

Self Advocacy Matters

Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance (The Alliance)



The Alliance is proud to be an initiative of the
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities



15th Annual
**Illinois Statewide
Transition Conference**
Stepping Stones of Transition
October 17 & 18, 2019
The Gateway Center - Collinsville, IL

In the words of self-advocates...

5 Dreams I Have For My Life

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What Self-Advocates Want You To Know

- Nothing about us without us.
- We have a mouth.
- We can speak for ourselves.
- We can make our own choices.





What is standing in the way of self-advocacy for people with disabilities you support?

Who We Are

The Alliance is a network of advocates, allies, and self-advocacy groups around Illinois.



Our Vision

Our vision is for self-advocates to work together to get the support we need and to live the life we want in the community.

Our Mission

Our mission is to speak up for ourselves and each other while working together to make changes in our communities and in Illinois.

Our Focus

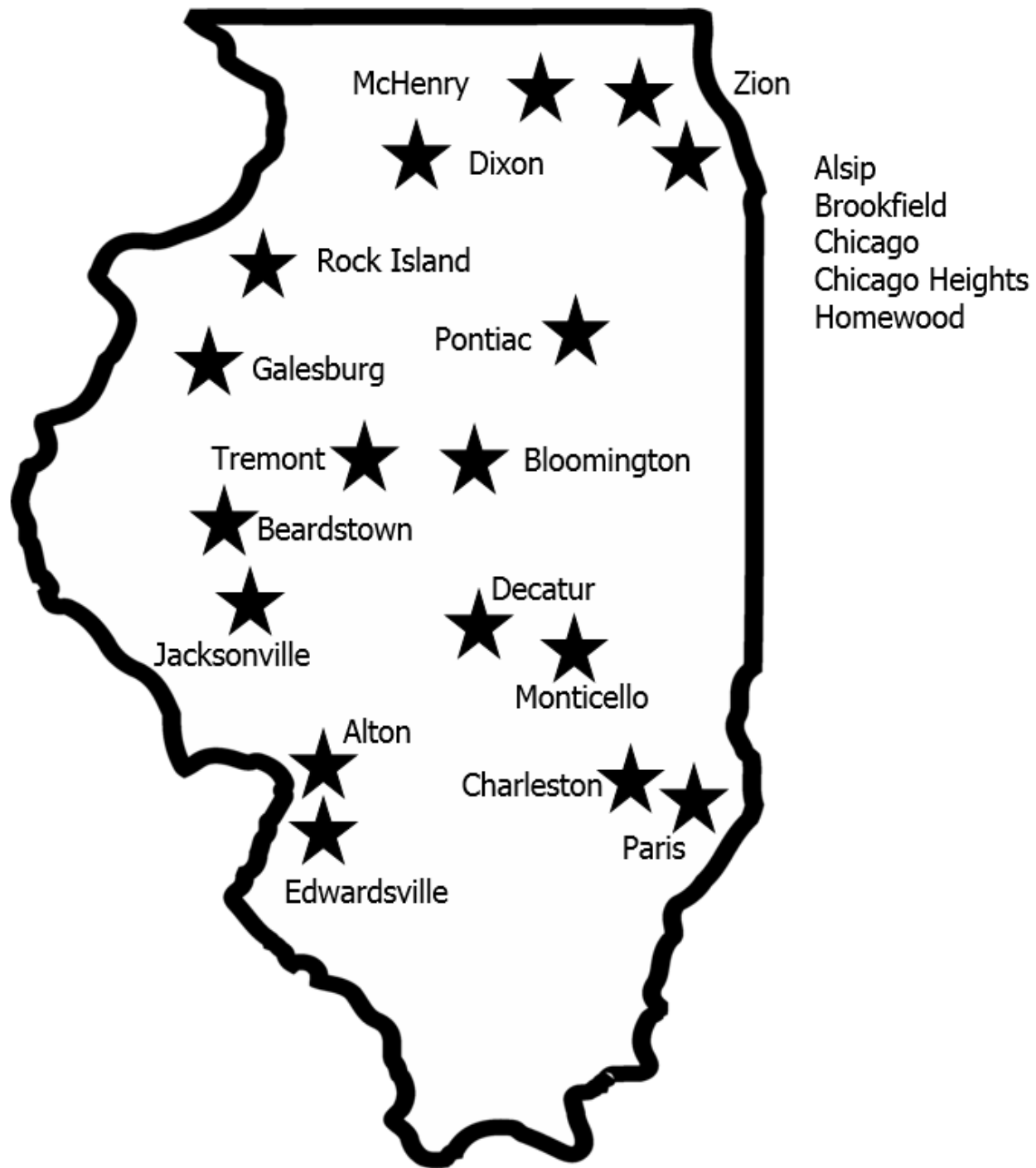
Our focus is on empowering people to speak up and speak out about

