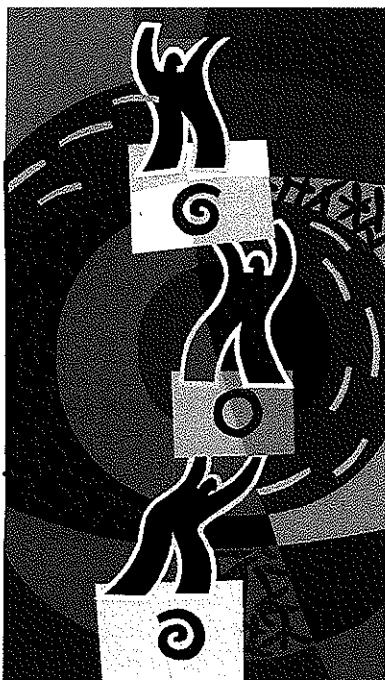


From HERE to THERE...



"To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream;  
not only plan, but also believe." (Anatole France)

# THE SELF-ADVOCACY HANDBOOK

Developed by The Center for Community Partnerships  
Department of Occupational Therapy  
Colorado State University

## Thank You

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Thank you to Tamara Mahler and Jim Irving for sharing their inspirational life stories. Their level of achievement and the richness of their lives is a testament to what empowerment can do. ✨

Thank you to Jane Slezak and Ralph and Nona Irvin for sharing their insights. Most notably, both families believe that it is important to give children with disabilities the same opportunities at success and failure as children without disabilities. Ultimately, these families have had the courage to let their children spread their wings and fly. ✨

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The Self-Advocacy Handbook was made possible through a grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services CMS QA/AI to the Colorado Division for Developmental Disabilities

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# SELF-ADVOCACY INTRODUCTION

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The Self-Advocacy Handbook is an interactive booklet designed by the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Colorado State University. The purpose of this handbook is to teach people with disabilities how to help themselves, promote themselves, and make their life dreams come true. The term “self-advocate” in this handbook reflects an individual’s progression toward personal empowerment and self-efficacy in all areas of daily living. The Self-Advocacy Handbook is founded on the premise that all people have the potential to make decisions and choices to help improve the quality of their lives. This handbook is for individuals with disabilities and is especially helpful when used with the support of family members, friends, teachers and/or adult service providers. It is recommended that the activities in the Self-Advocacy Handbook are done over a period of time with skills practiced in-between sessions. To the greatest extent possible, the individual with a disability is encouraged to participate in the exercises in this handbook. The exercises will be more meaningful and effective when applied to current, “real life” situations. It is also hoped that these materials will be creatively adapted to fit the learning style of the individual. (Have fun with the material - make a collage, draw a picture, visit places in the community, etc.) Upon completion of this handbook individuals will gain a greater personal knowledge of who they are, what they need and want, and how to get what they need and want.

## What does it mean to be a self-advocate?

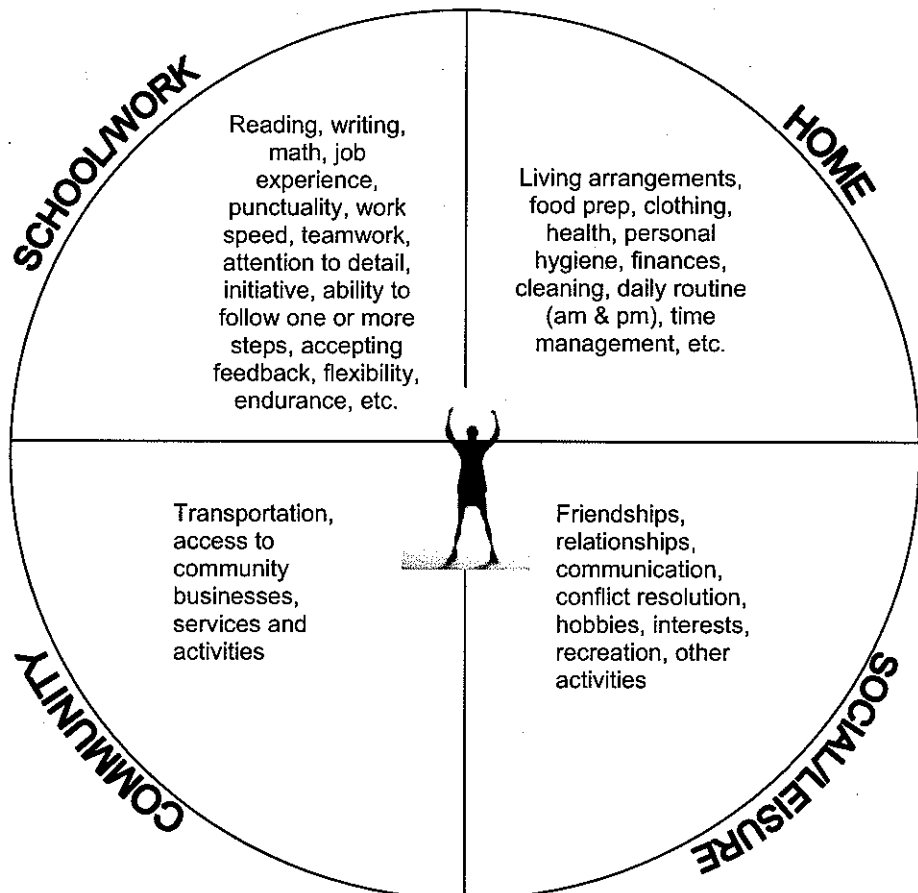
As a self-advocate you will:

- know yourself,
- know what you need and want, and
- know how to get what you need and want.

To be an effective self-advocate you must consider all areas of your life such as, home, social/leisure, community and school/work. Each area of your life is important. Success or failure in one area will affect how well you do in other areas. It is important to find a balance in which you have some level of satisfaction in each life area.

One way to picture all the areas in your life is to imagine your life as a big pie cut into four pieces. Each piece of the pie represents an area in your life.

The pie looks like this.

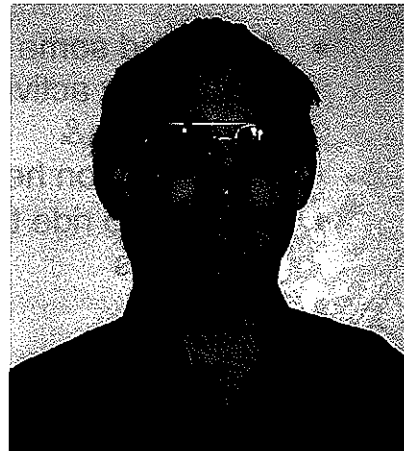


Learning to be a self-advocate will help you make your life what you want it to be! To help you learn about self-advocacy, this handbook will feature Tamara and Jim, two individuals who will demonstrate to you how they made positive changes in their lives by becoming self-advocates. Tamara and Jim will show you how they turned challenges in their lives into successes. Throughout the handbook there will be opportunities for you to learn self-advocacy skills which will help you make positive changes in your life. Tamara and Jim want you to know that you can be a self-advocate too!

