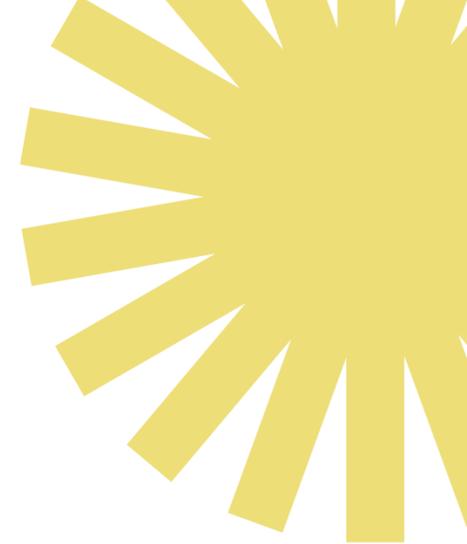


Welcome to Day #3

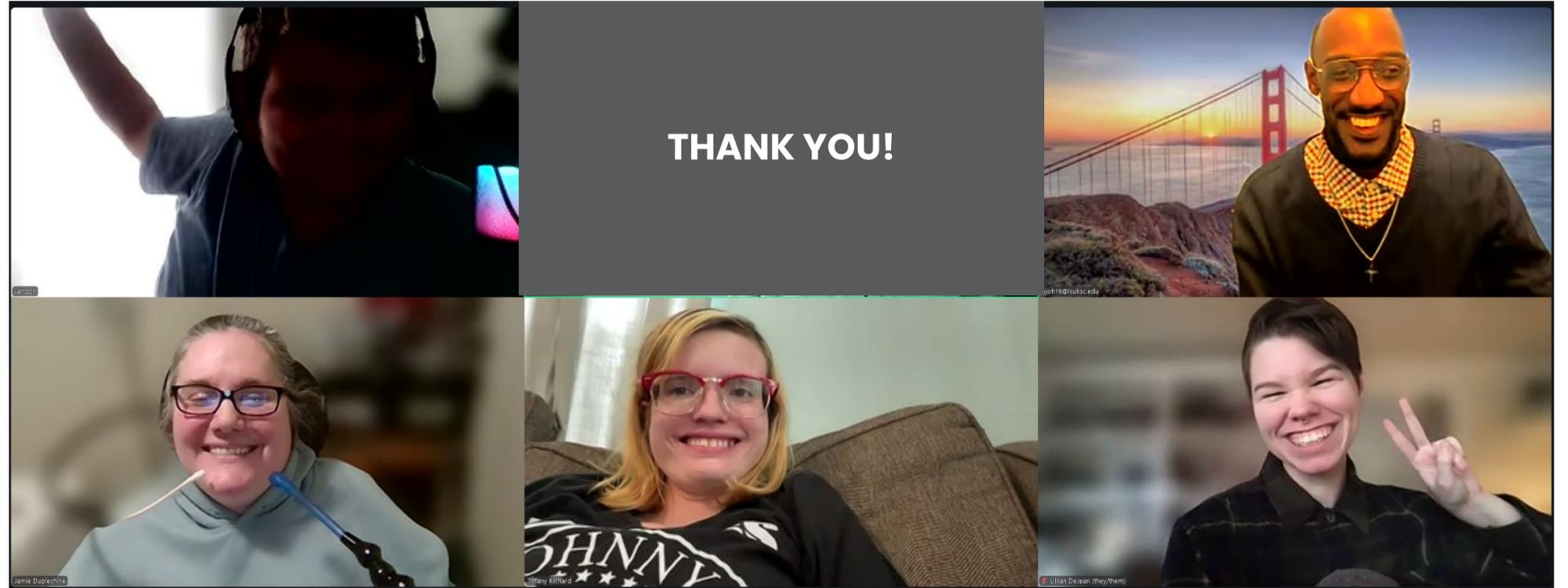


S P E A K U P S T A N D U P

Virtual Disability Advocacy Summit

**In partnership with
Louisiana's DD Network**





Thank you to our Summit Planning Committee!

Landon Hanks
Jamie Duplechine
Tiffany Richard
Lillian DeJean

Shout-out to
Vivienne Webb and Paul Ganucheau

Scheduling Change

- Former Governor John Bel Edwards cannot attend today's summit
- His time will be replaced by a special activity with Will Johnson

Summit Day #3 Agenda

10:00 AM	Welcome with Will Johnson
10:15 AM	Live It. Shape It. Share It.: Turning Experience into Advocacy with Will Johnson
10:45 AM	Stand Up, Speak Out! with Maria Town, President and CEO for the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)
11:25 AM	Breakout: What's Your Story?
11:40 AM	Personal Advocacy and Storytelling with Jeiri Flores from the Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities and Tim Villegas of Think Inclusive podcast
12:05 PM	Breakout: Sharing Your Story
12:30 PM	Closing

Access

- Jolie is your tech support!
- Send Jolie a message in the chat if you need help.
- Please add your name to your Zoom profile for the breakout groups.

Summit Day #3 Agenda

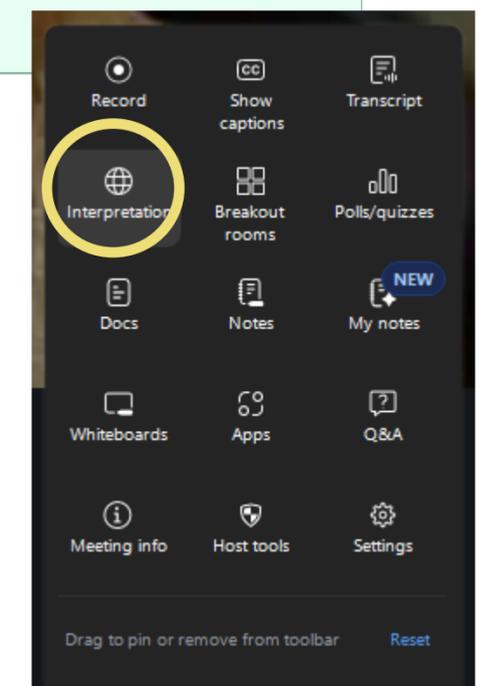
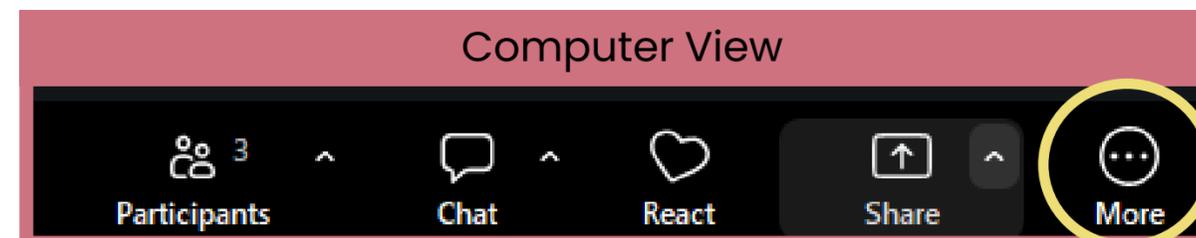
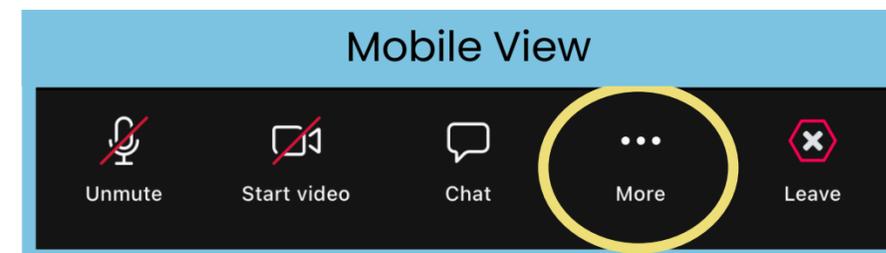
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Access – ASL Interpreter

