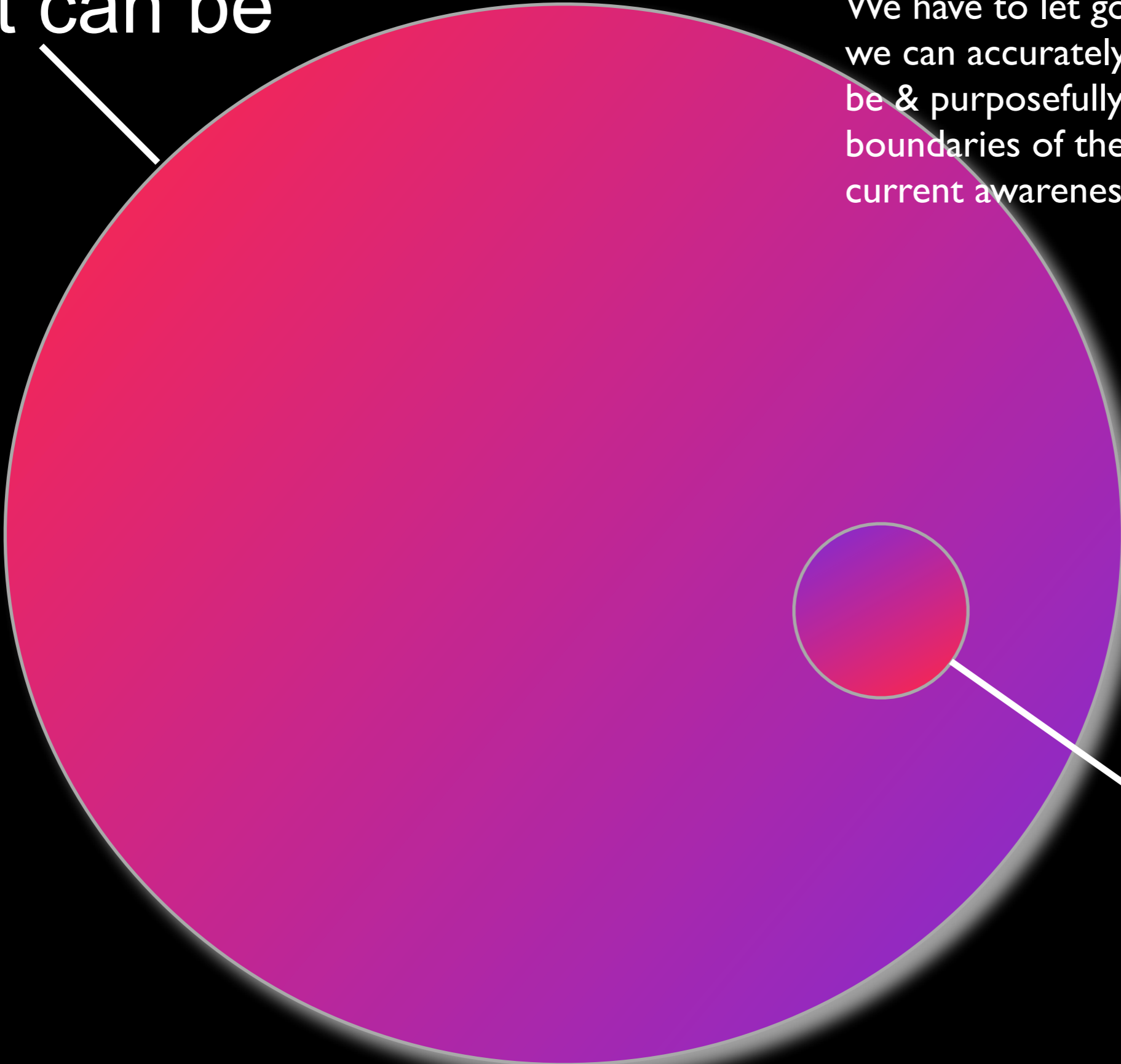
If you are going to work with me, you have to listen to me.

