

I SPEAK

· INDEPENDENCE · SUCCESS · POWER ·
· EDUCATION · ADVOCACY · KNOWLEDGE ·

A Self-Advocacy Newsletter Brought to You by Self-Advocates and SCDD San Diego Imperial

Spring 2025

The Dos and Don'ts of Friendship

by Cali Williams

Making new friends can be really tough sometimes. Whether you're starting a new program, going to a new school, moving to a different neighborhood, or just stepping into a totally new social environment—it's not always easy to connect with people. Trying to fit in or feel comfortable can feel awkward, especially when everyone already seems to have their own friend groups. And it gets even trickier when you're dealing with different personalities and the way people treat each other.

So, to help out, I put together a quick list of dos and don'ts for how we all want—and deserve—to be treated.

Do:

- ✓ Be a role model
- ✓ Make someone smile or laugh
- ✓ Show that you care
- ✓ Share—it shows kindness
- ✓ Lend a helping hand
- ✓ Speak up for yourself and others

Don't:

- ✗ Be a bully
- ✗ Start fights or drama
- ✗ Spread rumors
- ✗ Talk behind someone's back
- ✗ Be rude, inappropriate, or disrespectful

This list is just a simple guide to help you better understand how to handle social situations and make good choices. And remember, it's totally okay to ask for help—whether from a friend, support person or family member. We all need support sometimes, and that's completely normal.

"If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships – the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace."

~~ Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32nd President of the U.S.A. ~~

The Importance of Journaling

by the **I SPEAK** Team

The **I SPEAK** team recently took time to reflect on the role journaling plays in their lives and the impact it has had.

Inspired by the conversation, the Team decided to share their thoughts.

Here's what they had to say:

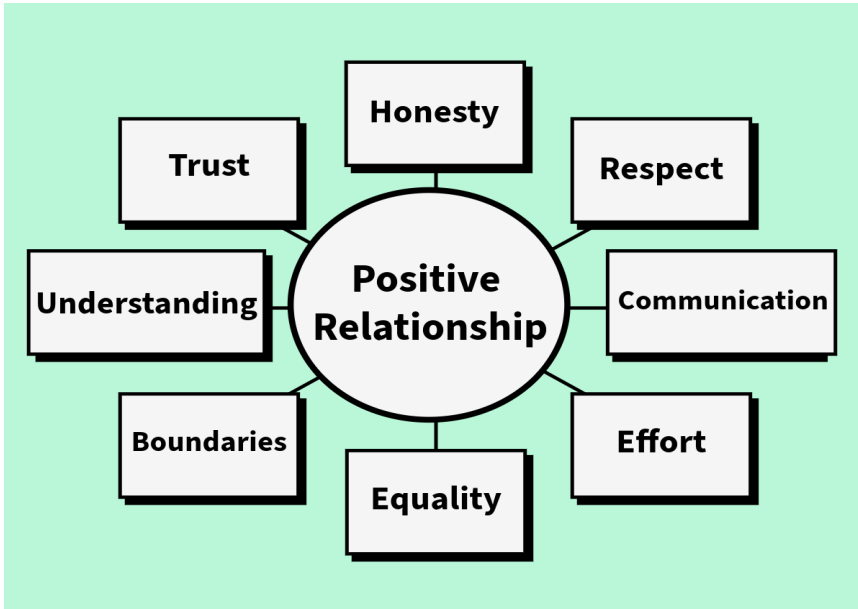


- ◇ Journaling helps me think about the future. Your future hasn't been written yet. It is what you make it. Your future is making it a good one. Journaling helps you write ideas down about your future.
- ◇ *Journaling is a good coping strategy. It can help clear your head and get all the negative energy out of your system.*
- ◇ Writing is something that makes me happy. I am passionate about it.
- ◇ I find pleasure when I am journaling. Even when I write about something that I don't like or care for, journaling still gives me satisfaction.
- ◇ Journaling helps me put my thoughts, hopes, and dreams on paper. It frees me and I feel emotionally lighter. Writing it gives me the opportunity to share my thoughts and feelings and to exercise my mind.
- ◇ Journaling is something I work on a lot. I take a lot of pride in writing as an author. It makes me aware of my surroundings and to want to write more. It helps me to be at peace.
- ◇ When you write a journal mistakes don't matter. Journaling is about expressing yourself. You can write however you want and how much you want.
- ◇ Journaling helps challenge me to be authentic and true to myself and my audience.
- ◇ *It helps to clear things up in my brain when I put them on paper.*
- ◇ When you go back to look at your journal entries, it reminds you of what was happening in your life.
- ◇ I look at my calendar to see what has happened and what will happen and that guides me in my journaling.