- You can access the ASL Interpreters in the Interpretation Channel in the Zoom menu.
 - Click the “More” button in your Zoom taskbar.
- Let Jolie know if you need an interpreter for the breakout group.

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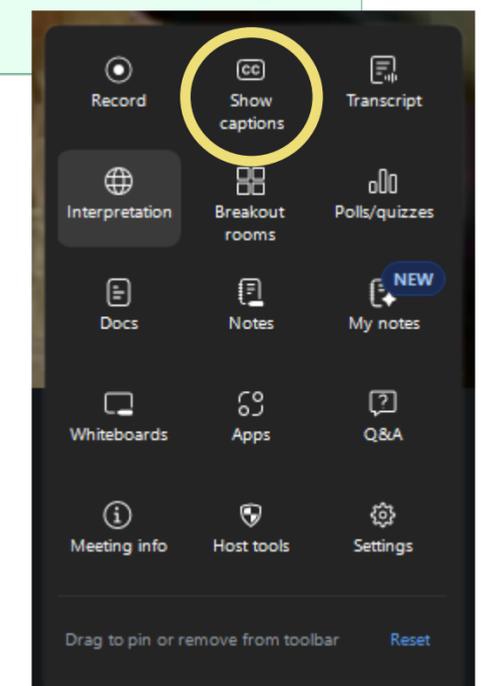
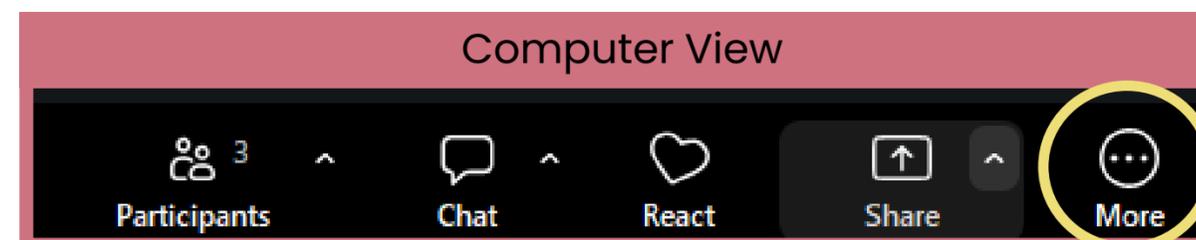
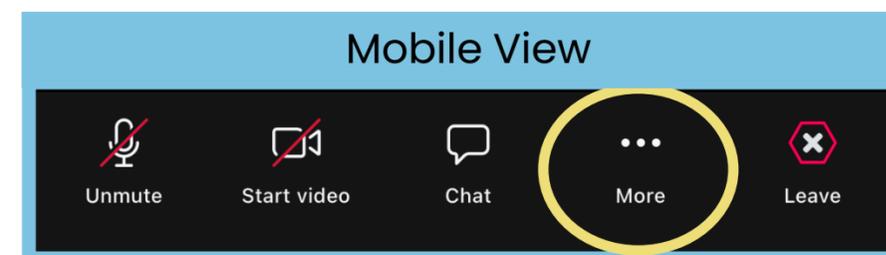


Access - Captions

- You can Live Captioning by selecting Show Captions in your Zoom menu.
- Click the “More” button in your Zoom taskbar.

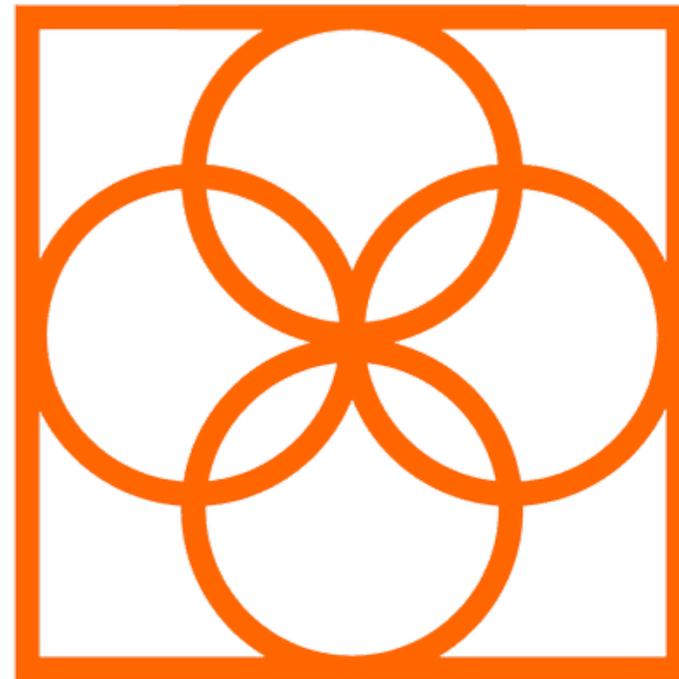
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Thank You!

**New Disabled
South provided
the Interpreters**



**NEW
DISABLED
SOUTH**



About Me

- My name is Will Johnson.
- I work at the Human Development Center as a Public Information Officer.
- I am a self-advocate and a speaker.
- I believe in change, leadership, and movement.



This is a 3-Day Summit

SUMMIT DAY 1

Friday, January 9

What's Going On?

