THOUGHTS ON DISABILITY

Normalize being okay with the fact that everyday is going to be different. You're not going to be motivated everyday... be okay with this. This is life. Life happens. And it's okay.
From the Editor....
BY VICKI LEEPER

HOW DO WE LEAD, RATHER THAN PUSH

People who acquire a disability are more empathetic in general. This gives them a perfect background for advocating for access, while still being kind and understanding. A leader is someone who inspires and motivates. The "push" approach is things being done in a certain way and monitored. Followers have to comply. By comparison, the "pull" approach attracts loyal followers even from outside their own circle.

Great leaders lead with a purpose. The purpose is bigger than who they are and forms a basis of connection between diverse people. And first and foremost, they serve their followers. They do whatever they can to help and protect. Not only does this empower and raise the performance of followers, it motivates them. It makes them want to succeed. It is human nature to return such gratitude. They have a clear vision. They are not prepared to quit. They know the time will come.

We should all have a system for pulling in the right people. Who believe in what we believe.

"It's time for society to let go of feel-good alternatives and just say the word 'disabled' loud and proud." ~ Maysoon Sayid, comedian with cerebral palsy

Have something for the Newsletter?
Email dac@dacnw.org
COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR YOU!
FEBRUARY 2022

Feb 2nd  - Fred Riggers Day
           Boise State Capitol

Feb 5th  - Veterans Outreach Center Openhouse
           Clarkston, WA

Feb 9th  - Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Group
           Virtual online support group

Feb 17th - Interacting with the Blind
           Boise Public Library

Feb 26th - Autism in the Wild
           Clarkston, WA

Feb 27th - Ice Skating for All
           Ice Rink in Lewiston, ID

For registration and details of events visit
www.dacnw.org/events/

Our Financial Conference
SAVE THE DATE!
April 1, 2022
Moscow, Idaho
Dear Miriam,

I’m on disability. I’m grateful for it, but it’s SSI, and all I get is $841 a month. Luckily, my SSI pays my rent, and I get some SNAP money for food. But this all isn’t a lot, and there’s zilch left for much else! Besides, I want to bring home a paycheck and buy stuff like other people! So what I REALLY want is a JOB. Places are even hiring now! Oh Happy Day! But wait a minute... Will I lose my $841 a month if I start working? Oh NO! What should I do, Miriam?

Sincerely,
Morrie

Dear Morrie,

It looks like you’ve figured out that it’s hard to do more than scrape by on SSI. But you CAN work part-time and get SSI, not the entire $841 a month, but some SSI. And the very BEST news is that your work income plus your reduced SSI will add up to more than the $841 in SSI you used to get! In fact, you’re better off working part-time and getting some SSI than if you don’t work at all and get full SSI!!! And you can keep your Medicaid!! And probably still get some SNAP too! But DO first talk to a benefits planner (like me) and find out exactly how much you can work at the job you want and keep some SSI. Good goin’, Morrie...

Sincerely,
Miriam at DAC
Tel: 208-883-0523
LINC - COMMUNITY LIVING WORKSHOPS

Our Community Living Workshops are beginning at LINC. This first session started January 12, 2022 and will be every Wednesday for 10 weeks. Our workshops will be held via Zoom but we are hoping to be able to provide sessions in person in the future. We are thrilled to have filled all the spots at our first Workshop! The Community Living Workshop strives to help individuals develop and improve skills to be as independent as each individual so chooses.

Independent Living is the ability to participate in our communities like everyone else. The Workshop topics will include the following: Disability Identity, Peer Support, Self-Advocacy, Self-Care, Housing, Budget and Finance, Healthy Relationships, Transportation and Time Use.

This workshop will be interactive and provide something for everyone. We are excited about the diverse group of participants that have signed up and look forward to them building friendships and developing peer support from within this group.

To sign up, contact LINC at 208-336-3335

EMPOWERING INDEPENDENCE
FINDING COMMUNITY FOR DISABLED QUEER PEOPLE

Many disabled trans drag artists struggle to find community and make connections. One reason for this is drag venues are often inaccessible, not just for mobility, but also for PTSD. Offering a soothing space to go and calm down.

But this completely changed during the pandemic. To keep drag alive, digital drag shows were created on Twitch. One of these shows included captioning and flashing light warnings. There was even a digital drag festival where disabled trans drag artists did performances about disability. Digital drag connects a large group of disabled drag artists.

Digital drag has made it possible for disabled drag artists to create more personalized performances about their experiences as disabled people. They can build performances to include issues about disability, mental health and domestic violence. Digital drag gives the audience, as well as performers, a chance to get more in-depth in who the artist is.