Relationships & Connecting

by Sarah Wolfsheimer

What do you think a positive relationship is? What do you think it takes to have a positive relationship? Multiple things need to be considered and thought about when you want to have a positive relationship with someone.



An [article](#) on the State of New York's website says: "Healthy relationships involve honesty, trust, respect and open communication between partners and they take effort and compromise from both people. There is also no imbalance of power.

Partners respect each other's independence, and can make their own decisions without fear of what their partner might say and feel safe sharing that decision."

[Health Direct](#) (a government-funded service from Australia) mentions respect, honesty, trust, open communication, common interests, equality, and understanding as being important.

Visit the webpages above and you can dive deeper into the qualities of a healthy relationship.

I conducted an anonymous survey of my co-workers to find out what people around me think contributes to a positive relationship. I found they most value: respect, kindness, trust, boundaries, and good listening and communication skills. Those surveyed also said that feeling supported, connected, and comfortable around a person as well as being able to have fun with them were vital to good relationships.

In my opinion, a positive relationship needs to involve communication that is healthy and strong. It also involves people putting the same amount of effort into the relationship.

If one person puts a lot of effort into the relationship and the other person only puts in a little bit of effort, then the effort put in is not equal. That could lead to serious relationship problems.

I also believe that people who are in a romantic relationship should, every so often, spend time away from their partners either by themselves or with other people.

Having a positive relationship with a friend, partner or someone you work with is very important. It can teach you lessons on how to interact with others in the future.

"Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."

~~ Maya Angelou, American Poet and Activist~~



Having Healthy Relationships with Your Healthcare Professionals

by Paul Mansell

Last December, I suffered a seizure and stroke in the shower. It was a bad seizure and I was severely injured. I spent a week in the hospital and two months in a skilled nursing facility (SNF). I spent Christmas and New Year in the facility and finally got out at the end of February. In March, I experienced another seizure. This time I spent four days in the hospital.

My stamina, endurance, voice, and mental faculties have been limited. I have an army of healthcare providers: RNs, CNAs, neurologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, cardiologists, and my primary care physician.

Our healthcare professionals are some of the most influential people in our lives because they directly affect the quality of our health. Good health makes it easier to have a happy life. A positive relationship with our healthcare professionals can go a long way toward ensuring we have the highest quality of health.

We can have a positive and effective relationship with our healthcare professionals if we follow these tips:

- Be honest.
- Accurately and thoroughly communicate our symptoms.
- Listen to what the healthcare professionals say.
- Remember, everyone is part of our healthcare team.
- Follow the orders of healthcare professionals.
- Ask our healthcare professionals to use words we can understand.
- Encourage healthcare professionals to talk to one another.
- Take medicines as prescribed.
- Make sure we don't run out of medicines.
- Get a new healthcare professional if we cannot achieve a positive relationship.
- Budget money for your healthcare needs.
- Own our responsibility for taking care of our health.

If we follow these tips, we will go a long way to have an effective relationship with our healthcare professionals and achieve our best possible health.

Support Local Micro Businesses

by Sarah Wolfsheimer

You might be thinking to yourself, what is a micro business? Is a micro business the same thing as a small business? In fact, they are different.

A micro business is significantly smaller than a small business and usually has less than ten employees.

Micro businesses are great because they are flexible and accommodating. You can run your micro business from your home. You don't even need a lot of money to start

a micro business.

Micro businesses always have a specific focus and typically specialize in one specific service or product.

Why should we support micro businesses? Because it's good for local economies.

They create jobs and allow communities to experience different products and services that they might not otherwise take advantage of.

Microbusinesses in the San Diego Imperial Area



OrtizCraftsArt

Joe Ortiz Peralta has a microbusiness called OrtizCraftsArt. He is an artist that makes and sells paintings and digital artwork of animals and nature.

Poli's Woodcraft

This micro business is family-run. Poli's Woodcraft showcases the woodworking skills of Policarpo Despaigne. Policarpo makes handcrafted ballpoint pens. He enjoys making these small hand-turned wood pieces from his home workshop.



Microbusinesses in the San Diego Imperial Area (continued)



Kiana Beads

Kiana Beads is a micro-business that sells branded and homemade jewelry and accessories that enhance your style and tell a story of transformation and the beauty of nature.

Blissful Seeds

Blissful seeds is a non-profit organization that employs and supports adults with developmental disabilities.

A variety of handmade products and crafts made by 34 artists are sold including handmade soaps, candles, resin trays and coasters, seashell art, photographs and paintings, and handbags.



Que Salsa

Karina Vela is the owner of the iQue Salsa! company.

Jalapeno and pineapple are some of the tasty additions to her salsas.