Looking to the Future +
Building Community

SUMMIT DAY 2

Friday, January 16

Let's Make a Plan!

Learning from the Past +
Advocacy

SUMMIT DAY 3

Thursday, January 22

Take Action!

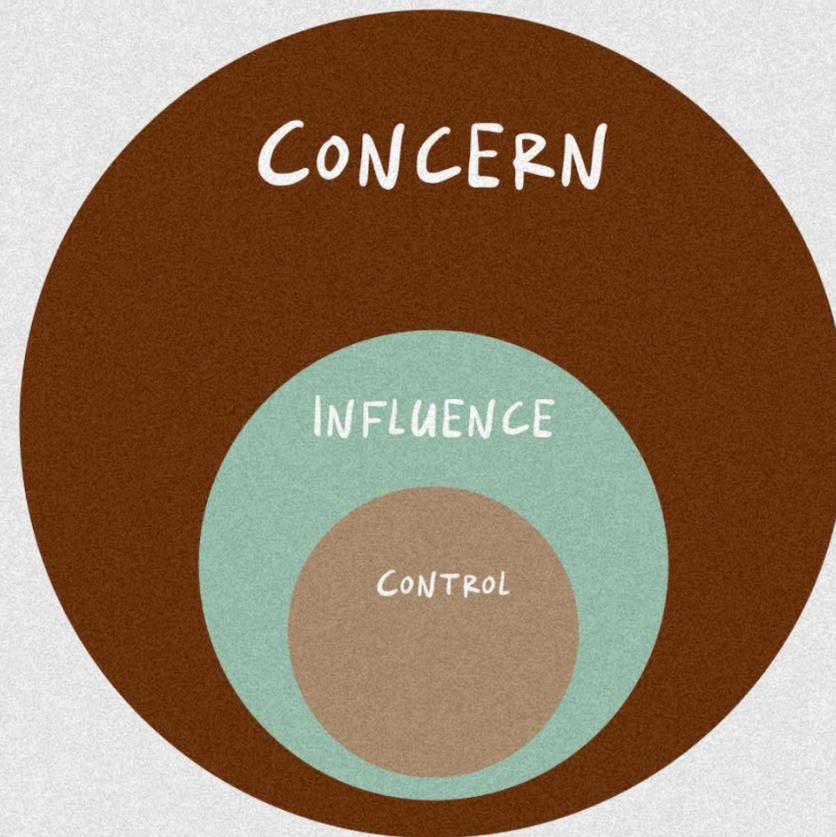
Personal Advocacy + Storytelling

SUMMIT
DAY 1

Recap



A CULTURE ROOTED IN DISABILITY JUSTICE



- Dom showed us a map to problem solve when problems feel really big.
- It's called the "Sphere of Control"
- This tool to remind us what control we have.



SUMMIT
DAY 1

Recap



A CULTURE ROOTED IN DISABILITY JUSTICE

DREAM OF NEW
POSSIBILITIES

AND MAKE
THEM REAL!

- Dom reminds us that in order to change the world, we need to dream new possibilities.
- We need to dream of the world that we want in order to make it real.



SUMMIT
DAY 2

Recap



Our Movement Was Built By Young People



- Rebecca reminds us that our movements were built by young people.
- You can be any age with whatever experience to be an advocate.

SUMMIT
DAY 2

Recap



What Is Your Call to Serve?

- Supporting Programs Like This
 - Running for Office
- Sharing Information (newsletters, TikTok, etc)
 - Personal Development or Growth

- Now is the time to put your skills to work and help.
- There are many opportunities to engage.
- This is “your community, your people, your movement in this space and time.”

SUMMIT
DAY 2

Recap

**“We’re Not Fighting
for Scraps, We are
Fighting for
Liberation”-Ayanna
Pressley**



- They want us to be thankful for crumbs.
- What does it mean to not be satisfied with what they're giving us?
- We must demand more because we deserve more. We have a right for more.



Live It. Shape It. Share It.

**Turning Experience
into Advocacy**

With Will Johnson

How do we feel?

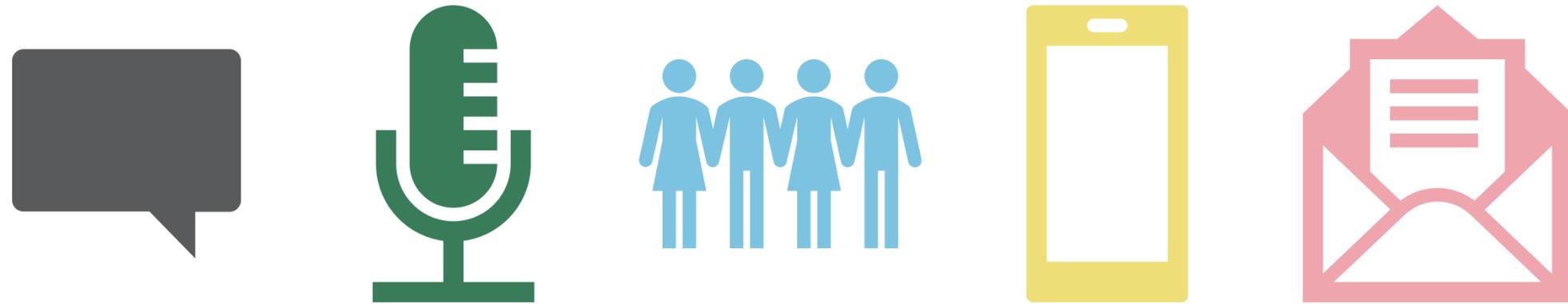
- Recent policies have affected our community.
- Many of us feel scared, alone, and frustrated.
- How do you feel today?



You have the power!

- You can make change.
- You have community.
- We are stronger when we stand together.
- As Dom said at Summit Day 1:
 - 17.7 million disabled people voted in 2020. 15.8 million voted in 2022.
- There's power in these numbers!





Your Voice = Your Power

Let's put those feelings into action!

You are the expert in your life.

We must show policymakers how their policies affect our lives.

Share your stories to be seen and heard.

Rest in Power

Alice Wong

- Alice Wong was a disability justice activist who passed in November 2025.
- She pushed back against unfair ideas about disability by showing disabled people as real people with feelings, opinions, creativity, and power — not as something to feel sorry for.