As COVID recedes and performances move to live venues, the disabled drag community is struggling with keeping those connections up. Live performances don't include captioning or light warnings, and are often inaccessible to those with mobility issues. There should be a future with disability activists connecting with disabled drag artists. Witnessing disabled queer drag artists create community through art helps people see what disabled queer liberation can look like. It can be life-affirming. You can find and follow disabled drag queens on Instagram and watch digital drag shows on Twitch.tv/MediaMeltdown.

Working for Independence, Equity, and Justice!
LIFE, INC
FEBRUARY’S CLASS LIST

Idaho Falls
250 S Skyline
Idaho Falls ID 83402
208-529-8610
Soft Skills Class- Enthusiasm & Attitude Monday, February 7, 2:00 – 4:00pm
Crafts Class Wednesdays in February, 11:00am-12:00pm

Blackfoot
129 N Broadway St
Blackfoot, ID 83221
208-785-9648
Soft Skills Class- Communication Monday, February 14, 2:00 – 4:00pm
Crafts Class Wednesdays in February, 11:00am-12:00pm

Pocatello
5210 Stuart Ave
Chubbuck ID 83202
Soft Skills Class- Enthusiasm & Attitude Monday, February 28, 2:00-4:00pm
Crafts Class Wednesdays in February, 11:00am-12:00pm

To sign up for a class or for additional information on these classes or upcoming classes please call the respective office!
NORTHWEST ADA CENTER
INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDE

The University of Washington has been working toward fostering an inclusive and welcoming culture in their campus community. As such, they have been working to eliminate some of the IT terminology used for years that has racist, ableist and/or sexist origins and their continued use perpetuates privilege. Using clear, concise and direct language (known as plain language) is a good way to avoid problematic words. Plain language is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Plain language:

- Uses active voice, not passive voice
- Uses short sentences and paragraphs
- Is composed of common, everyday words
- Is organized using easy-to-follow design features like headers, lists and tables
- Avoids jargon and colloquial language

Colloquial language in particular can be a source of many problematic words and phrases, and many of the terms included in the list are colloquial. Colloquial language refers to words or expressions used in ordinary language by common people. Colloquialism is casual conversation where some slang terms are used and where no attempt is made at being formal. This can include idioms, or phrases that have a cultural meaning, but that meaning is derived from a cultural familiarity and not the meaning of the words themselves.

Examples include “raining cats and dogs” or “sanity check” or “lowering the bar.” While most people reading this know exactly what these phrases mean, the meaning is derived from a cultural context and not the words themselves. Two of those phrases are problematic. Other examples would be "black-out dates" instead of blocked out dates. Or "master" instead of main.

For more information about the complete list of suggested words you can visit this site.

If you have concerns about accessibility, contact your nearest ADA Center.

www.NWADACenter.org/Idaho, dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com
Phone: Voice & TTD 208-841-9422
Do you know people with disabilities or older adults who are having difficulty finding and keeping direct care workers or service providers?

Idaho’s direct care workforce is in crisis. The pandemic, along with increasing wages in many industries, is pulling direct care workers away from their underpaid positions for higher paying jobs with benefits. This shift means that people with disabilities and older adults who live independently in the community with supports are at risk of being institutionalized. For individuals currently in an institution, the lack of direct care workers means they are unable to return to their own homes and communities to live independently.

**It is critical that voices of people with disabilities and older adults are heard!**

We are collecting the stories of people who are experiencing barriers to community-based services, such as finding direct care workers. These stories will be summarized and shared with Legislators, Idaho State Agency Staff, and the media to raise awareness of the workforce crisis. The questionnaire is available by clicking on the link below, or by contacting or referring someone to the project coordinator. The project coordinator will help people complete the questionnaire over the phone. Here is the [barriers to service questionnaire](#).

A Spanish version is also available [here](#).
Every three years, the Idaho State Independent Living Council (SILC) works with the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI), to develop the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The SPIL is a three-year plan that sets goals and guides plans for the delivery of independent living services, systemic advocacy, and public outreach and education.

Before we can develop a Plan, we need to learn more about what's important to Idahoans with disabilities and their families. In the coming months, we'll be holding town meetings across our state to hear from Idahoans with disabilities. We're also asking people to take 10 – 20 minutes to complete our survey so we can learn more about your needs and what matters to you. Your responses are confidential unless you choose to share your name.

The survey is available online in English and Spanish. Surveys in English and Spanish are also available in hard copy, large print and Braille. PDFs are included for your convenience. Please contact our office at 208-334-3800 if you need help or to request a survey be mailed to you.

PLEASE NOTE: The survey asks if you are a person with a disability, a family member, a service provider agency or a direct care/community support worker. Many people fall into several of these categories. The electronic survey questions are different depending on how you identify yourself in questions 1 and 2. You may take the survey multiple times if you choose, or just once. If there is something you want us to know, please add it in the comments section.