### **MEET TAMARA AND JIM**

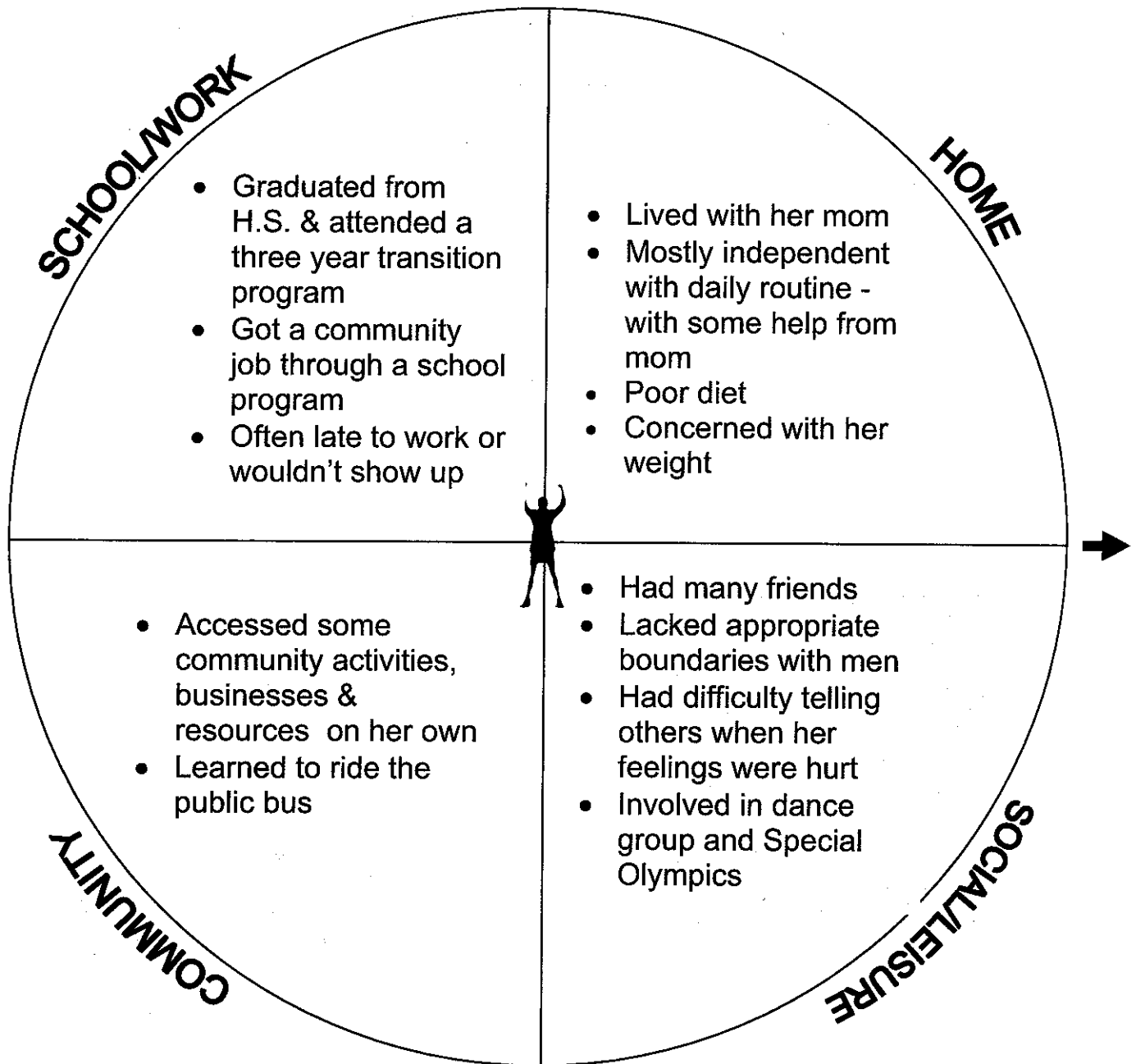


**Tamara**

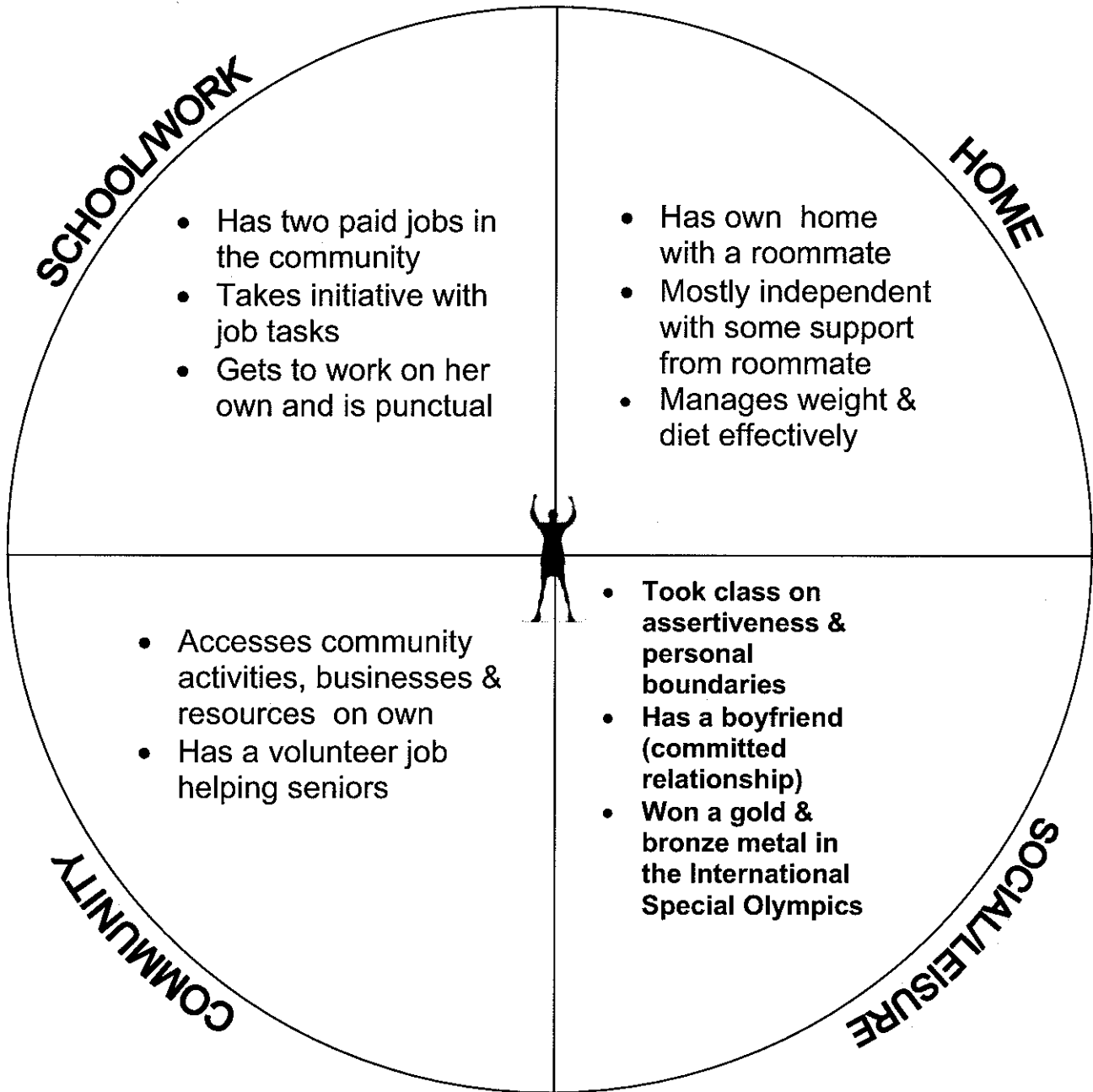


**Jim**

# *This is Tamara's life as a young adult...*

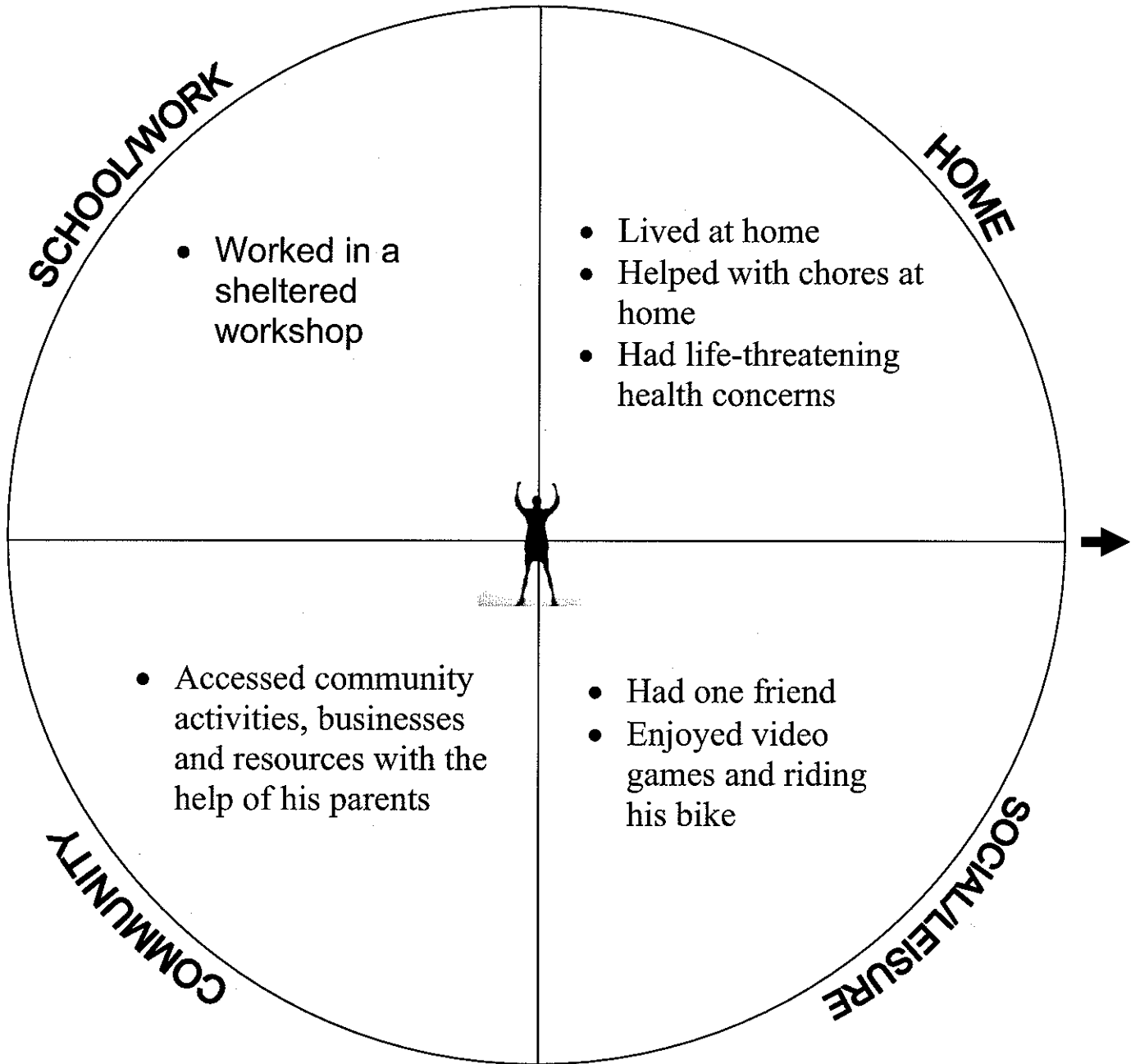


# *This is Tamara's life now...*

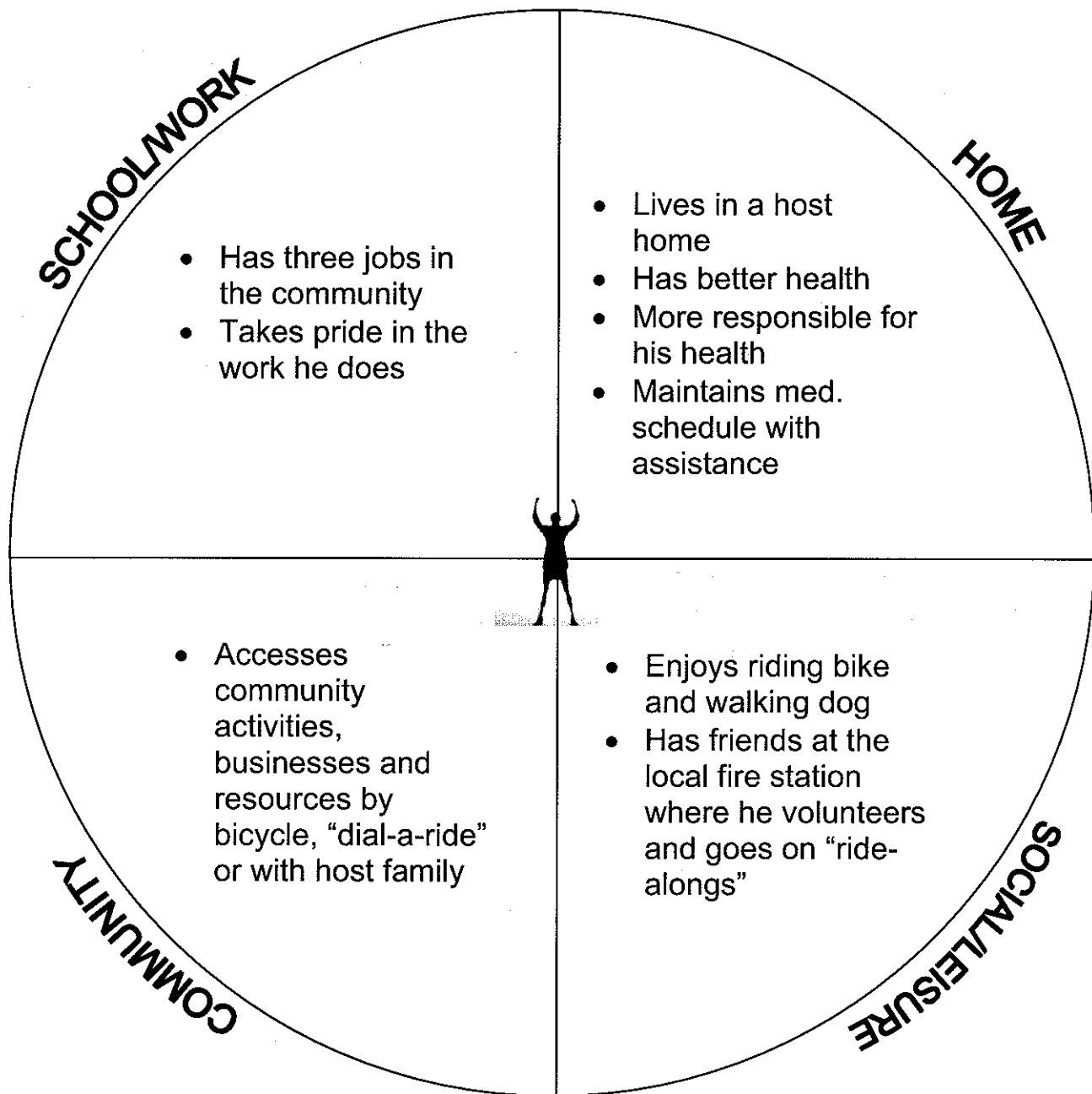




# *This is Jim's life as a young adult...*



# *This is Jim's life now...*



# KNOW YOURSELF

---

To be a successful self-advocate, the first step is to know yourself. Knowing what you like and dislike and what your strengths and challenges are will help you take your life in the direction *you* want to go.

## KNOW YOUR LIKES AND DISLIKES

Every person has likes and dislikes. These preferences are what make each person unique and special. You can make your life more enjoyable by letting others know what you do and don't like.

Here is what Tamara and Jim like and dislike:

Tamara's favorite colors are blue and red. She likes country music, spaghetti, sports, friends and watching her favorite TV show. Her favorite thing to wear is her sparkly dress. She dislikes pizza, fast food, scary movies and when her friends do something bad.

Jim's favorite color is blue. He likes soft music, his pet cat, pepperoni pizza, vanilla ice cream, taking his dog for a walk, riding his bike and joking around with the guys at the fire department. He dislikes hard rock music and when people don't listen to him.

### ***Now It Is Your Turn...***

What are *your* likes and dislikes?

## What I Like

**Instructions:** Write, draw or paste a picture of what you like. Share this information with people in your life. By sharing your likes and dislikes, people will be able to honor you as the truly special person you are.

My favorite color:

My favorite music:

My favorite food:

My favorite clothes to wear are:

My favorite thing to do:

My favorite TV show and movie:

My favorite game:

My favorite people:

My favorite place to go in the community:

## What I Dislike

**Instructions:** Write, draw or paste a picture of what you dislike. Share this information with people in your life. By sharing your likes and dislikes people will be able to honor you as the truly special person you are.

What is your least favorite color?

Is there any music you do not like?

What food do you dislike?

What types of clothes do you think are uncomfortable?

Are there certain types of movies you do not like?

"It really bothers me when  
people \_\_\_\_\_."  
(Finish the sentence.)

"I really don't like it  
when \_\_\_\_\_."  
(Finish the sentence.)

"I feel mad  
when \_\_\_\_\_."  
(Finish the sentence.)

## KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Knowing yourself also means knowing your strengths and challenges. Knowing your strengths and challenges will help you take your life in the direction *you* want to go.

### **What is a strength?**

Everyone has something they do well. Knowing your strengths will help you promote yourself and let others know how you can contribute and participate in life.