And you can't just listen with your ears, because it will go to your head too fast.

*If you listen slow,
with your whole body,
some of what I say will enter your heart.*

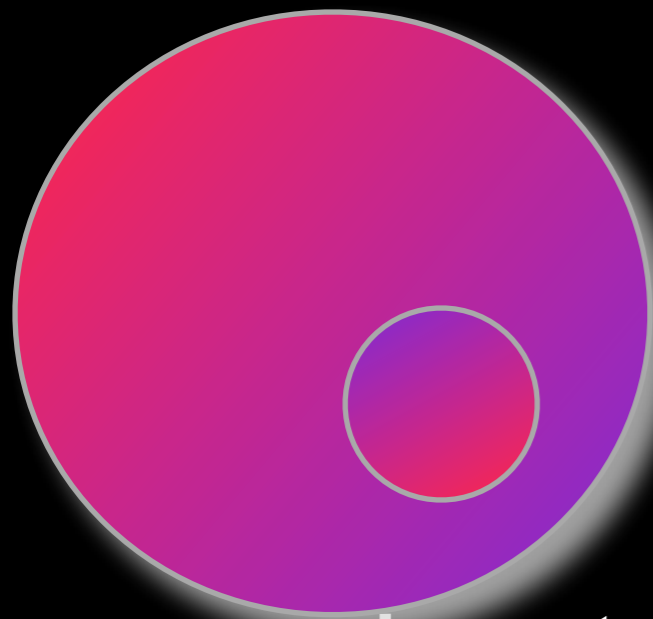
–Christine Mayer

What can be



We have to let go of the myth that we can accurately predict what can be & purposefully extend the boundaries of the little circle of our current awareness.

What we see as possible now



Introduce yourselves

Each take a turn

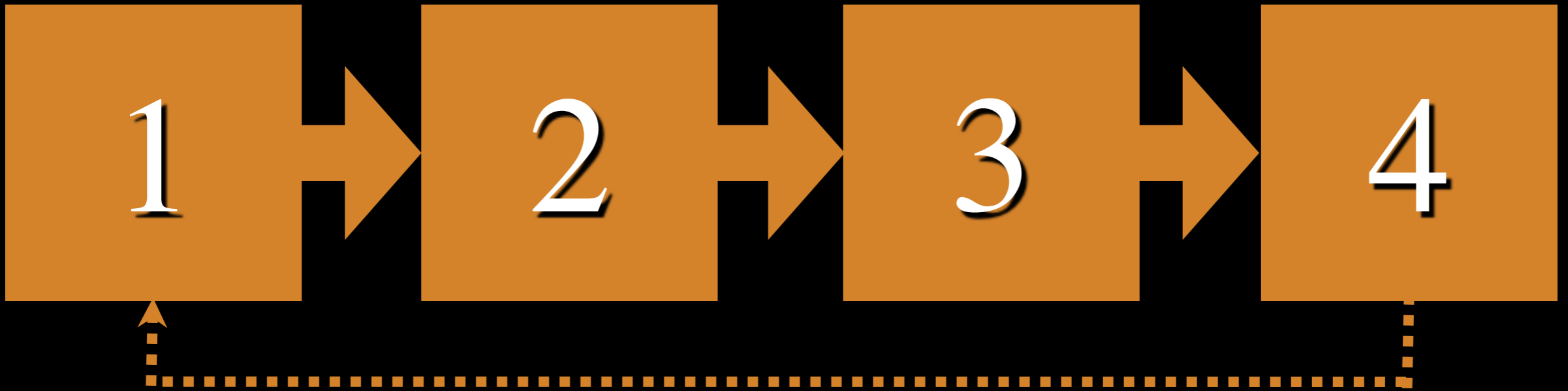
Tell a 2 minute story

about a time when you discovered
a new & positive possibility with
a person with a disability.