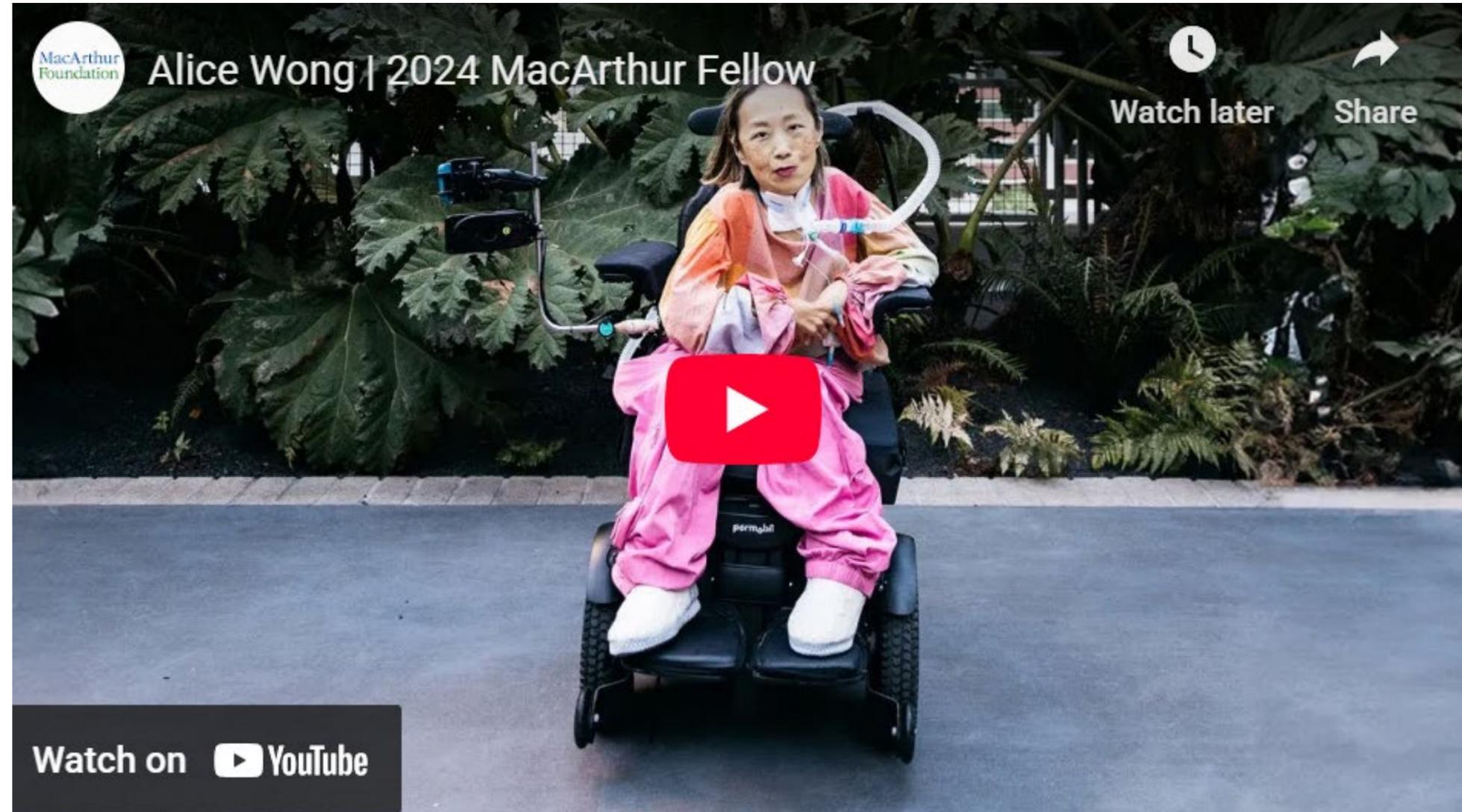


Rest in Power Alice Wong

- She used storytelling as a way to make change, helping people understand disability better.



Meet Alice



Meet Alice in this video announcing her 2024 MacArthur Fellowship.

<https://youtu.be/5yMnlzGTCRQ?si=Sd8GSEKa4I6x7-oU>

Lived Experience as Expertise



Watch Alice talk about centering your lived experience as expertise.

From her Keynote for the 2019 Autistic Self Advocacy Network Annual Gala.

<https://youtu.be/k400kB9yi5Y?si=miTHMI74KId2Bn7->

Why should people share their stories?

- Elected officials listen to the problems that everyday people have, and make rules or laws to solve problems.
- These rules and laws are called policies.
- Elected officials have to choose which problems to work on, so they need to learn how a problem affects people in real life.
- Hearing a real person talk about a problem is important because it gives elected officials a name and face to remember.

From Autistic Self-Advocacy Network's They Work For Us: A Self-Advocate's Guide to Getting Through to your Elected Officials