### **What is a challenge?**

Everyone also has something they are not as good at as others. This is a challenge. A challenge may also be a difficult life situation. Knowing your challenges will help you figure out how to get your needs met.

For example, let's look at Tamara's life when she was starting out on her own after finishing high school. Let's look at her strengths and challenges in each area of her life.



### **Tamara - HOME**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Tamara liked to take care of her personal hygiene, meals and do her daily routine independently.	Tamara was frustrated living at home because she wanted to move out on her own.
	Tamara ate junk food which caused her to gain weight.
	Tamara had a tendency to forget about appointments.



### Tamara SOCIAL/LEISURE

Strengths	Challenges
Tamara was friendly and had a lot of friends.	She did not have a sense of personal boundaries with men. She acted friendly and gave the impression she wanted to be their girlfriend.
Tamara liked to dance, swim and do other sports.	Tamara had a difficult time letting someone know when her feelings were hurt.
	Tamara wanted to be better at swimming.



### Tamara – COMMUNITY

Strengths	Challenges
Tamara knew how to use public transportation.	Tamara had difficulty recognizing safety issues with strangers.



### Tamara – SCHOOL/WORK

Strengths	Challenges
Tamara completed high school.	Tamara had limited reading skills.
After high school Tamara went through a 3 year transition program.	When Tamara got upset at work she would not come in the next day.
Tamara had work experience in the community.	Sometimes Tamara was late to work.

Here are Jim's strengths and challenges when he was a young adult.



### Jim - HOME

Strengths	Challenges
Jim helped out with chores and yard work at home.	Jim was living at home and didn't know if he wanted to live anywhere else.
Jim's mom helped him take care of his health needs.	Jim had significant health problems that required daily monitoring and continued to get worse, leading to life saving surgery.



### Jim - SOCIAL/LEISURE

Strengths	Challenges
Jim was friendly and had a few close friends.	If Jim did not understand something, he felt upset because he did not know how to tell someone he didn't understand.
Jim liked to play Nintendo and ride his bike.	



### Jim - COMMUNITY

Strengths	Challenges
Jim enjoyed going places in the community with his parents.	Jim did not know how to use public transportation on his own.



### Jim - SCHOOL/WORK

Strengths	Challenges
Jim gained work experience from his Community Centered Board.	Jim had difficulty using his hands for writing and other fine motor activity.
	Jim worked in a sheltered workshop, but thought he had the skills to do more.