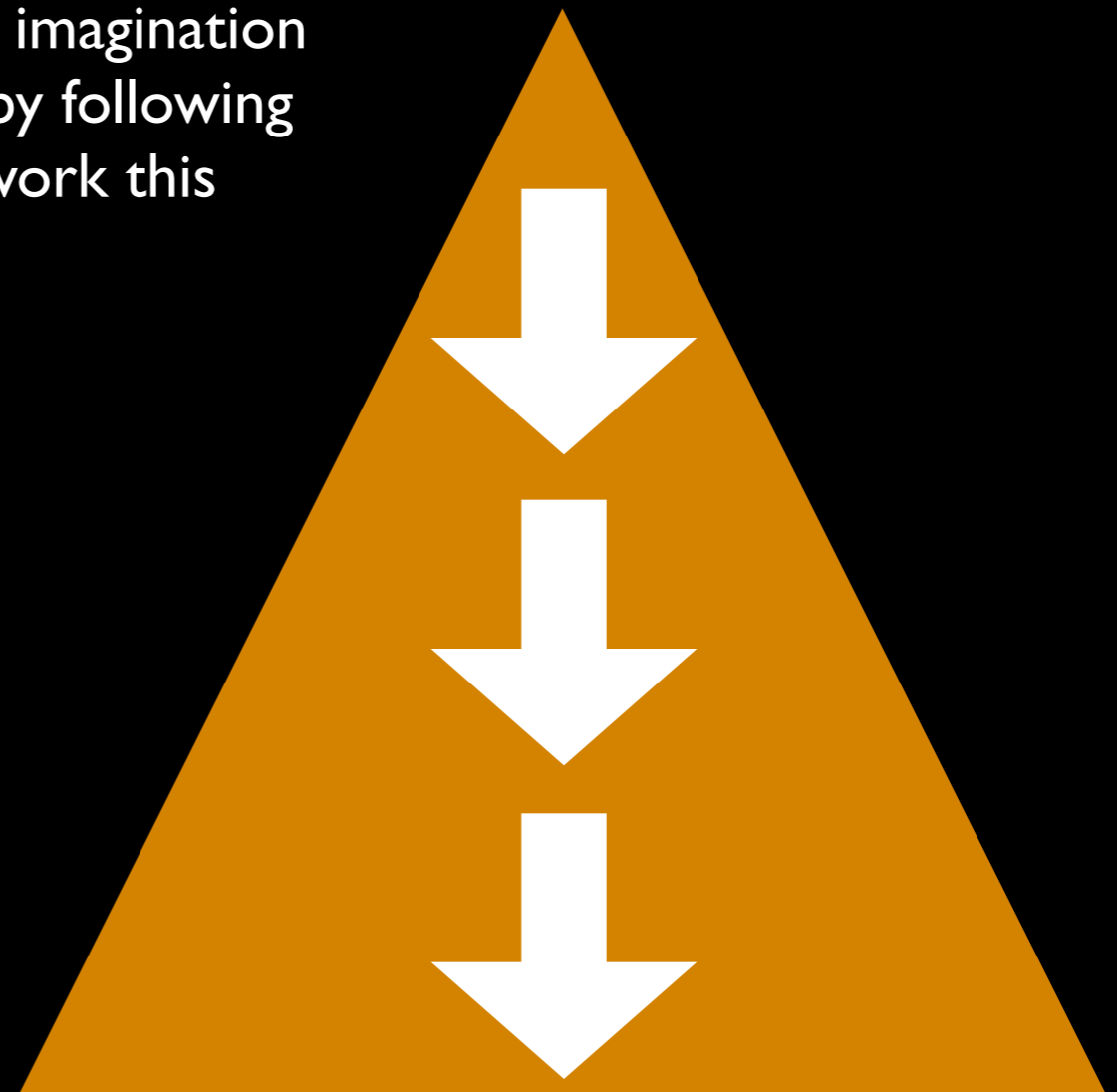
It can be a small thing or a big thing
just as long as it was new and good.

