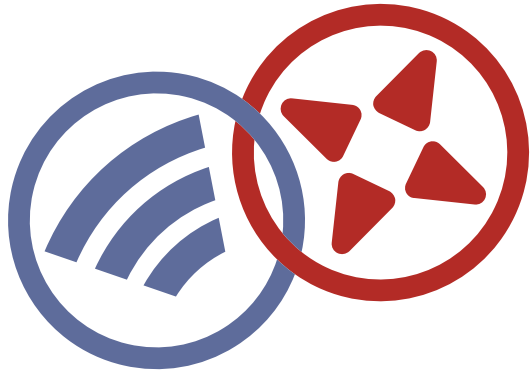


# CENTER ON YOUTH VOICE YOUTH CHOICE



## Week 3 Disability and Identity

# YOUTH AMBASSADOR CURRICULUM

## WEEK 3: DISABILITY AND IDENTITY



Artwork courtesy of Gabby Melnick with Sangha Unity Network



**Icebreaker—**



# Week 3 Learning Objectives

01

Learn about what a disability is

02

Learn about identifying as a person with a disability

03

Learn about people first language



# Word and Phrase for the week:

Ability

Believe in  
yourself

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Discuss takeaways from last week's discussion and information on SARTAC, SABE, NACDD and your local advocacy opportunities.



## Group Discussion



# SARTAC

Self Advocacy and Beyond



# What is a disability?

People describe disability in many ways.

There is the definition from Google which says:

“Disability is a condition of the body and mind that may make it difficult to interact with the world around them without supports.”

# Medical Definition of Disability

There are medical definitions for disability that focuses on your medical condition. Examples are:

**Physical** – Doctor says what you can handle

**Mental Illness** – what people say you can or can't handle in your life

**Cognitive** – how your brain works with figuring out things in your life

**DSM** – medical book by doctors describing medical diagnosis

# Medical Definition of Disability

These are all medical definitions or conditions that doctors, or caseworker say you have and place limitations on you.

Self advocates don't view these as a medical condition that define who they are.



# Legal Definitions of Disability

There are legal definitions that focus on what you can't do because of your disability. Examples are:

- An impairment that limits your ability to interact with your world around you.
- If you have a guardian appointed from the court or family member who tells you where you can live, what you can buy or who you can hang out with.

**An example of a law is Americans with Disabilities Act.**



# Legal Definitions of Disability

Many states have laws in place that can limit self advocates in making decisions on their own.

Self advocates work towards changing laws that protect their rights to do what they want not limit them.

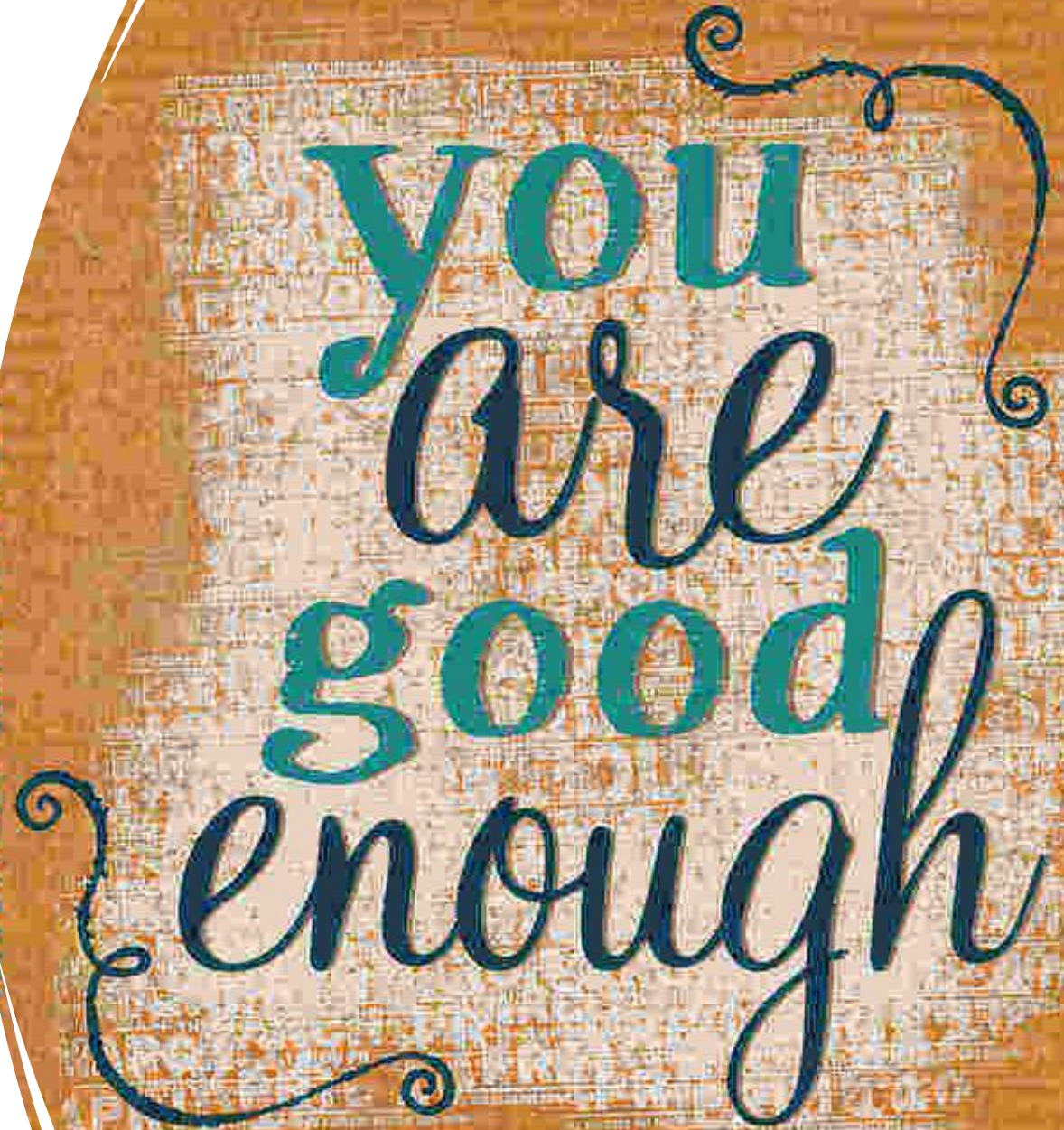


# Social Definitions of Disability

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How you describe your disability is an example of a social definition.