- what they want and need
- don't want and don't need
- action plan their goals
- participate in advocacy at the personal, agency, community and statewide levels.

What We Do

- Support local groups
- Work together on important issues
- Offer networking, advocacy and learning opportunities
 - Monthly Newsletters
 - Webinars
 - Ambassador Leadership Program
 - Training Institute





Supporting the Supporters

- Advisors and Allies
- Agency staff
- Other support professionals
- Teachers and school personnel
- Parents, guardians, family members



You are key to the success of people with disabilities!

Disability Competence: One Model

“I need to be competent and knowledgeable about all types of disabilities, various accommodations and legal definitions before I can work with people with disabilities.”

Disability Humility: A New Model

“When I meet someone with a disability,
I will be open, creative, respectful,
and ready to learn.
I will treat everyone with a disability
as a unique person.”

Self Advocacy is...

Speaking UP and speaking OUT for yourself and for other people who can't or don't know how to speak up for themselves.



The Power of Power

There are three kinds of power in the world:

Power Over

“I’m in charge and you’re not.”

Power With

“Let’s work together as equals.”

Power Within

“I am a strong person inside.”

5 Dreams I Have For My Life

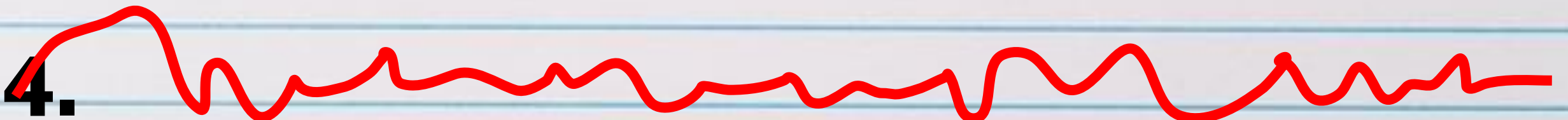
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Shifting the Power



- The words we choose to use
- Nothing about me without me
- Our beliefs about people with disabilities
- Society's beliefs about people with disabilities
- Tapping the wisdom and knowledge of people with disabilities

You and I

TAKE YOUR PLEDGE
TODAY AT R-WORD.ORG

**SPREAD THE WORD
TO END THE WORD.**

Talk

Think

#Write

with

RESPECT

Easy Opportunities for People Power

- Help people learn about their rights
- Ask people about their gifts, talents, hopes and dreams
- Say "Well done" or "Great job" a lot more than you say "Stop that" or "No" - self-esteem is important!
- Tell people what's really going on in their lives - don't "fib" or ignore them if they ask questions
- Listen to and acknowledge what people say

The Power of a Minute



Challenging Opportunities for People Power - 1

- Have people be in charge at their Person Centered Planning and IEP meetings
- Invite people to be on committees, workgroups, and boards
- Have people do some jobs that are traditionally reserved for staff, such as reserving conference rooms for meetings and coordinating schedules, taking attendance, etc.

Challenging Opportunities for People Power - 2

- Rewrite Person Centered Plans, IEP's policies/procedures, manuals, brochures, and other materials to make them easier to understand
- Help people write letters to elected officials about issues that concern them
- Schedule face-to-face meetings between people and elected officials

Very Challenging Opportunities for People Power

- Include people in helping recruit, train, interview, and evaluate staff
- Ask people what they think staff's job is and what the jobs should do
- Ask people what it means to have power "with" and "within" instead of power "over"

How Well Do You Listen?