# Where I

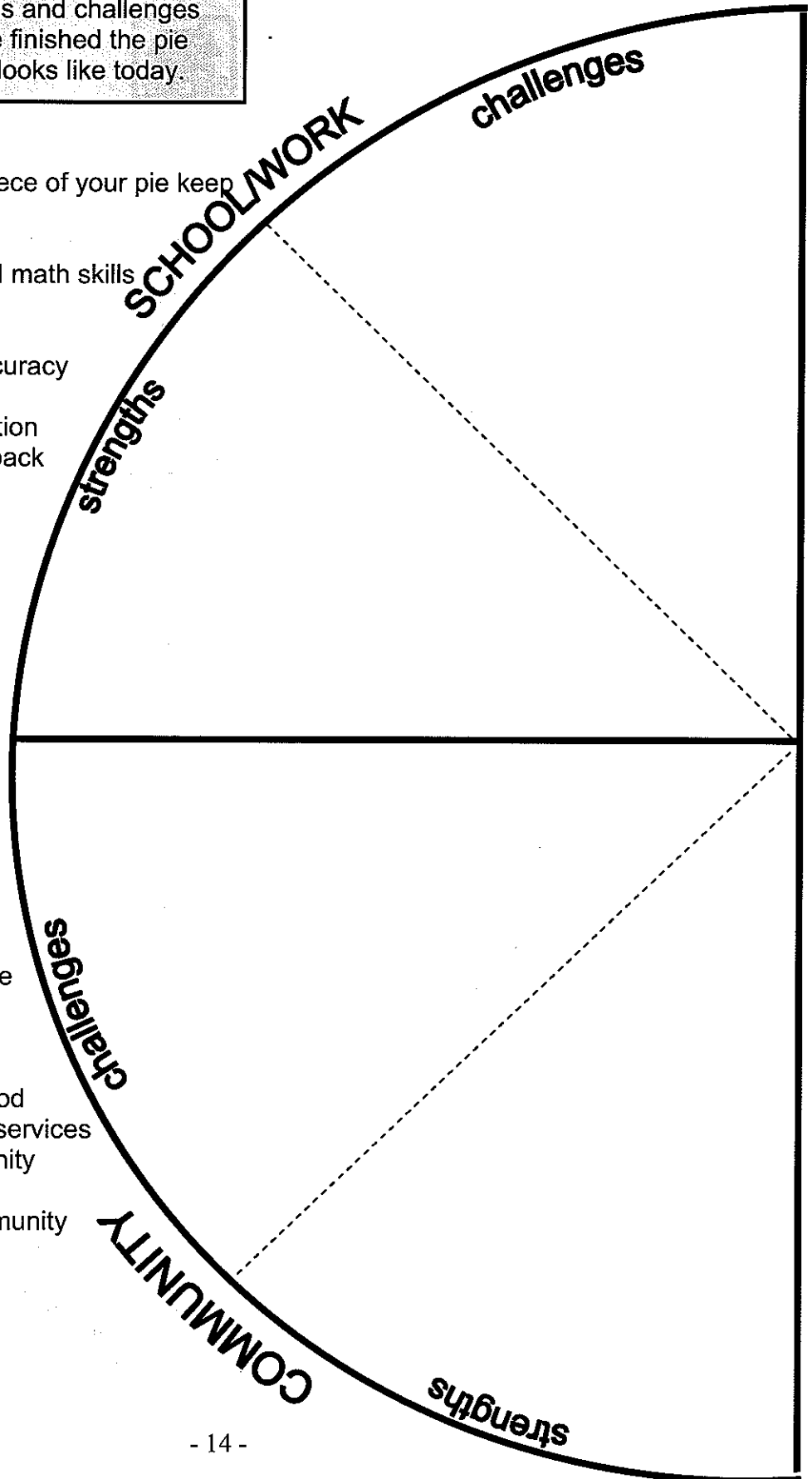
**Now It Is Your turn...** fill in the pie by drawing or writing where you are now in each area of your life. Write your strengths and challenges in each area. When you are finished the pie will represent what your life looks like today.

For the **SCHOOL/WORK** piece of your pie keep in mind the following:

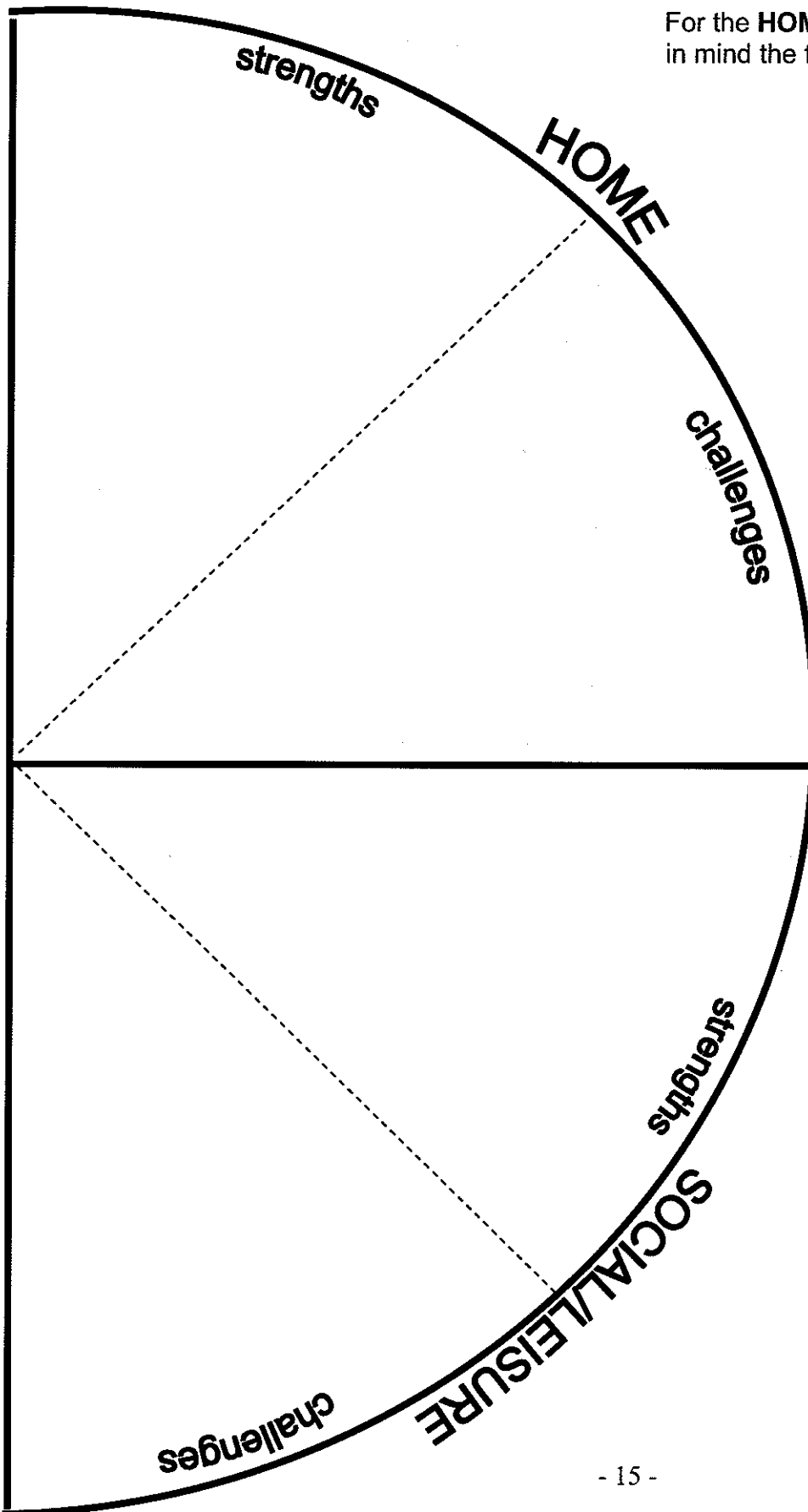
- Reading, writing and math skills
- Work experience
- Punctuality
- Work speed and accuracy
- Teamwork ability
- Initiative and motivation
- Acceptance of feedback
- Flexibility
- Endurance
- Following directions

For the **COMMUNITY** piece of your pie keep in mind the following:

- Transportation method
- Utilizing community services
- Shopping at community businesses
- Participating in community activities



# am Now



For the **HOME** piece of your pie keep in mind the following:

- Living arrangements (alone, with parents, host home, etc.)
- Food preparation
- House cleaning
- Laundry
- Personal hygiene
- Finances
- Resource Management (self-determination)
- Daily routine (AM & PM)
- Time management

For the **SOCIAL/LEISURE** piece of your pie keep in mind the following:

- Friendships
- Relationships
- Communication skills
- Conflict resolution abilities
- Hobbies
- Interests
- Recreational activities
- Other activities

# KNOW WHAT YOU NEED AND WANT

---

The next step toward advocating for yourself is to know what you need and want. Knowing what you need will help you take steps right now to improve your life. Knowing what you want will give you a direction for your future.

## KNOW WHAT YOU NEED

As a self-advocate, it is always important to make sure that your needs are being met. A need is something you must have to live a happy, healthy life. Basic needs include food, shelter and clothing. Everyone must have food, clothing and shelter to survive. In addition, there are many other needs that must be met in order for you to feel happy and satisfied with your life, such as the need for friendship, the need for achievement and the need to have fun. Unmet needs in one area of your life may affect other areas of your life. For example, if a person doesn't keep himself clean by bathing and brushing his teeth he may not get hired for a job because of his personal hygiene.

Another clue to your needs can be found in the challenges you listed on the “Where I Am Now” pie. Often a person has a challenge because of an underlying need.

For example, Tamara was frustrated with living at home because she wanted to make more of her own choices and therefore wanted to move out on her own. *She had a need to be more independent.*

Tamara had a difficult time letting someone know when her feelings were hurt. *She had a need to be liked and accepted.*

Jim was challenged by his health problems. He needed to work with a support person to make sure his health needs were addressed. *He had a need for daily medical treatment.*

Jim was challenged at work when he did not understand what his boss wanted him to do. He felt upset because he did not know how to tell him he didn't understand. *Jim had a need to understand and make himself understood.*

***Now it is Your Turn...***

# My Needs

**Instructions:** To find out more about your needs, answer the following questions by circling the face that best describes your answer.

☹ = no    😐 = sort of    😊 = yes



HOME

1) Do you like where you are living?