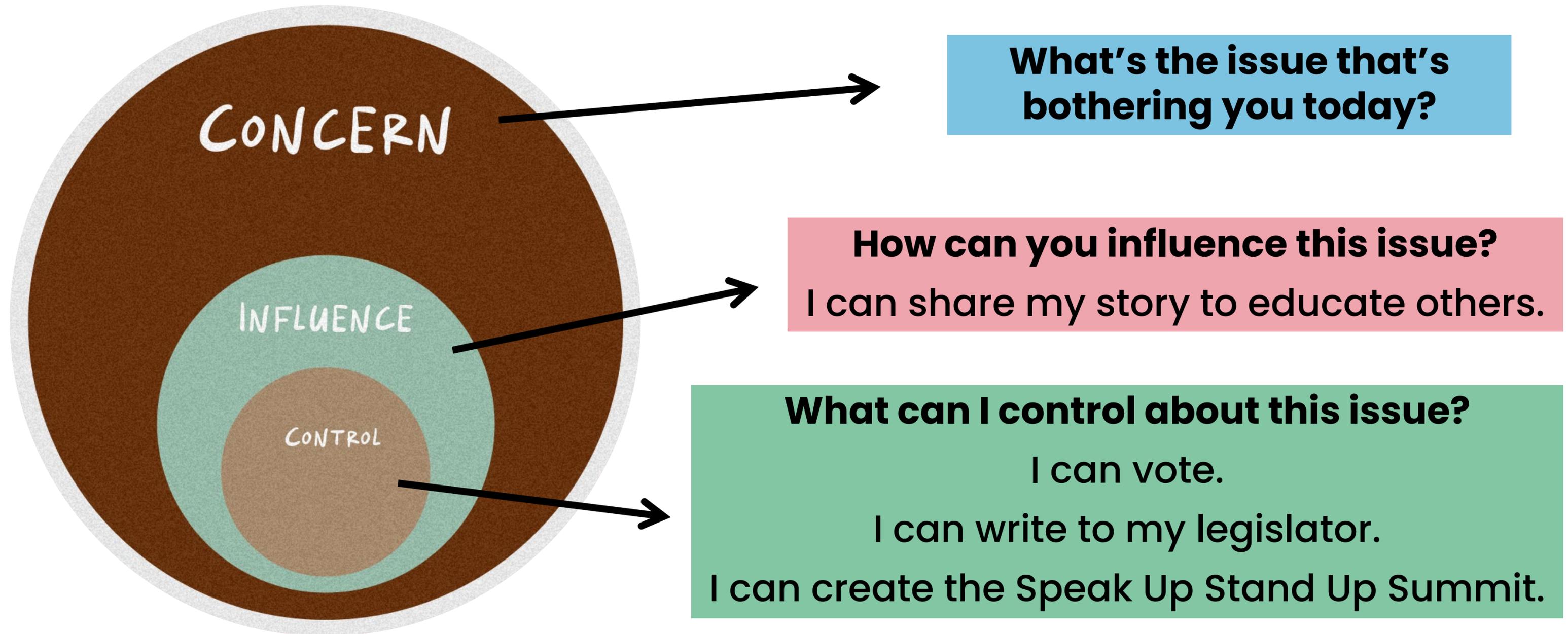


Why do people with disabilities need to share our stories?

- The government makes a lot of policies, and many of those policies affect people with disabilities.
- Sometimes, the government makes policies without talking to people with disabilities. Because of this, some of the policies that get made to help us don't help at all, and some even hurt people with disabilities.
- We need to make sure that policies help people with disabilities instead of hurt us.

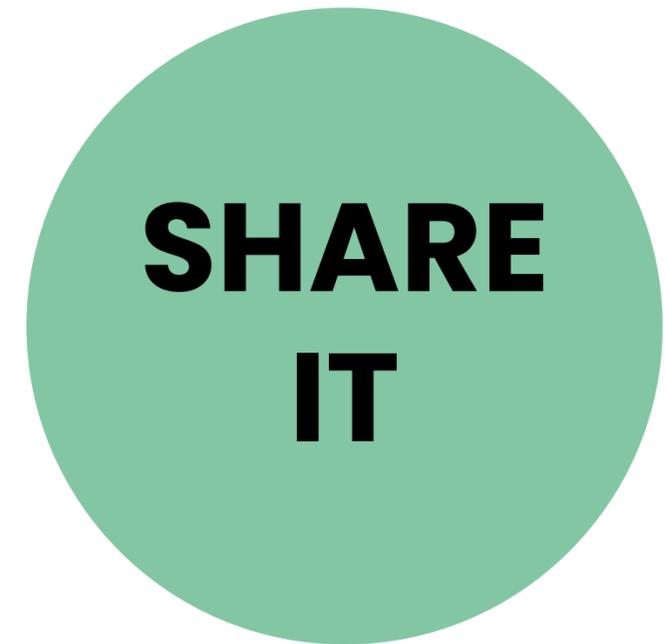
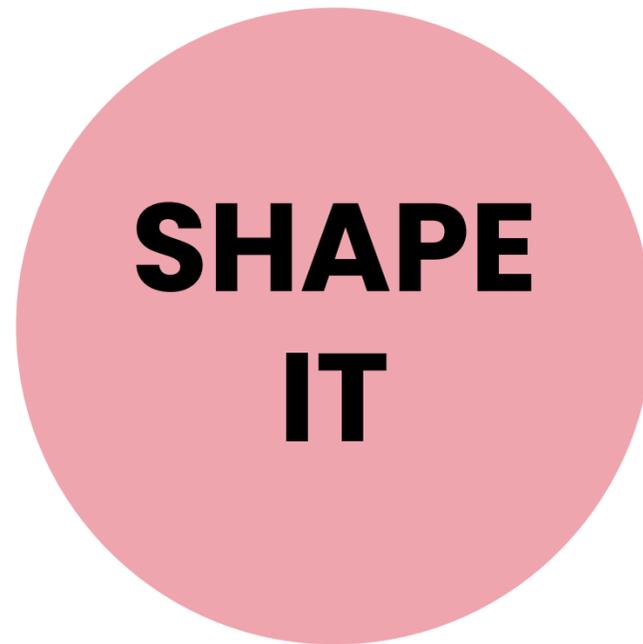
From Autistic Self-Advocacy Network's They Work For Us: A Self-Advocate's Guide to Getting Through to your Elected Officials

Where does your story start?



Let's Live It. Shape It. Share It.

This model helps you take something you've lived through or fear —like Medicaid cuts—and turn it into something that creates change.

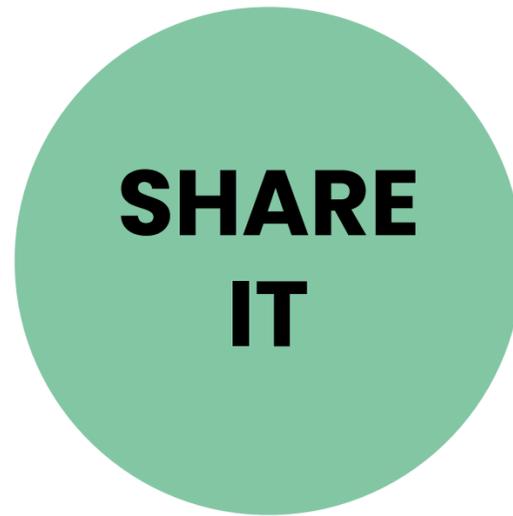
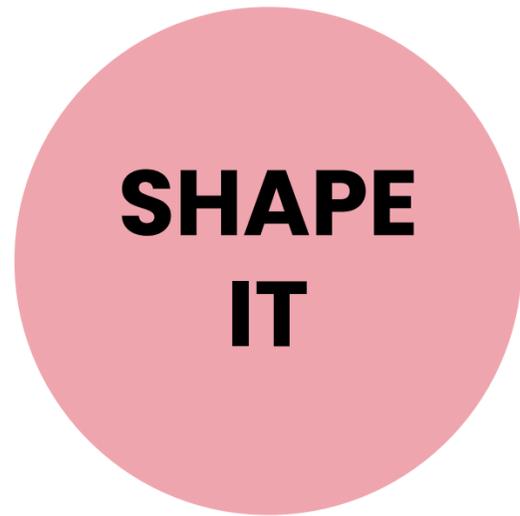




What makes a good advocacy story?

- It stays focused on one clear action.
- It is short and to the point.
- It connects the personal story to the action in a meaningful way.
- The action is easy to understand and easy to remember.
- It invites people in. It feels encouraging and doable, not overwhelming or demanding.

Let's Live It. Shape It. Share It.