Listen with your eyes



Listen with your ears



Listen with your heart



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Creating a Culture of Advocacy - 1

- Learn how people best communicate
- Teach people how to communicate

words **signs** **pictures**

gestures **sounds**

communication device

facial expressions

Creating a Culture of Advocacy - 2

- Change the way choice is viewed: it is a right, not a privilege
- Recognize that choices enhance and enrich lives
- Create an environment that invites, encourages and celebrates choices

Creating a Culture of Advocacy - 2

- Be flexible
- Spend time learning about people's gifts and strengths
- Recognize that there are different types of choices
- Use the Environmental Checklist
- Mistakes = Experience
- Allow for the possibilities!




Creating a Culture of Advocacy - 3




- Teach people how to speak up and speak out for what they want and need AND don't want and don't need
- Teach about the pieces of the self-advocacy puzzle
 - Who
 - What
 - Why
 - When and Where



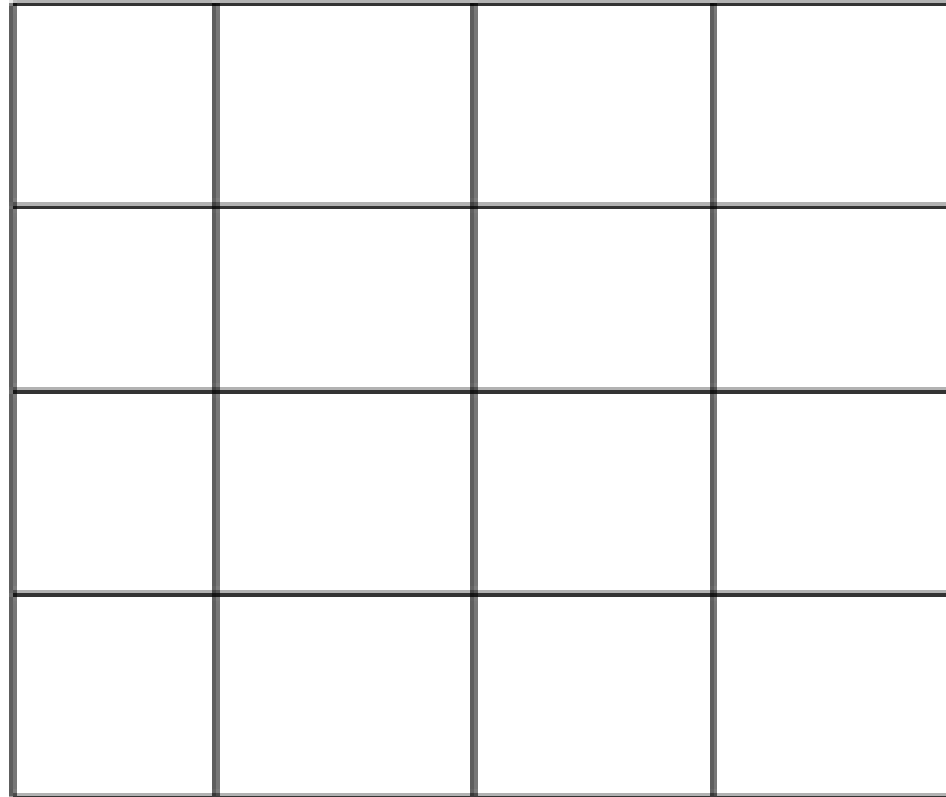
A Culture of Self-Advocacy Checklist

A Culture of Self-Advocacy Checklist

	 Never	 Sometimes	 Always
Skills Training			
People with disabilities have an opportunity to learn self-advocacy skills.			
People with disabilities have the chance to teach others what they learn.			
People with disabilities have an opportunity learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.			
People with disabilities can learn to do more things on their own.			
Day-to-Day Life at Agencies/Organizations/Schools			
People with disabilities can be on committees, workgroups, and/or boards.			
People with disabilities are regularly asked if they are happy with their services and supports.			
People with disabilities are asked and heard when rules are made or changed that everyone must follow.			
Staff			
People with disabilities can help find new staff to hire.			
People with disabilities can help interview new staff.			
People with disabilities can help decide if the staff are doing a good job.			
People with disabilities can help train the staff members they work with.			
Person Centered Planning			
People with disabilities can choose WHERE their staffing meetings are held.			
People with disabilities can choose the DATE and TIME of their staffing meetings.			
People with disabilities are the main people in charge at their own meetings.			