What made that discovery possible?

If you have time, tell another story



A common idea of policy change is based on the imagination that change can be “driven” from the top down by following a pre-defined sequence of steps. Some changes work this way.



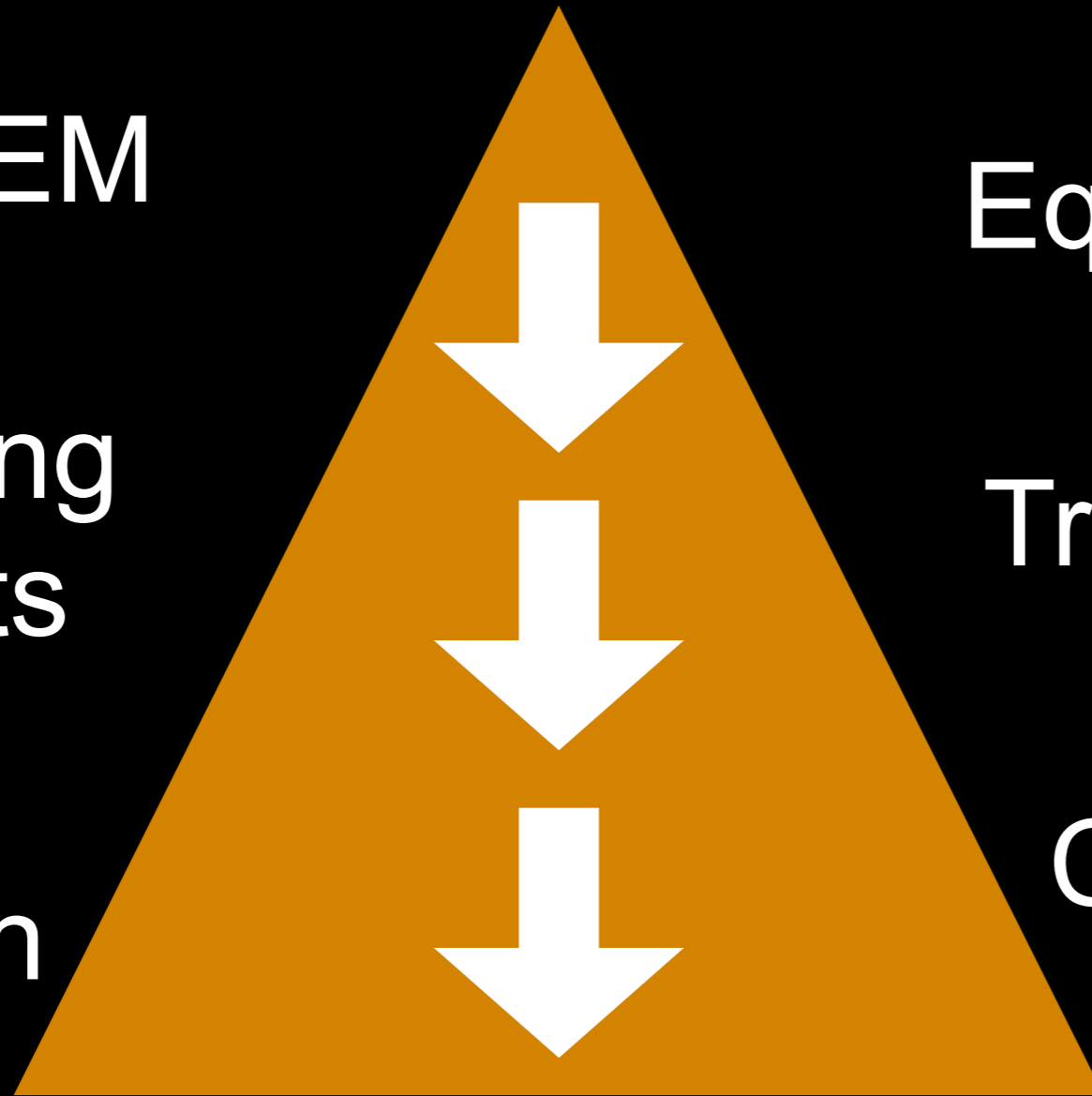
Unequal power and unequal distribution of disadvantage creates these conditions...