2) If you are living with someone, do you like who you are living with?



3) Do the people you are living with ask you about your likes and dislikes?



4) Do you eat healthy food?



5) Do you exercise?



6) Are you getting the healthcare that you need?



7) If you take medication, do you remember to take it?



8) Do you bathe, wash your hair and brush your teeth?



9) Do you wear clean clothes?



10) Are you able to manage your money?



11) Do you have as much control over your disability support resources (self determination) as you would like?



---

If you circled ☹️ you have a need in that area. Write your "HOME" needs here.

I need \_\_\_\_\_

I need \_\_\_\_\_

---



### **SOCIAL/LEISURE**

1) Do you have friends?



2) Are your friends treating you with kindness and respect?



3) Are you able to keep your friendships?



4) Are you able to spend time with your friends and have fun together?



5) Do you participate in any sports or hobbies?



6) Have you participated in any recreational classes?



---

If you circled ☹️ you have a need in that area. Write your "Social/Leisure" needs here.

I need \_\_\_\_\_

I need \_\_\_\_\_

---



### COMMUNITY

1) Do you know how to access public transportation?



2) Can you get to the places you need to go to in the community?



---

If you circled ☹️ you have a need in that area. Write your "Community" needs here.

I need \_\_\_\_\_

I need \_\_\_\_\_

---



### SCHOOL/WORK

1) If you are in high school, do you like school?



2) If you need help in school, are you getting the help you need?



3) If you have an IEP, are you taking part in the IEP meetings?



4) Do you have any work experience?



*\*\*\*Answer the following questions if you are currently working.*

5) Do you like where you are working?



6) Do you like the number of hours you are working?



7) Do you feel like you are using your skills and abilities on your job?



8) If you need help with your job, are you getting the help you need?



9) Do you get to work on time?



10) Do you get along with your coworkers?



11) Are you getting paid a fair wage?



---

If you circled  you have a need in that area. Write your "School/Work" needs here.

I need \_\_\_\_\_

I need \_\_\_\_\_

---



## **KNOW WHAT YOU WANT**

After you know what you need, the next step is to think about what you want in the future. One way to think about what you want is to think about your hopes and dreams. A person must have a dream before they can make a dream come true.

What do *you* want your life to be like in the future?

Here are some hopes and dreams that Tamara had when she finished high school:

- Hoped to have her own place to live in the community
- Hoped to make more of her own decisions
- Dreamed of competing in the International Special Olympics and winning a gold medal
- Dreamed of traveling

Here are some hopes and dreams Jim had as a young adult:

- Hoped to make money
- Hoped to have fun with friends
- Dreamed of not having to worry about his health
- Dreamed of riding along on a fire truck

### **Know Your Options**

Before exploring your hopes and dreams, it is important to know the many options that exist for you in each area of your life. Knowing these options will help you make your dreams for the future more fulfilling.

Here are possible options for you to consider. Discuss these options with support people in your life to find the ones that best suit you. When possible, go out in the community and explore these options. You will make better choices if you truly understand your options.



### **HOME Options:**

Living arrangements:

- Live at home
- Live by yourself
- Live by yourself with support
- Live with a host family or foster family
- Live with several other people with disabilities in the community
- Manage (on your own or with support) your disability support resources, as well as the money you earn (self determination)



### **SOCIAL/LEISURE Options:**

- Have friends with and without disabilities
- Have a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Participate in recreational hobbies and activities
- Participate in supported recreational activities through your local recreation department



### **COMMUNITY Options:**

- Use public transportation
- Use accessible public transportation (as needed)
- Access community stores and services
- Community participation activities (Community related activities with a support person and possibly with peers)
- Volunteer in the community



### **SCHOOL/WORK Options:**

#### **School**

- Participate in and possibly facilitate IEP meetings
- Help your school develop a transition plan as part of your IEP  
(Start planning for your life after high school)
- Obtain the educational accommodations you need
- Get work experience through a school program

#### **Work**

- Get a competitive job in the community  
(Competitive wage in an integrated setting without support)
- Get a supported employment job in the community  
(Competitive wage in an integrated setting with support)

- Work on a work crew  
(A job where a small group of people with disabilities work at different sites in the community)
- Work in an enclave  
(A job where a small group of people with disabilities work at one site in the community)
- Work in a sheltered employment setting with others who have disabilities

### ***Now It Is Your Turn...***

Now that you have thought about your options, what are your hopes and dreams? When you think about your hopes and dreams, think of what you really want in your life. Dream big, but also make your dreams achievable. For example, the dream of becoming a professional football player may not be realistic, but helping a football team or working in a sports complex may be possible.

*"One can never consent to creep when one feels the impulse to soar." –Helen Keller*

# Where I

**Now it's your turn...** fill in the pie by drawing or writing where you would like to be in each area of your life. When you are finished, the completed pie will represent your future hopes and dreams.

For the **SCHOOL/WORK** piece of your pie keep in mind the following questions:

*Do you want to learn something new? If yes, what do you want to learn?*

*Do you want to have a job?*

*What type of job would you like to have?*

*What type of workplace would you like to work in?*

**SCHOOL/WORK**

For the **COMMUNITY** piece of your pie keep in mind the following questions:

*How would you like to get around in the community?*

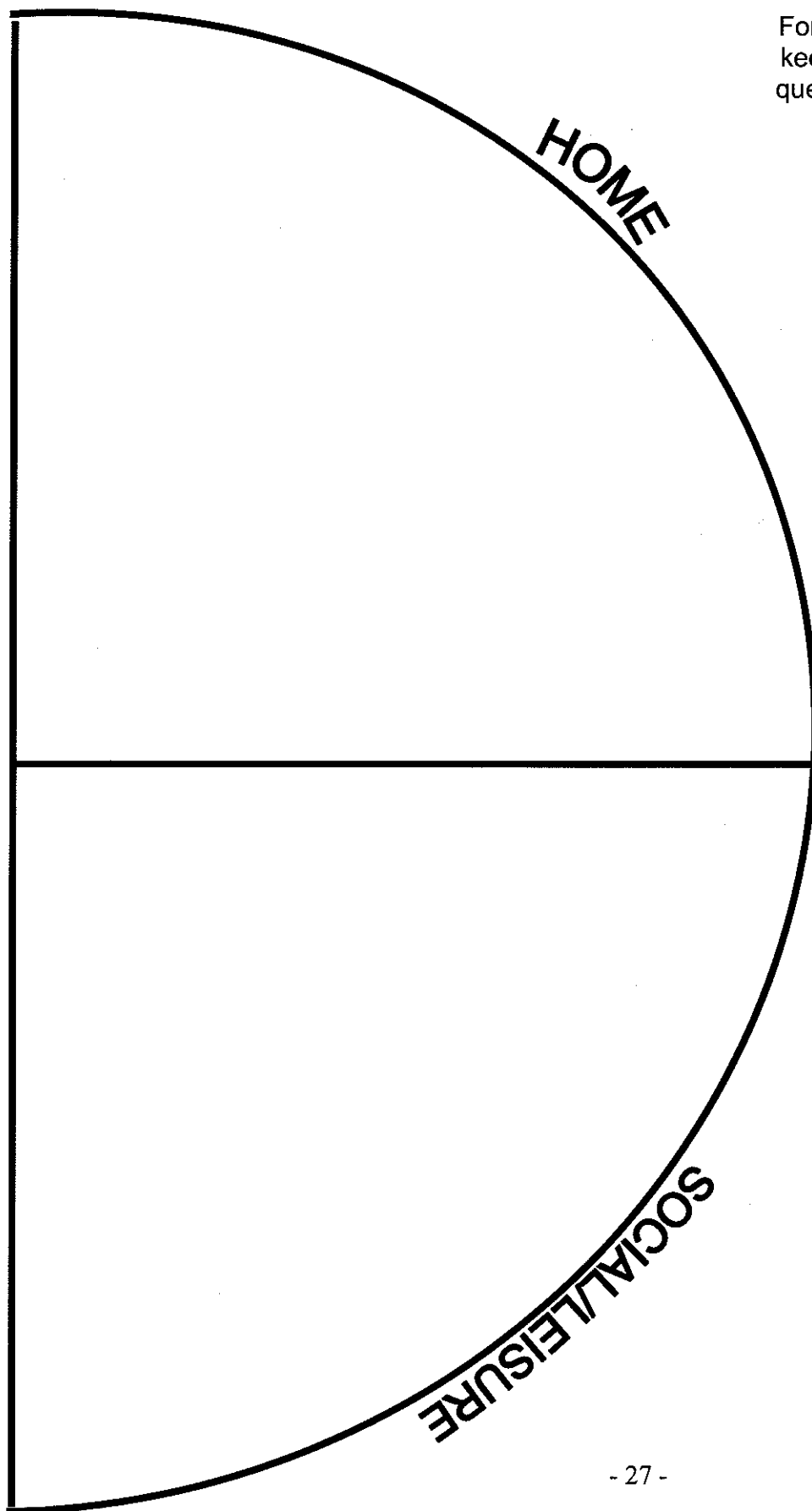
*Where would you like to go?*

*What would you like to do?*

*Would you like to volunteer in the community?*

**COMMUNITY**

# Want to Be



For the **HOME** piece of your pie keep in mind the following questions:

*Where would you like to live?*

*What type of living arrangement would you like to have? Do you want to live alone, with a friend, or with a support person?*

*Do you want to improve your health?*

*Would you like to have more control over your support services?*

*Would you like to manage your money?*

For the **SOCIAL/LEISURE** piece of your pie keep in mind the following questions:

*Who would you like to spend time with in the future?*

*What kind of a friend would like to be?*

*Would you like to improve your social skills?*

*What would you like to do for fun that you are not doing now?*

*Where would you like to go on a vacation?*

# KNOW HOW TO GET WHAT YOU NEED AND WANT

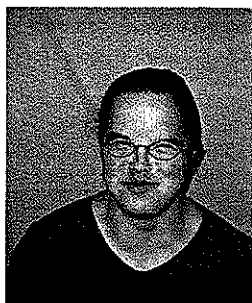
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The last step in self-advocacy is to know how to get what you want and need. Often, to accomplish getting your needs and wants met, specific skills are required. Skills most commonly used in self-advocacy include communication, problem solving, decision making and goal setting. It is also helpful to know who your support people are and where you can find resources in the community.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication is a very important part of letting others know what you want and need. Good communication will help you be successful. Communication is not just about what you say, but it is also about how you act and how you look.