Follow along and complete your story with this worksheet:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/19ZhUCUZxUdDQBMILOWUjift_xlXr4-aN26gK6vYAt8/copy



SPEAK UP STAND UP
Disability Advocacy Summit



Live it. Shape it. Share it. Worksheet

Before we start: The Big Issue

A) What is your big concern or issue that you want to take action on?

Part 1: Your Story

How you live is your story to tell!

Your story is when you talk about your life. Some things you might share in your story could be:

- What has happened in your life, and how you think and feel about your life.
- What things could have made your life better.
- What you want to see happen next in your life, and what you want to happen for other people who have lives like yours.

STEP 1: Start with Your Story

B) How does the issue you named earlier affect you, your family, and your community? Does the issue affect your health, work, independence, or something else?

Example:
"I use Medicaid to get my medications and see my doctor. Without it, I can't stay healthy enough to work."

1



Live it. Shape it. Share it. Worksheet

Before we start: The Big Issue

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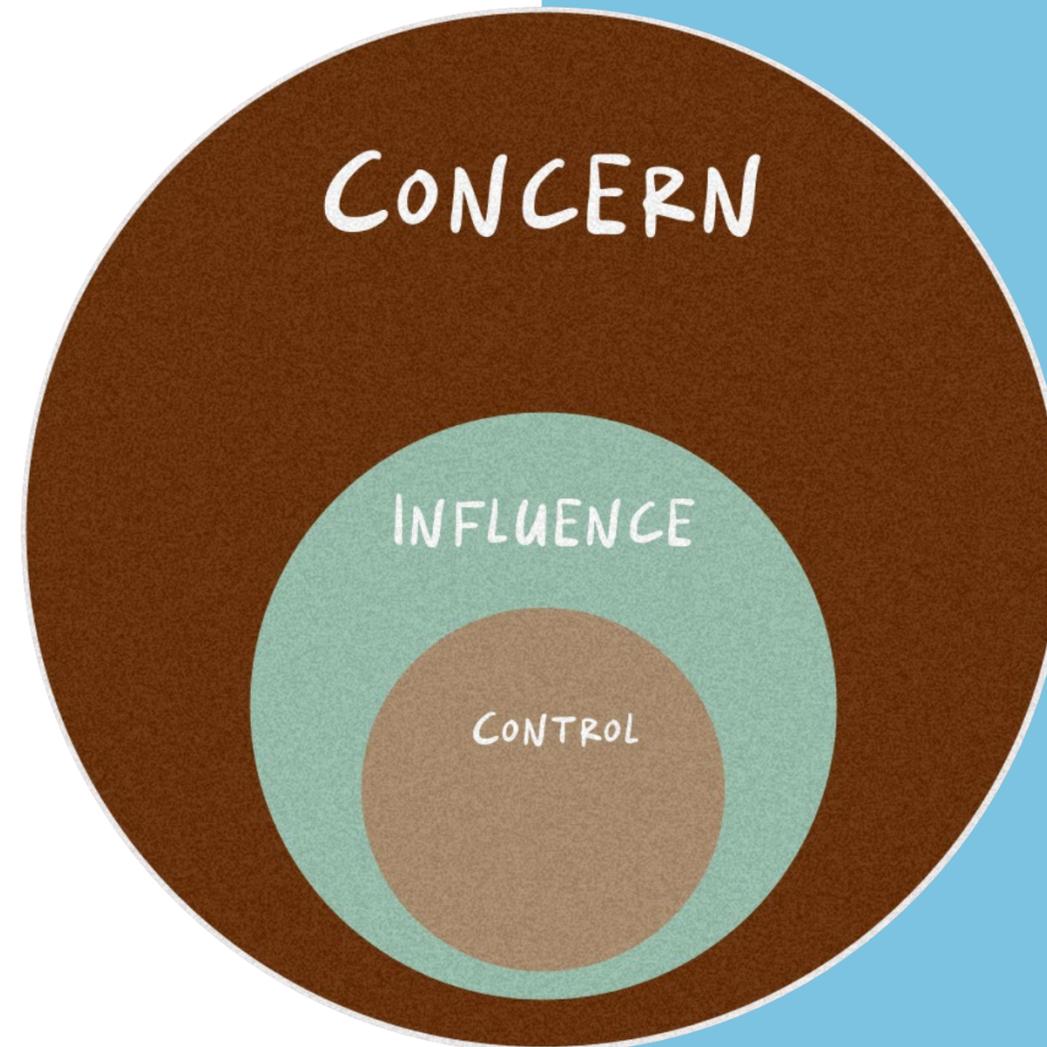
- What has happened in your life, and how you think and feel about your life.
- What things could have made your life better.
- What you want to see happen next in your life, and what you want to happen for other people who have lives like yours.

Before we start: The Big Issue

What is your big concern or issue that you want to take action on?

Will's Example

Inclusive Employment



Start with Your Story

How does the issue you named earlier affect you, your family, and your community?

Does the issue affect your health, work, independence, or something else?

Will's Example

Having a job where you feel included is important because you give people with disabilities a chance to better themselves.

A job gives me benefits, vacation time, good pay, freedom, knowledge, and independence to support myself.

You don't have to rely on others.

Tie It to the Bigger Issue

Is there a policy, bill, or decision that connects the issue to your story? What is it? Who has the power to impact this issue? Who are you appealing to for this action?

Will's Example

Employers:
Hire people with disabilities.

Make It Real

**What does this issue look
like in real life?**

Will's Example

I have a job.

I've been promoted.

I've made more money over
the years.

I've had opportunities to travel
and network

I've challenged myself.

Name Why It Matters

**Why does this matter
beyond just you?**

Will's Example

By having a job, people with disabilities don't have to rely on others.

