



NCAPPS

National Center on Advancing  
Person-Centered Practices and Systems

## **Culture & Person-Centered Care Practices – “Perspectives on Person-Centered Planning”**

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### **SPEAKER:**

Kenny Burr

Person-centered planning to me means being in control of everyday decisions and long-term choices and decisions that you make in life, that allows you to break away from the dependency and stereotypes that are often imposed on people with disabilities.

I had the good fortune of being raised by parents whose goal was to provide me with the opportunities to acquire skills, so I could get the greatest level of independence possible. This was supported by coming from an upper middle class socioeconomic background that gave me these options and advantages that are often not available to people from other socioeconomic backgrounds. As a result, I believe my life allows for person-centered planning and has given me the ability to live very independently in a great apartment in a safe urban community.

Person-centered services are very important to me and having the ability to direct and make my own choices when it comes to how I want to live my life.

I do have access to a support staff for help with daily activities that are necessary for me for independent living. For example, although I can dress myself, there are times when I do need assistance. Certain daily living activities, such as cooking, requires a lot of fine motor skills. Those particular tasks are difficult for me.

My staff helped me in making person-centered planning decisions when it comes to cooking and other life skills as well. However, I am in charge of selecting and managing my staff. Sometimes this can create some difficult solutions in terms of managing direct support staff.

Recently, because of the pandemic, I was challenged with a DSP (Direct Support Professional) who had worked for me for a number of years. And was not willing to get vaccinated, was not willing to take a personal once-a-week COVID test. So, she abruptly during her shift, just decided not to work for me and that put me in a tough spot. I wanted staff to follow COVID compliance. It was very important to me.

Before the pandemic, distancing, and all shutdowns and all the restrictions that have forced people to have minimal opportunities to socialize or even participate in-person at work; I was very active and always on the go in terms of socializing.

The people I work with and my friends are all respectful of my independence and careful not to treat me differently because of my disability. They also make accommodations that allow



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me to join them in their activities. For example, they understand the need to have wheelchair access for restaurants or other places for entertainment. They understand the concept of person-centered planning and how important it is for me to live and make my own decisions independently for the good of my life and the people who support me.

Thank you very much for listening.