...which can be at least partially redressed by policies concerned with these principles

US v THEM

Conflicting Interests

Cautious

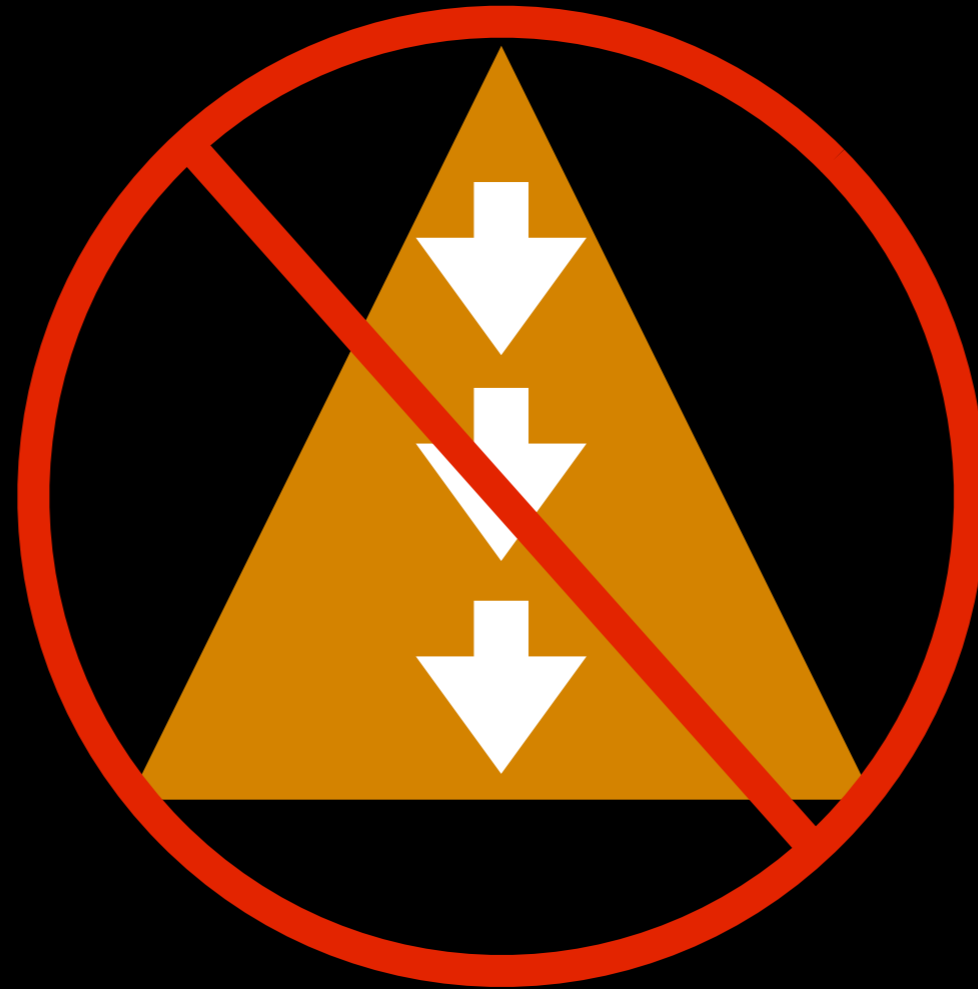


Equity

Transparency

Clear & uniform Procedures

This form for organizing hits its limits when the task is collaborating with people who can't be told what to do & how to do it and the purpose is learning new ways toward a good life.



Creating flexible,
individualized paths to
inclusion & control



We need to leave this form to its proper function: the fair regulation of conflicting interests.