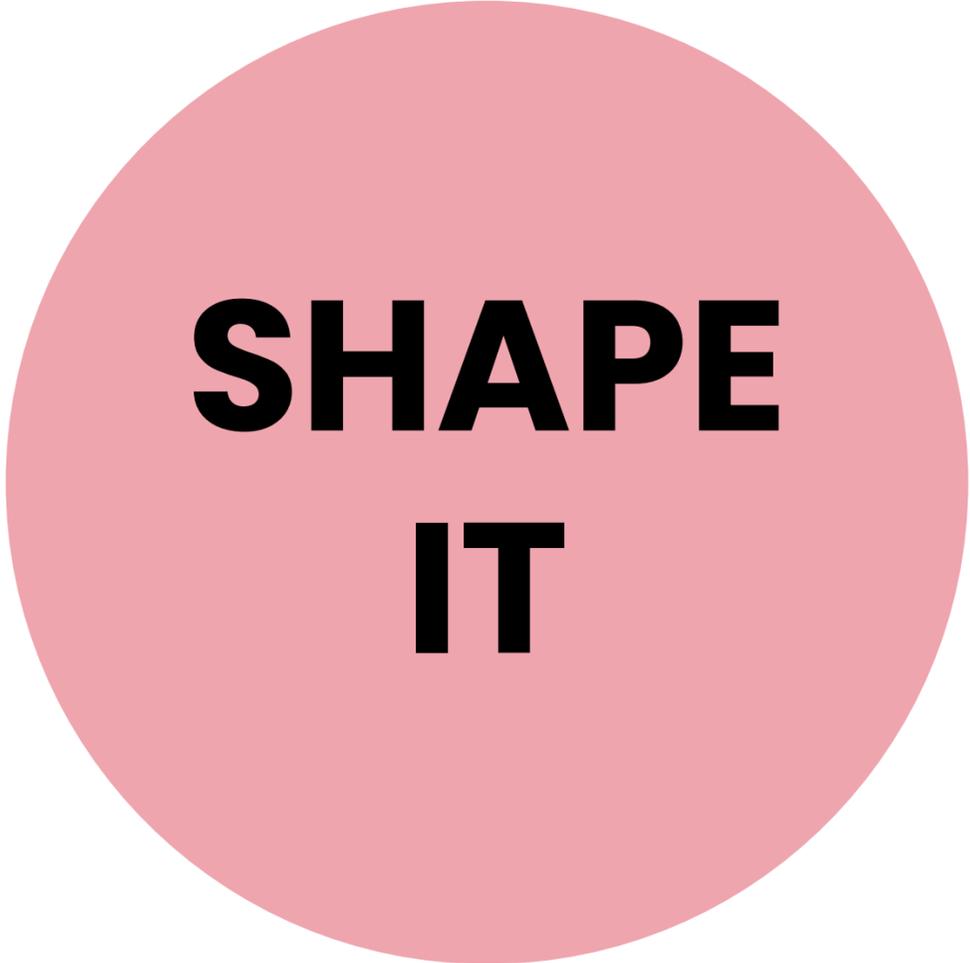
AND we make workplaces better! We bring unique skills, perspectives, and character everywhere we go.

Let's Shape It.

Now that we've brainstormed your lived experience. Let's shape it into a call-to-action.



**LIVE
IT**



**SHAPE
IT**



**SHARE
IT**

What's your hook?

We want the message to grab the audience's attention. This opening sentence is called a hook.

Is there a powerful fact about your issue that you want to share

Or do you have a powerful moment, experience, or story to share that relates to your issue?

Will's Example

Did you know that:

Adults with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty.

And that only 34.8% of disabled people who are old enough to work are working? Compared to 74.4% of people without disabilities.

The Call to Action

A call to action is a clear message that tells people what you want them to do next.

Write out exactly how you want them to take action about your issue.

Will's Example

Calling on employers to hire people with disabilities.

The Closing

What do you want your audience to remember about this issue?

Will's Example

By hiring people with disabilities, you will help others live the life they want independently.

Did you know that adults with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty compared to non-disabled people? And that only 34% of disabled people are in the workforce vs. the 74% of people without disabilities.

Write your hook.

My name is Will Johnson and I have a disability.

What is your name? Who are you?

Because of Inclusive Workplaces, I can live the life I want. I get paid, I have my community, and I don't have to rely on other people. And you know what, I was promoted twice last year and was given the 2025 Staff Award!

What is your issue? How does the issue help or hurt you?

Hiring people with disabilities is important because we bring unique skills, ideas. And knowledge to the workplace

Name the issue

Say why it's important

That's why I'm asking Employers to give us a chance to show you what people with disabilities can do.

Your decisionmaker

What is the action you want them to do?

You can make your business a better place by hiring people with disabilities and paying us a competitive wage.

What is the positive from your issue?

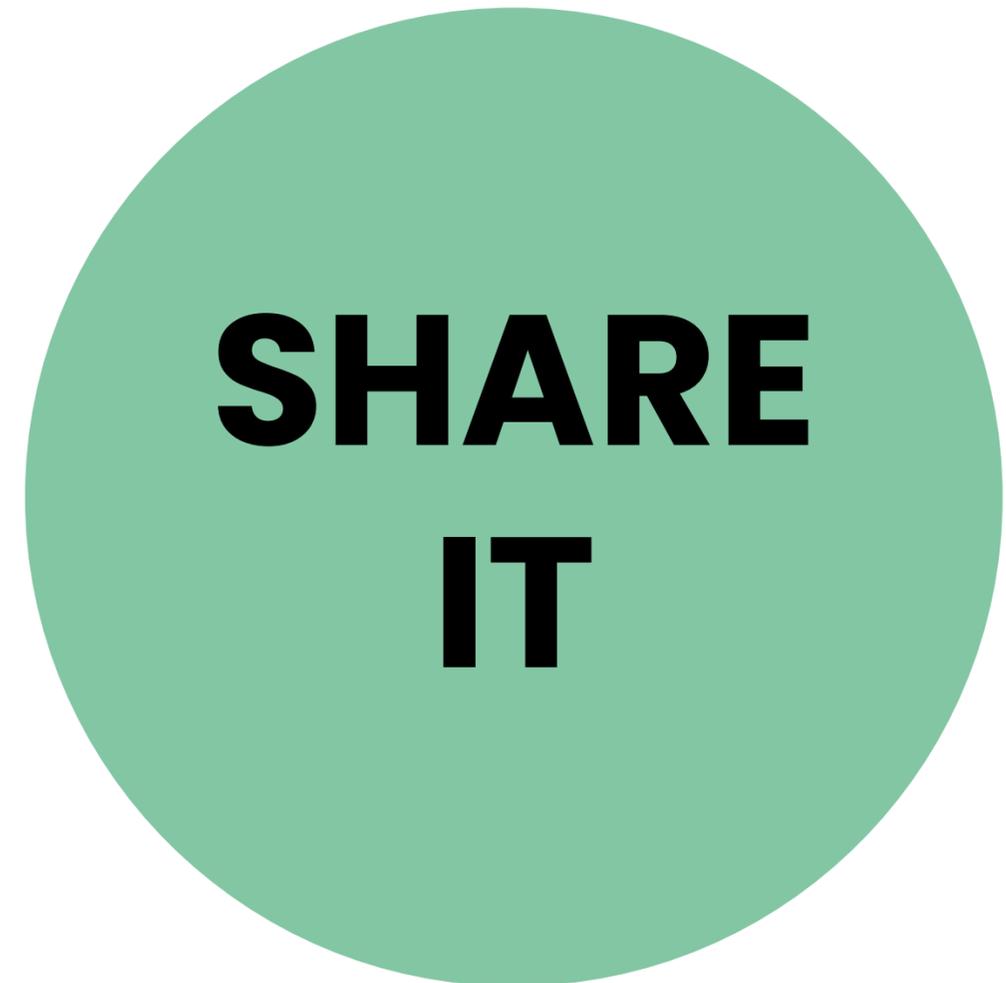
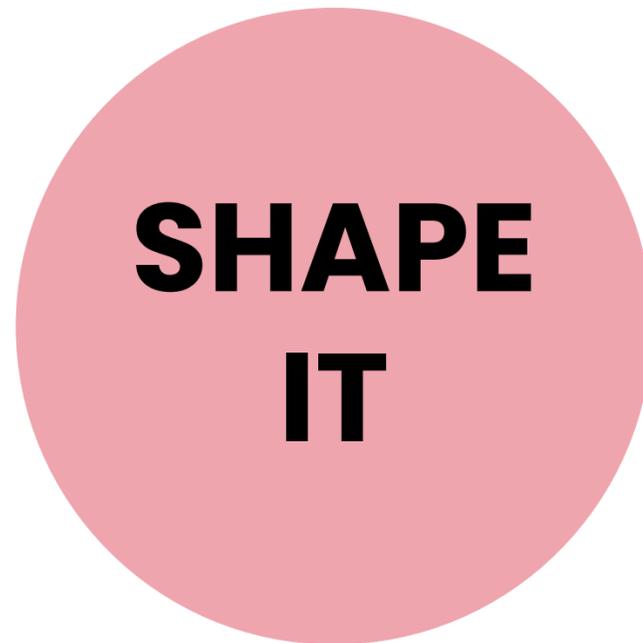
What is your call to action for your audience?