Thinking of yourself positively increases your self-esteem and helps with your independence.



you  
are  
good  
enough

# Social Definitions of Disability

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The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty that focuses on protecting the rights of people with disabilities.

This is an example of a social movement focusing on disability issues.

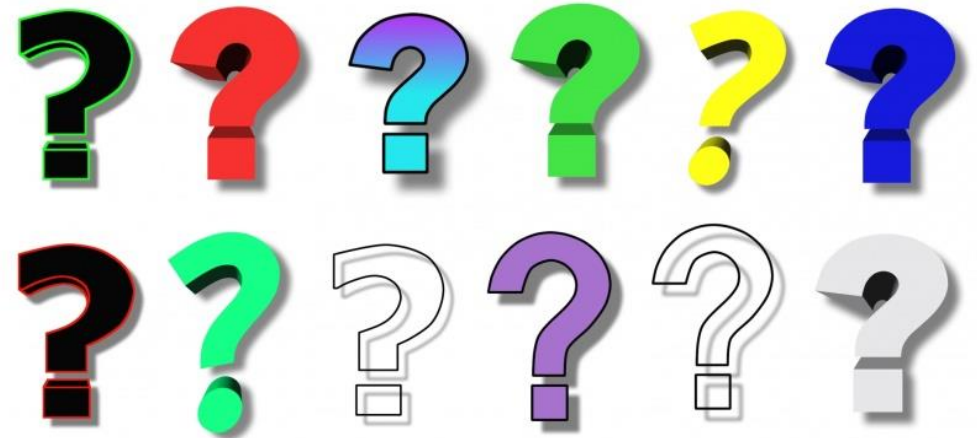


# Social Definitions of Disability

## Remember:

Your disability does not define who you are and what you can do.

What is your definition of disability or how do you identify yourself?



# What is Identity?

Identity is the fact of being who or what you are.

Everyone has an identity that they identify with such as:

- Being kind
- Prefers to be alone
- Laid-back and don't get stressed out
- People who are go-getters in life who take initiative

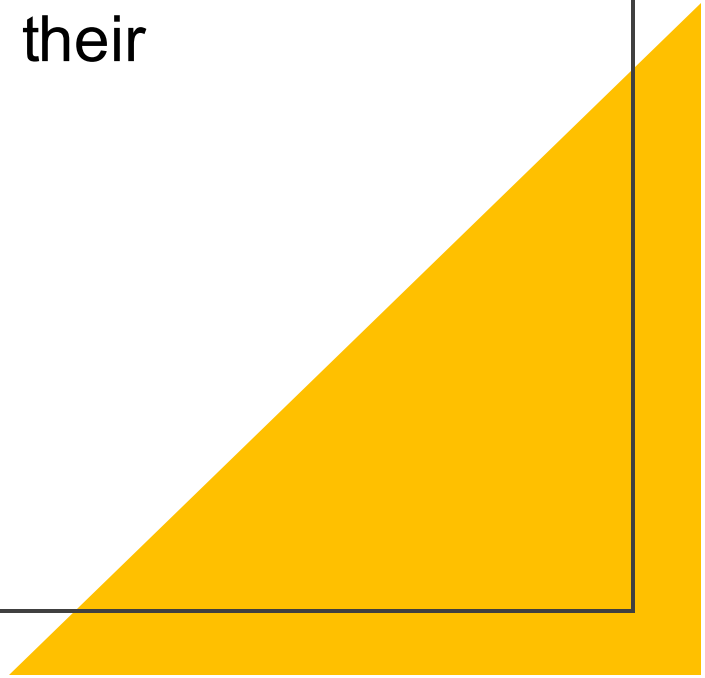
# What is Identity?

What are some other examples of identity?

- Age, Gender, Family Status, Race, Sexual Orientation, Language, Religion, Social Security number, Attitude, Class (income), place in society, and disability

# **Disability and Identity together**

Self Advocacy organizations believe that everyone, regardless of their disability, can make a difference in their lives and others, if given the opportunity to grow in themselves.



# Disability and Identity together

Using negative words to describe people is unacceptable. Words such as:

- Handicap, the “R” word, stupid, dumb, confined to a wheelchair, etc., deaf and dumb (used in a negative way)
- Be careful on how you use your words or phrase your words
- Think before you speak!
- Labels belong on jars not people!



# What does disability mean to you?

Small Group Discussion:

How are you treated in your life as a person with a disability?

- Can you provide examples?
- Report Back to Large Group:
  - Take a few minutes to enter response in chat box or raise your hand

# Label Activity for Homework

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- Spend 5 minutes looking around your area and write down 5-10 labels you see that describe something
- Report back to the group on those labels and explain how they made you feel
- Which best describes you and why?





Questions?

## About

The Center is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston (ICI) in partnership with:

- Center for Public Representation (CPR)
- Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
- Human Services Research Institute (HSRI)

in consultation with experts from:

- Harvard Law School Project on Disability
- Georgia Advocacy Office

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### For more information

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