	 Never	 Sometime	 Always
Person Centered Plans include information about talents, gifts, skills, dreams and choices.			
Life in the Community			
People with disabilities can be in a self-advocacy group.			
People with disabilities can do volunteer work in the community.			
People with disabilities know about learning opportunities and how to get help in the community.			
People with disabilities get help to learn about the community around them.			
Supporting Personal Power			
People with disabilities are encouraged to speak up and speak out about the things that are important to them.			
Staff receive training on how to support people with disabilities in having more power, voice, and choices in their lives.			
Staff evaluations include how well they support people with disabilities have more power, voice, and choices in their lives.			
People with disabilities get support if they want to make changes to the system that supports them, in their community, or the state.			
People with disabilities receiving residential services choose their providers (doctors, bosses, dentists, community day services, etc.)			
People with disabilities get forms, papers, and materials in formats they can understand.			
Other Ideas/Suggestions			

Think Outside the Box



Dignity of Risk & the Right of Failure

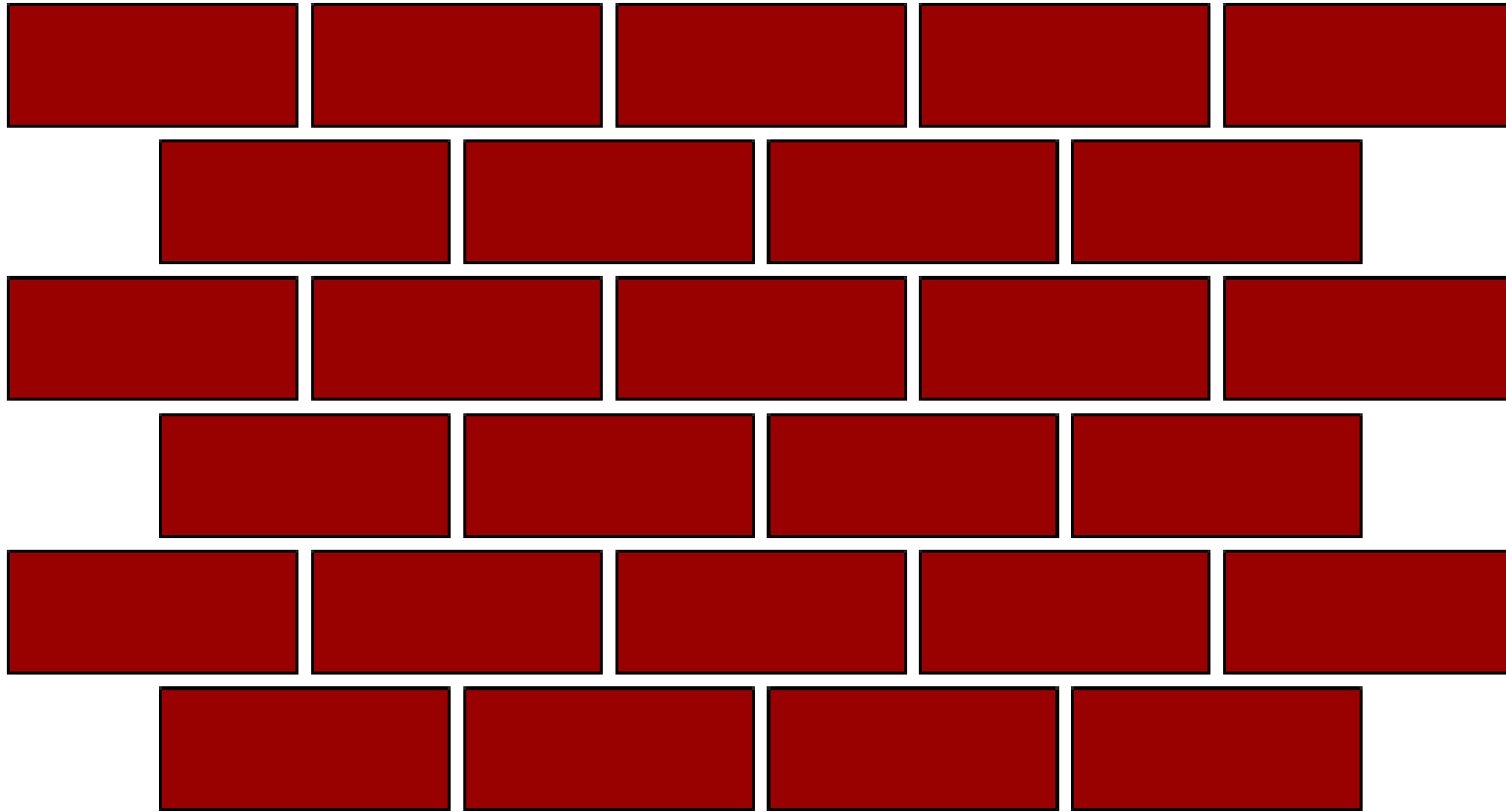
Dignity of risk is the idea that self-determination and the right to take **reasonable risks** are essential for **dignity** and **self esteem**, thus should not be impeded by others concerned about their duty of care.