"One of the most beautiful qualities of true friendship is to understand and to be understood."

~~ Lucius Annaes Senceca, Ancient Roman Philosopher and Dramatist~~

Building Relationships

by Natalie Jackson

While relationships and friendships are forming, there are some important things to remember. As relationships and friendships are developing you should take time to get to know other people before thinking about them as future partners.

Things that come into play are setting boundaries, working out issues, building trust with one another, and communicating effectively.



There are a lot of ways to learn about developing friendships and relationships. One way to learn about them is by watching TV. You can look at the relationships in a show and take out bits and pieces to learn from.

Another thing I have learned from watching different television shows is that marriage is a serious commitment especially if you want to form a strong relationship.

Sometimes relationships end in a breakup or divorce. Once this happens and the couple is no longer together the relationship will be very different. Breakups and divorce can be hard for the people in the relationship as well as for the family.

One thing I've learned from my relationships and experiences is that the work you put in is totally worth it—it helps you grow both as a person and within a partnership.

San Diego People First (SDPF) Self-Advocacy Monthly Meeting



**Join us for updates on SDPF
and other committees,
the SDPF Conference, and a
variety of other topics.**

When?

3rd Friday of each month
from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Where?

In person

State Council on
Developmental Disabilities
San Diego Imperial Office
8880 Rio San Diego Drive
Suite 325
San Diego, CA 92108

Zoom

Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975
Passcode: 123763

Questions?

Viri Salgado
viridiana.salgado@sdrc.org
or

Debbie Marshall
debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov

WANTED

✦ **Wanted: Volunteers to write for the I SPEAK Newsletter -- a newsletter by and for self-advocates of the San Diego Imperial Region.**

✦ **Who: People with disabilities who are interested in writing.**

✦ **What: To share, discuss, and write about a variety of topics important to self-advocates.**

✦ **When: 4th Thursday of every month at 11 a.m.**

✦ **Where: Online on Zoom.**

Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975

Passcode: 123763

✦ **To join the I SPEAK newsletter team contact Debbie Marshall at (619) 913-8232 or debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov**



SCDD Supported Self-Advocate Zoom Meetings

Zoom link: bit.ly/421knkO

Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975

Passcode: 123763

- ♦ **1st Tuesday of the Month – 11 a.m.
Health and Wellness Rap Session**
- ♦ **2nd and 3rd Wednesday – 4 p.m.
Advocates at the Movies**
- ♦ **4th Thursday of the Month – 11 a.m.
I SPEAK Newsletter**
- ♦ **3rd Friday of the Month – 2 p.m.
San Diego People First**

Zoom link and passcode are the same for all meetings.

Additional training will be scheduled, and flyers will be sent out via email to let you know about them.

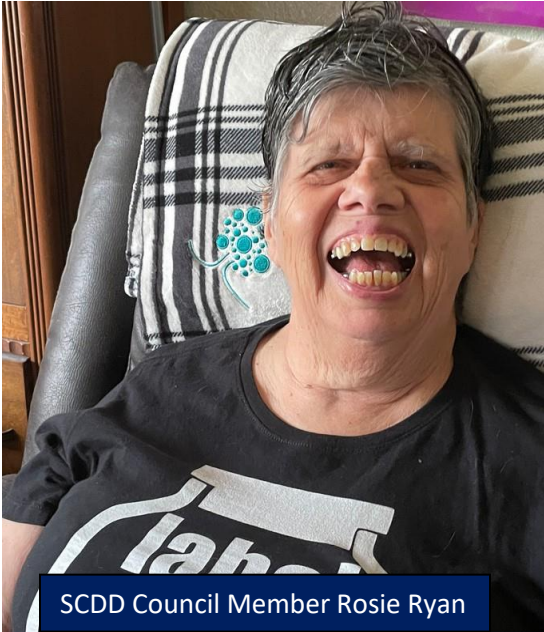
Requests for interpretation or other accommodations must be received a week in advance.

For questions and/or to be added to the email list contact Debbie Marshall at debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov or call 619-913-8232.

"The only way to have a friend is to be one."

~~ Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th Century American Essayist and Philosopher~~

MEDICAID FUNDING IS AT RISK!



Self-Advocates Wanted: Tell Your Story

What: Large cuts to Medicaid have been proposed!

- ✓ Learn how Medicaid services support individuals with disabilities and older adults.
- ✓ Learn how to share your story to make a difference with lawmakers.

When: Monday, May 19th, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Where: Ballard Center, 2375 Congress Street, San Diego

Questions? Call Debbie Marshall at (619) 913-8232 or email debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov

You Can Also
Share Your Story Today!



California State Council on
Developmental Disabilities