Here is Tamara. If Tamara is meeting someone for the first time, what type of face should she make? Circle the picture.



Here is how Tamara meets someone for the first time. She looks them in the eye and says, "Hello" with a pleasant voice and a smile on her face. She might also shake the person's hand with a firm handshake. Tamara is dressed in clean, neat clothes and has fixed her hair. People like Tamara because she knows how to communicate.

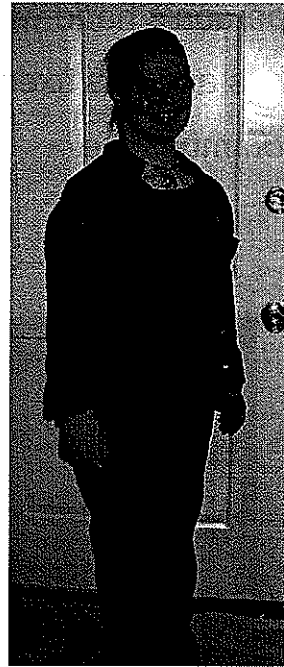


Looking your best will help you to be successful. It is important to take a shower or bath, wash your hair, brush your teeth and wear deodorant and clean clothes. Keeping yourself clean and neat will help make a good first impression.

This is especially important when interviewing for a job. Taking time to make yourself look nice will show an employer that you are interested in the job. On the other hand, looking messy makes an employer think that you are not interested in getting the job.



Which of these two pictures shows how Tamara should dress for a job interview?



When Tamara goes on an interview she dresses like the second picture. Her nice, neat and clean appearance has helped her get the job she wants.

***Now It Is Your Turn...***

**Greeting Someone:**

Practice greeting someone. Find a friend to help you practice.

Remember to:

- 1) Look the person in the eye.
- 2) Smile at the person.
- 3) Say, "Hello" with a pleasant voice.
- 4) Shake their hand with a firm handshake.

## Listening:

Communication is not just about talking it is also about listening. Practice good listening skills with a friend. Have a friend tell you two things about him or herself. Repeat back to the friend what he or she just told you. Then have your friend listen as you tell two things about yourself. Have your friend repeat back to you what you just said.

## Phone Communication:



When talking on the phone, it is important to talk as clearly as possible. If you want to call someone on the phone here are the steps to follow:

- 1) Look up the phone number in the phone book or have someone help you find the phone number.
- 2) Think about what you want to say.
- 3) Dial the phone number.
- 4) Say, "Hello my name is \_\_\_\_\_."
- 5) Tell why you are calling. "I am calling because \_\_\_\_\_."

6) Listen to what the other person has to say.

7) When you are done talking, end the phone conversation by saying, "Goodbye."

Practice the above steps with a friend. When you feel confident enough, make a real phone call to a family member or friend. Ask them to tell you how you did.

### **Speaking Up:**

Communication is also how you tell someone what you like or don't like and what you need and want. Sometimes it is easier to tell someone what you like and harder to tell someone what you don't like because you don't want to hurt their feelings. However, it is very important to tell people what you don't like. If you don't speak up, you may get yourself into an uncomfortable situation.

For example, one time Tamara took a ride with a stranger because she did not want to hurt his feelings by saying, "No thank you." She put herself in a dangerous situation because she was afraid to speak up.

Now you can let others know what you are thinking and feeling. Look at your list of likes and dislikes. Practice telling a friend what you like and what you don't like.

If you were in Tamara's situation and a stranger asked you if you wanted a ride, what would you say?

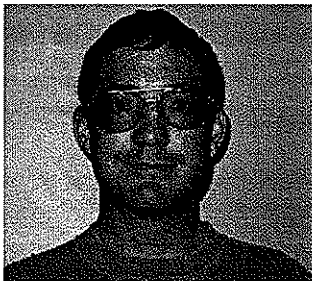
## PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Now that you understand the importance of communication skills, these skills can be applied toward problem solving. Communication and problem solving go together. Learning how to work through problems will help you move your life in a positive direction and help you get your wants and needs met.

### **Here is an example of a problem Jim had...**

One day at work Jim's boss asked him to do something. Jim wasn't sure what his boss wanted him to do. He was upset because he didn't understand. In the past Jim would have said nothing and felt frustrated. Now, Jim knows that when he feels frustrated he has a problem. To solve the problem Jim uses good communication. He tells his boss, "I don't understand what you want me to do." As a result, his boss then helps him understand what he needs to do.

When a problem is frustrating it is easy to get mad. However, Jim remembered the right way to communicate. What type of face should Jim make when he talks to his boss? Circle the best face.



OR



Jim has found making a pleasant face helps him solve his problem.

Jim uses good communication when he talks to his boss. Jim looks his boss in the eye and with a nice voice tone tells her he doesn't understand. His boss appreciates Jim's communication and helps him work through the problem.



Here are the steps Jim used to solve his problem.

1. What is my problem? (Jim was frustrated because he didn't understand.)
2. What can I do about my problem? What is my plan? (Jim's plan was to talk to his boss.)
3. Am I using my plan? (Jim used his plan.)
4. How did I do? (Jim solved his problem.)

### ***Now It Is Your Turn...***

**Here are the problem solving steps.**

- 1. What is my problem?**
- 2. What can I do about my problem? (What is my plan?)**
- 3. Am I using my plan?**
- 4. How did I do?**

Think of a problem you have had recently. Use the problem solving steps. If one plan doesn't work try a new plan until you feel that you have solved your problem.

**1. What is my problem?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What can I do about my problem? (What is my plan?)**

Here are some ideas...

- Do I need to do something differently?

What will I do differently? \_\_\_\_\_

- Can I solve the problem through communication?

What will I say?

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_."  
(feeling) (describe behavior)

"I need you to \_\_\_\_\_."

- Should I ask a support person to help me figure out the problem?

Who can I ask for help? \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Am I using my plan?** \_\_\_\_\_

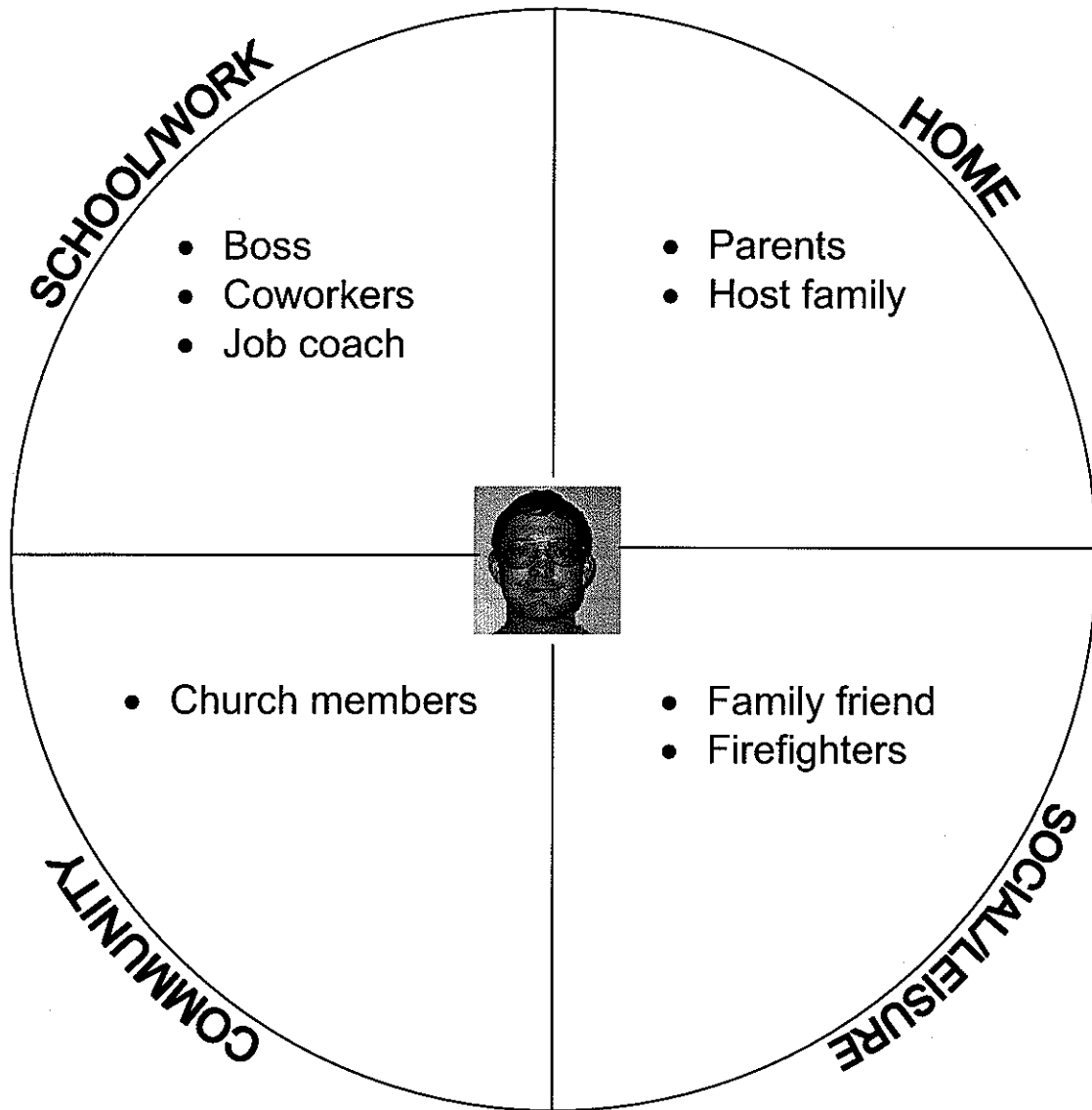
Make sure you are using your plan.