Mistakes are teachable moments & present opportunities for growth, insight and personal transformation.

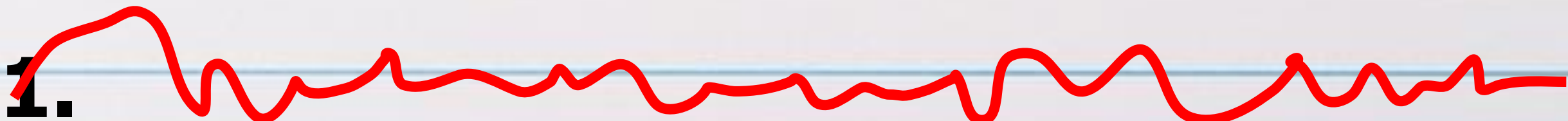
**“Every person I know
knows something more than me.
My job is to listen long enough
to find it and use it.”**

~ Jack Nichols

The Brick Wall That "No" Built

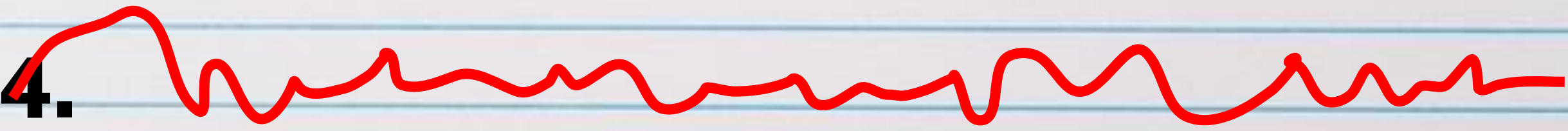


5 Dreams I Have For My Life

1. A thick red line scribbled across the first line of the notebook paper, starting with a '1.' on the left.

2. A thick red line scribbled across the second line of the notebook paper, starting with a '2.' on the left.

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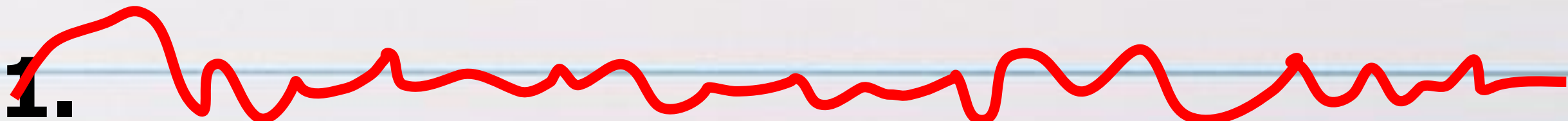
**“It’s about what’s important to them,
not what’s important for them.”**