Give us a chance and interview someone with a disability today!

Say your call to action again.

Let's Share It.

This model helps you take something you've lived through or fear —like Medicaid cuts—and turn it into something that creates change.





How can you share it?

Record a video

Make a podcast

Post to social media

Tell a friend

Write a letter to your legislators

And more!



So what are you advocating for?

What lived experience do you have that makes you an expert?

LaCAN's 2026 Advocacy Agenda



Pay Direct Support Workers More

Increase waiver rates and pay for Direct Support Workers



Emergency Alert System

Create or improve an emergency alert system for individuals with I/DD



More Funding for LRS

Provide additional funding for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) to ensure full federal fund match



Maria Town

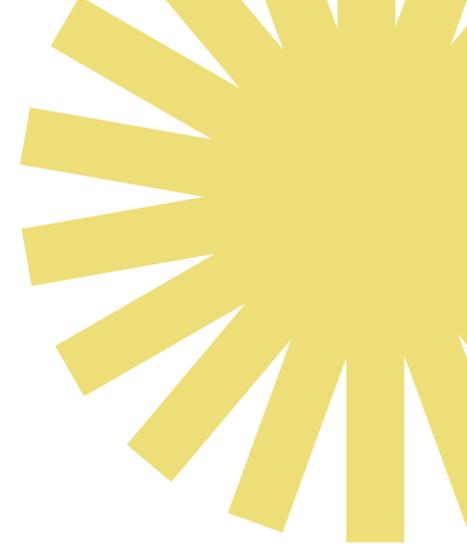
Maria is President and CEO of American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).

Maria works to help people with disabilities have more power in politics, jobs, and the economy.

Maria is from Louisiana, where her family still resides.

**Presentation Title:
Stand Up, Speak Out!**

SPEAK UP
STAND UP



Breakout Group:
What's Your Story?

Discussion Time: 15 Minutes

Reflection Questions

- Is there an issue that affects you, your family, or your community that you feel passionate about?
- Why is this issue important to you? How does it affect others in your community?
- Name some ways you can take action to get others to support your cause?
- What can be your next steps?



In Conversation:

Personal Advocacy and Storytelling

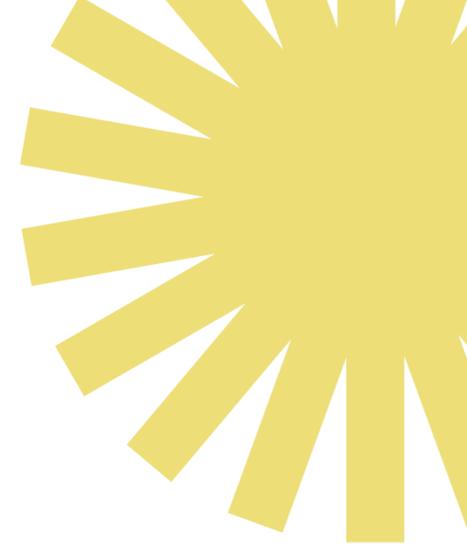
Jeiri Flores

Advocacy Specialist, Strong Center for
Developmental Disabilities

Tim Villegas

Director of Communications, The
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive
Education, Inc. (MCIE) and Host of the
Think Inclusive Podcast

SPEAK UP
STAND UP



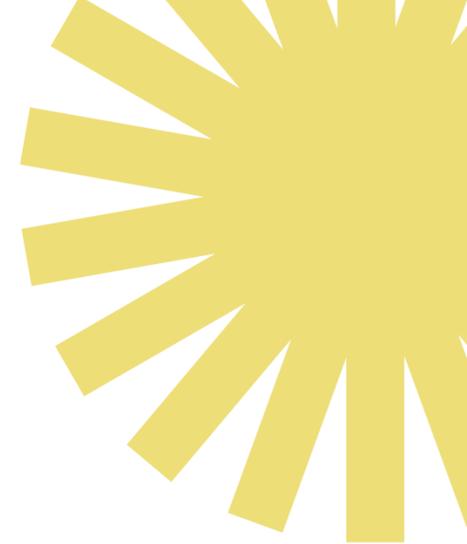
Breakout Group:
Sharing Your Story

Discussion Time: 15 Minutes

Reflection Questions

- Is there an issue or barrier in your community that affects people with disabilities, you or your family, or others you care about?
- Why is this issue important to you? How does it affect daily life, access, or inclusion for people in your community?
- What are some ways you could help others understand this issue or encourage them to support change?
- What is one small next step you could take to help improve access, inclusion, or support?

**THANK
YOU!**



Please take our
Satisfaction Survey 😊



In partnership with
Louisiana's DD Network