**4. How did I do?** \_\_\_\_\_

Have you resolved your problem? If not, come up with a new plan and try again.

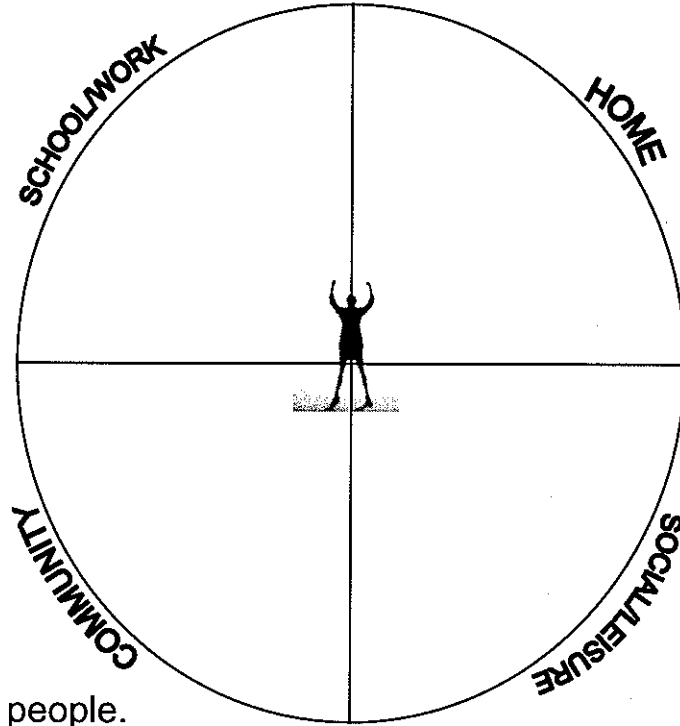
## Asking for Help

When you feel frustrated by a problem, it is often helpful to ask a support person for help. Remember that it is OK to ask for help. We all have support people in our lives who want to help us. Support people can be very helpful in problem solving. They can help us figure out what to do. For example, here are Jim's support people:



***Now It Is Your Turn...***

**Instructions:** Think of each of your life areas. Who are the people in each life area that can help you? Write the names of your support people in each of the four sections.



Complete this list of support people.

**List of Support People**

**Name:**

**Phone:**

- 
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.

Write this list on a note card and carry it with you. If you need help with a problem you can ask or call one of these support people.



## DECISION MAKING SKILLS

Decision making skills will help you make good choices. The choices you make will help you get where you want to go. Your decisions will allow you to shape your life.

For example, here is a decision that Tamara needed to make. She needed to decide whether to live by herself or live with a roommate. To help her decide whether she should live by herself she thought about the pros (what was good) and cons (what was bad) about this situation. Here is what she did.

### Decision Making Chart

Define Question: Should I live by myself?	
(What is the question you are trying to answer?)	
Pros: (+)	Cons: (-)
1) I like having my place all to myself.	1) I'm afraid I will feel lonely.
2) I can eat what I want to eat.	2) I only cook a few things.
3) I don't have to share anything.	3) I don't like to go grocery shopping.
4) I can stay up as late as I want to.	4) I wouldn't feel as safe by myself.
	5) I need help with budgeting.
	6) It wouldn't be as fun by myself.

When Tamara made a list of the pros and cons she decided that there were more cons than pros to living by herself. She decided that she would rather have a roommate. She started looking for a roommate right away!

Tamara followed these steps:

- D** Define the question. (Tamara's question: "Should I live by myself?")
- O** Outline your pros and cons. (There were more cons than pros.)
- I** Identify the decision. (She decided to live with a roommate).
- T** Take Action. (She started looking for a roommate.)
- !** Get Excited! (She found a great roommate!)

***Now It Is Your Turn...***

What are you having a difficult time deciding? What is the question you are trying to answer?

- D** Define the question. \_\_\_\_\_
- O** Outline your pros and cons.  
( Fill in the chart on page 40.)
- I** Identify the decision.
- T** Take Action.
- !** Get Excited!

**Instructions:** Fill in the chart below.

**Decision Making Chart**

Define Question: (What is the question you are trying to answer?)	
Pros: (+)	Cons: (-)

The *Do It* decision making model used here was adapted from *It's My Future! Planning for What I Want in My Life* (Bolding and Wehmeyer, 1999).

## **GOAL SETTING SKILLS**

Goal setting is one of the most powerful things you can do to get your needs met and make positive changes in your life.

Let's start this process by looking back at the "Where I Am Now" and "Where I Want To Be" diagrams found earlier in the handbook.

---

Now that you have thought about where you are at this point in your life and where you want to be in the future, it is time to start making those dreams come true. You can make your life what you want it to be by setting goals. Change may not happen in one day, it may even take years, but if you take the right steps you will make positive changes in your life. Begin by thinking about your wants and needs. Decide which one of your wants and needs is the most important to you right now. Use goal setting to help you get what you want or need.

**For example, Jim wanted to get a job in the community. Here is the goal setting steps he followed to get what he wanted.**

### **I.) SET YOUR GOAL**

**Jim's Goal:**     Get a job in the community.

## II.) TAKE ACTION

**What do you need to do to make this goal happen?**

**List the steps:**

- 1). Look into work crews or enclaves.
- 2). Look into supported employment.
- 3). Look into competitive employment.

## III.) SEEK SUPPORT

**Who can help me achieve this goal?** My case manager, parents and friend can help me.

**How can they help me?**

- My case manager can tell me more about enclaves, work crews and supported employment.
- My parents can help me set up a meeting with a supported employment agency. My mom can go with me to a meeting.
- My friend can tell me more about competitive employment.

## IV.) SET A TIMEFRAME

Jim set a date for each of his action steps and wrote these dates on his calendar.

## **V.) HOW ARE THINGS GOING?**

**When can I meet with a support person to talk about how I am doing with this goal?**

Jim met with his case manager and parents to tell them how he was doing with his goal and get their feedback.

## **VI.) FINISH GOAL – CELEBRATE!**

Jim decided that supported employment matched his skills and interests and needs the best. Jim worked with a supported employment agency and celebrated when he got his first job in the community!

*Now It Is Your Turn...*

### **I.) SET YOUR GOAL**

Look back at your needs listed on pages 18-21 and revisit your wants listed on pages 26-27. Decide which need or want you would like to work on right now. Write it on the space provided below. (Hint: Take out the words “need” or “want” when writing a goal. For example, if you want to move to a different host home, write the goal like this: Move to a different host home.

Write Your Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

## II.) TAKE ACTION

What do you need to do to make this goal happen?

List the steps:

1). \_\_\_\_\_

2). \_\_\_\_\_

3). \_\_\_\_\_

## III.) SEEK SUPPORT

Who can help me achieve this goal? \_\_\_\_\_

How can they help me? \_\_\_\_\_

(What can they do?)

## IV.) SET A TIMEFRAME

When will I start working on this goal? \_\_\_\_\_

(Write this date on your calendar.)

When will I begin step 1?

When will I begin step 2?

When will I begin step 3?

## V.) HOW ARE THINGS GOING?

When can I meet with a support person to talk about how I am doing with this goal? \_\_\_\_\_

(Write this date on your calendar.)

Do I need to make any changes to the steps I am taking or to the timeframe?

Am I running into any problems? Do I need to do problem solving to reach my goal?

## VI.) FINISH GOAL – CELEBRATE!

Congratulations! You have completed the Self-Advocacy Handbook and learned how to become a self-advocate. (A Certificate of Completion can be found on the last page of the handbook.) By knowing yourself and your wants and needs, you can make your life what you want it to be. Your future holds many great things for you. Tamara and Jim became self-advocates by putting into action the skills you have learned in this handbook. Now it is your turn... As Helen Keller wrote, it is time for you to soar! ✨



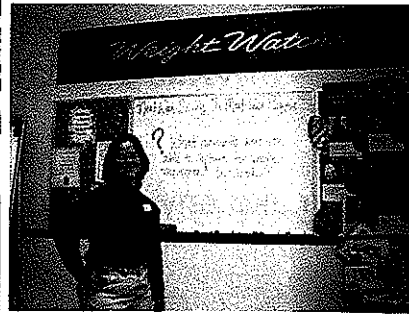
Here is What Tamara is Doing Now...