~ Nancy Thaler

**"We want to learn skills;
we want to make
changes; and
we want to help others."**

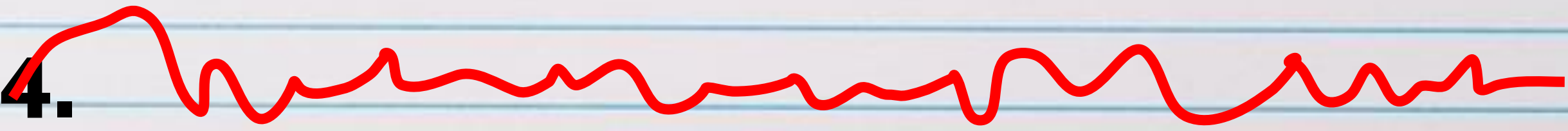


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Speak Up and Speak Out!



What is one bright idea from today's training that you will start doing within the next 3 days?

Email:

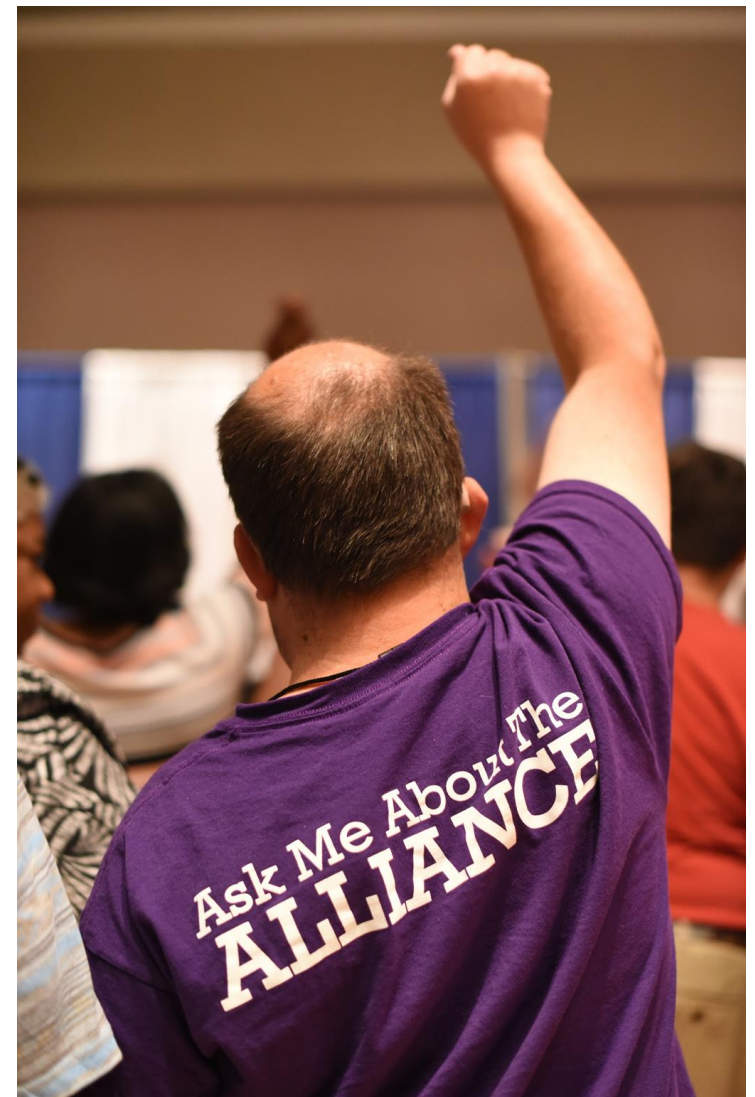
info@selfadvocacyalliance.org

Website

<http://selfadvocacyalliance.org/>

Facebook

www.facebook.com/IllinoisSelfAdvocacyAlliance/?ref=bookmarks



Communicating with the Speaker

Krescene Beck

Preferred Pronouns: she/her/hers

Blue Tower Solutions, Inc.

PO Box 312

Forsyth, IL 62535

BlueTowerSolutions@gmx.com

www.bluetowersolutions.org

618.806.9431 (direct line)

krescenebeck@gmail.com (direct e-mail)