And set about creating *power-with* relationships that have a better chance of discovering people's capacities & gifts, identifying community places where those gifts matter and figuring out how to support people in valued roles in those places.

Creating flexible,
individualized paths to
inclusion & control

The work that needs to be done depends on the qualities we cultivate through our relationships. This image is at the center of a quilt created by direct support workers. It reminds us that together we can develop our capacities for purposeful action.

Gifts of the heart: relationship
& deep purpose

Gifts of the imagination

Gifts of the hand

Gifts of practical knowledge



Read more about this in *Make a Difference: A Guidebook for Person-Centered Direct Support*.
www.inclusion.com

Finding the way means listening deeply to many different voices, forming new understanding & and vision, & acting together to learn from new experiences

What's most important to me

What matters to our family

Best use of €

How we could help

What our community can offer

How we know you & your gifts



Faithfulness to these practices builds a circle with the power to create new opportunities.



Honor each other's dignity

Make time to listen deeply & reflect

Dare to trust the other voices

Be honest about differences & conflicts

Create a real world next step to learn from

The same form for organizing needs to hold the work across the scales where social learning is necessary.

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System

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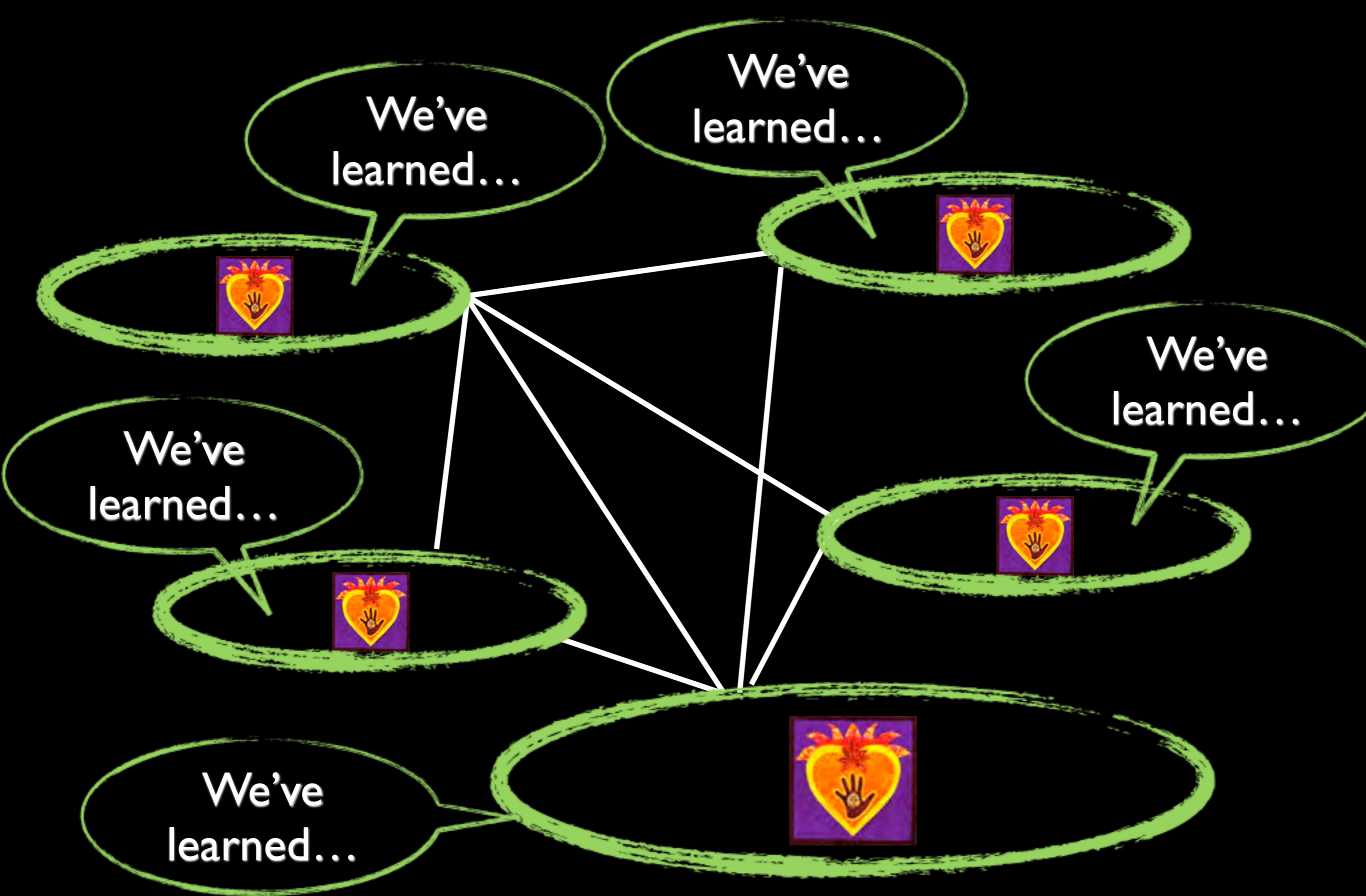