Roommate & Tamara



Tamara at work



Tamara at Weight Watchers



Tamara winning gold at the International Special Olympics in Ireland



Tamara volunteering at Senior Center

## Here is What Jim is Doing Now...



### Poudre firefighters give back to LaPorte volunteer



**PROUD:** Jim Irvin, right, poses with firefighter Doug Lotman Thursday as he poses a fire engine at Station 30. Irvin has been helping out at stations for 20 years. Now it was Irvin's turn helping out at stations for 20 years. Now it was Irvin's turn and he raised money to get him a kidney and pancreas.

### After years of giving to firehouse, man gets gift in return - a transplant

By BONNA BRIDGES WILSON  
The Gazette  
Local firefighters are glad to have their best friend Jim Irvin, back. For 20 years, the local man with developmental disabilities has been almost a daily visitor to Poudre Fire Authority's station, joining in cookouts and workouts, helping on cleanup days and occasionally riding along with the crew.  
Every year, Irvin's mother takes a Christmas tree care for each

shift at each station — 42 in all — and last year she made them more than 100 meals. Irvin, 35, has been severely diabetic since he was 11, requiring at least four insulin shots a day to control his blood sugar. Fingers calloused from years of numerous daily blood

#### Want to help?

As of November, Colorado and Wyoming had 1,072 registrations on the national organ list, according to Donor Services in Denver. Of those, 283 were waiting for a kidney, and 62 were waiting for both a kidney and a pancreas, said spokeswoman Beth King.  
With an organ match dependent on blood and tissue type, anatomical size and numerous genetic factors, an eligible recipient has to wait an average of 300 days for a kidney-pancreas transplant. Four people in Colorado and Wyoming died waiting for a kidney-pancreas transplant in 1998. Fifteen patients in the two states donated kidney-pancreas pairs.  
If you want to be a donor, call your local organ donor center to get listed on the list. Call the Department of Health Services, 400 South Dearborn at (303) 333-3875.



Jim at work



Jim with boss

## **RESOURCES**

The following section includes local and national resources for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

### **Local Resources:**

Local School District Department of Special Education  
State Division for Developmental Disabilities  
Local Community Centered Board  
Social Security Administration  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Workforce Center  
Local Supported Employment Agencies  
SWAP (School to Work Alliance Program)  
(Ask your school district or Vocational Rehabilitation about SWAP.)  
Local Independent Living Center

### **National Resources:**

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET)

<http://www.ncset.org>

The mission of the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) is to create opportunities for youth with disabilities to achieve successful futures. This website features research-based information and resources, newsletter, teleconferences and more.

The ARC of the United States

<http://www.thearc.org>

This national organization on mental retardation provides local chapter links and information on services and education.

Health Care Transitions Listserv

<http://hctransitions.ichp.edu>

This site is supported by Promising Practices in Health Care Transition Project based at the Institute for Child Health Policy at the University of Florida. The focus of the site is health care transition for youth with disabilities and special health care needs.

DisabilityInfo.gov

<http://disabilityinfo.gov>

This site has a comprehensive federal listing of disability-related government resources.

### **SSA Work!**

<http://www.mchbhrtw.org/ssawork>

This site describes the Social Security Administration (SSA) Work Incentives Programs. Youth and adults with disabilities can explore new roads to pursue dreams, accomplish career goals and get a job. Videos describing Ticket to Work and Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS), as well as a CD-ROM are embedded in this site. Hard copies of the videos and CD-ROM (one per person) can be ordered from the site.

### **Federal Office of Personnel Management (Jobs)**

<http://www.studentjobs.gov/>

This site includes opportunities for youth with disabilities. The e-Scholar link contains specific information about funding for education and employment.

### **The Department of Labor (Youth Focus)**

[http://www.doleta.gov/youth\\_services/](http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/)

This section of the larger Department of Labor web site is youth focused.

### **Job Accommodation Network**

1-800-526-7234

<http://jan.wvu.edu>

This site offers free consulting services designed to increase the employability of people with disabilities by 1) providing worksite accommodation solutions, 2) technical assistance regarding ADA and other disability legislation and 3) education on self-employment options.

### **APSE – Association of Persons in Supported Employment**

<http://www.apse.org>

The mission of the Association of Persons in Supported Employment is to improve and expand integrated employment opportunities, services, and outcomes for persons experiencing disabilities. This site provides the latest news on supported employment and related legislation, advocacy, education and links to local chapters.

### **Center for Community Partnerships**

Department of Occupational Therapy

Colorado State University (970) 491-5930

<http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/CCP>

The mission of CCP is to promote the inherent dignity, potential and participation of all people. This site provides information on trainings, programs and information related to supported employment and the advocacy of people with disabilities.

## Self-Advocacy Handbook Order Form

Please send Self-Advocacy Handbook(s) to the following:

Name or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check or money order for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover the costs of (#) \_\_\_\_\_ Handbook(s) @ \$15/Handbook.

Please send your completed Handbook Order Form with payment to:

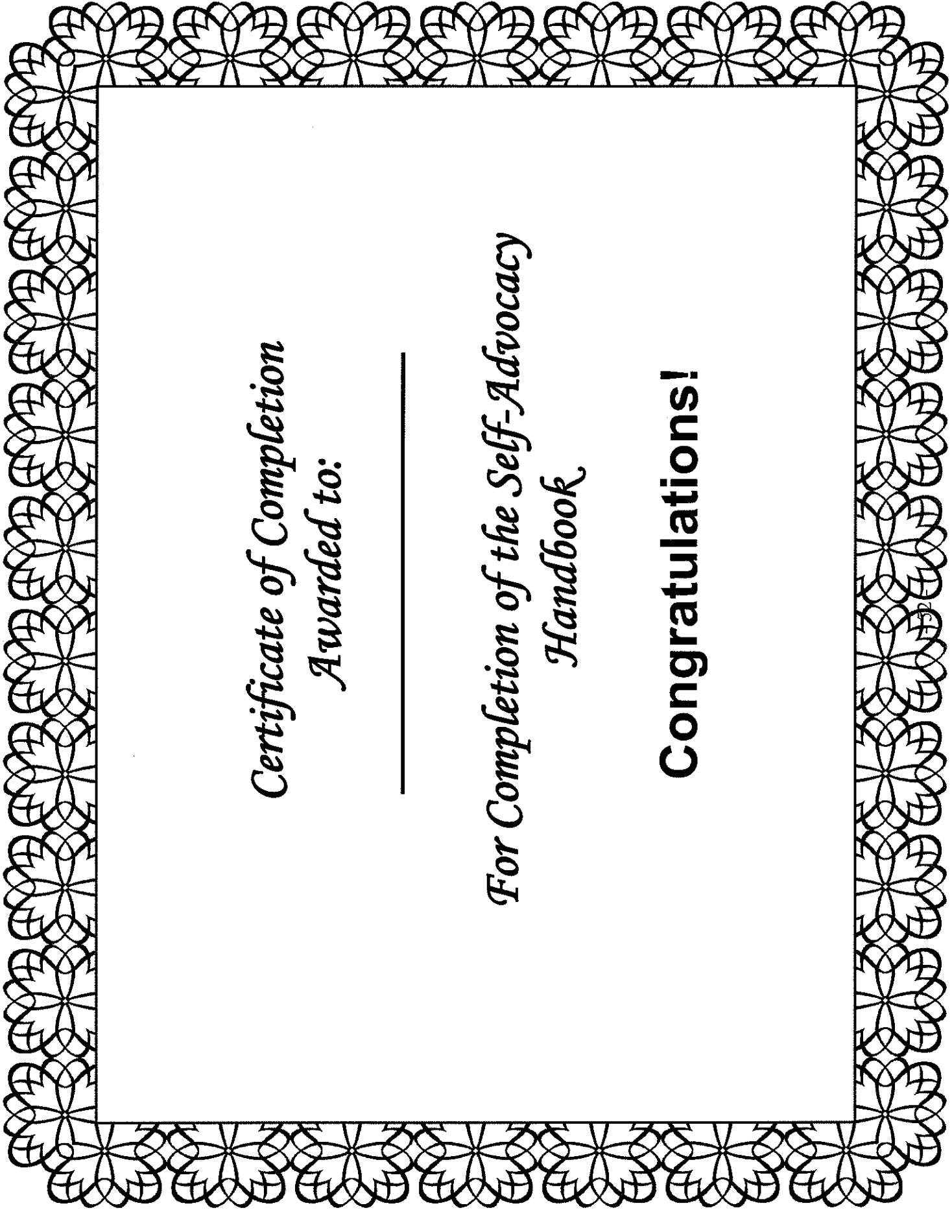
Center for Community Partnerships  
320 Occupational Therapy Department  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523

You can expect to receive your Self-Advocacy Handbook order within 2-3 weeks. For questions, please call: Center for Community Partnerships (970) 491-5930.

PLEASE NOTE: These materials were developed by the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Colorado State University through a grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services CMS QA/QI to the Colorado Division for Developmental Disabilities. Self-Advocacy Handbooks may only be duplicated with permission from CCP [www.colostate.edu/Depts/CCP](http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/CCP) or (970) 491-5930.

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*Certificate of Completion*  
*Awarded to:*

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*For Completion of the Self-Advocacy  
Handbook*

**Congratulations!**