Organization

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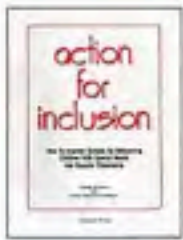


Person



A network of learners who will try new things & tell their stories accelerates the work.





Action for Inclusion
How to improve schools by welcoming children with special needs into regular classrooms
by O'Brien & Forest with J. Pearpoint, Snow & Hasbury
> **Inclusion Classic Books Pack**



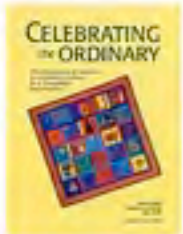
Members of Each Other
Building community in company with people with developmental disabilities
by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien
> **Community Living Pack**



Conversations on Citizenship and Person-Centered Work
Edited by John O'Brien & Carol Blessing
NEW!!



The PATH & MAPS Handbook
Person-Centered Ways to Build Community
John O'Brien, Jack Pearpoint and Lynda Kahn



Celebrating the Ordinary
The emergence of options in community living as a thoughtful organization
by John O'Brien, Connie Lyle O'Brien & Gail Jacob
> **Community Living Pack**



PATH: Planning Possible Positive Futures
Planning alternative tomorrows with hope for schools organizations, businesses and families
by Jack Pearpoint, John O'Brien, Marsha Forest
> **Path Action Pack**



A Little Book About Person-Centered Planning
Ways to think about person-centered planning
John O'Brien & Connie Lyle O'Brien - Editors
> **Person-Centered Planning Pack**



Person-Centered Planning with MAPS and PATH
A Workbook for Facilitators
by John O'Brien & Jack Pearpoint



Implementing Person-Centered Planning
Voices of Experience
John O'Brien & Connie Lyle O'Brien - Editors
> **Person-Centered Planning Pack**



Finding Meaning in the Work
Facilitator's Kit
Ten Exercises to Encourage Reflection on Direct Support



Make A Difference
A Guidebook for Person-Centered Direct Support
John O'Brien & Beth Mount
Plus Resource Kit and Learning Journey Manual

FREE JOHN O'BRIEN DOWNLOADS:

- Actions That Build Communities**
- Deinstitutionalization: Do We Still Know How to Fall After All These Years?**
- Supporting Social Roles: A second bottom line for services**
- A Disgrace to the Nation**
- Remembering Why: Promoting Valued Social Roles (English)**
- Se souvenir pourquoi (Français)**
- Reflecting on Social Roles**

To read more...

Books & downloads

www.inclusion.com/jobrien.html

More downloads

<http://thechp.syr.edu/rsapublications/>

www.centreforwelfarereform.org/library/authors/john-obrien/