Access the survey in English here.
Access the survey in Spanish here.
LOOKING BACK - by Mark Leeper

A REFLECTION ON 2021

This past couple of years, 2020 and 2021, have been especially tumultuous on many fronts - nationally, regionally, and locally. Public offices have been shut down, employees in many agencies and companies have come and gone, and the country has seemed ever more divisive. Needless to say, CILs are not immune to the external factors that are impacting everyone everywhere, and neither are the CIL staff.

We have experienced a tremendous amount of stress throughout our workforce. Staff members are doing their best to support others even as they struggle to maintain their own health. This stress has clearly affected people at every level and my compassion has been great for those that have continued to do their best under trying and ever-changing circumstances. VR programs, many CILs, and others have often struggled to find new or replacement staff. Many programs have faced significant reductions in the numbers of people with a disability seeking services as the pandemic limited connections. Even with that reduced contact, we know that people are suffering and we want to figure out how to help. To better reach out and serve, we have received many thousands of dollars with uncertain timelines and vague structure, putting additional strain on already stressed people and systems.

As these funds and uncertain expectations threaten to lead us down paths we have never traveled in the IL world, I believe that it is doubly important that we maintain our focus on the IL philosophy and not allow the IL movement and the CILs that are built to implement services to support it, lapse into provision of traditional, intervention types of services. Too much focus on intervention services dilutes our impact as a movement that champions and supports choice and self-determination and chosen levels of interdependence that are key to changing attitudes and supporting the idea that we are equal and not special. Let's remember to support each other, reminding each other that the IL philosophy still applies, and that systemic change and peer support are still critical underpinnings and primary ingredients in our struggle for equality and justice.
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

FASHION FORWARD ACCESSORIES FOR THE WHEELCHAIR

FFORA is a lifestyle and accessories brand which utilizes the power of functional design and real life experiences to create beautiful products that place the disability at the forefront of design. At the heart of these products is the FFORA Attachment – a clamp and open dock that attaches securely around the lower tubes of most manual wheelchairs. Products range from cellphone holders, to cups and bags. All are easily clipped in or out and can be positioned at any angle.

Prices starting at $15.

www.liveffora.com

explore 12

This easy-to-use electronic magnifier with superb HD image quality enhances both near and distance viewing. It has a 12" touch screen to create a larger interface for reading, writing, painting or drawing and more. The built in stand allows you work comfortably with magnification up to 30x. You can zoom in or pan across a book without moving the book. And there are color enhancements to increase visual contrast, https://store.humanware.com/hus/explore-12-portable-video-magnifier.html

STUFF TO MAKE LIFE EASIER
LINKS WORTH SHARING

IMPROVE YOUR VISION   BY JAMES PICKARD

The L.O.V.E. Program, (Lions Low Vision Services) in cooperation with the University Eye Center at Los Angeles and Marshall B. Ketchum University offers complete vision care including such specialties as low vision devices and vision therapy. Patients of the program receive complete vision examinations and prescribed correction and treatment.

Magnifying Aids has been providing products for the low vision and blindness community for over 15 years. They always have the "latest and greatest" technology to help you maintain independence and see better. Tech includes talking watches, big button phones and numerous writing aids to provide assistance for completing the basic tasks of everyday life.

Library users with visual impairments face a number of barriers to access. Adaptive technology has leapt forward in recent years, with artificial intelligence (AI) opening up new possibilities, but more basic technologies are also important in creating a welcoming library experience for users of all ages with visual disabilities. American Libraries has multiple levels of technology for use.

This innovative system by Jordy is the ideal solution for your active lifestyle, enabling you to read, write, and see in any environment including work, home, and school. Jordy is a battery-operated, full-color portable system that can be worn like a pair of glasses to see near, far, and everything in between. HD headset with automated focus is ideal for watching TV, visiting with friends, reading or working on the computer.

For those living with any visual impairment, reading medication labels can be challenging and lead to medications being taken incorrectly. The Webster-pak Low Vision medication pack has specific Low Vision Folder labels with white text on a black label available. Available for pharmacies, doctors, and group homes.

GOT A MINUTE? CHECK THEM OUT!
STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING FARM/RANCH SUICIDES

BY AGRIBILITY

Data shows that suicide in the United States continues to be a major health issue. Tragically, farmers and ranchers have disproportionate rates of suicide in comparison to other occupations. Some of the reasons behind this are unpredictable market prices, widening gap between operating costs and revenue, and few health care resources. There are some practical, daily strategies that can be used on the farm to help improve mental health, alleviate depression, and reduce the risk of suicide. We also need to look at how to best help the loved ones left behind.

Researchers have demonstrated that one suicide deeply impacts 25 people, and another 115 are exposed to suicide’s devastating impact. 140 people can be a significant portion of many communities in Idaho and other frontier/agricultural states.

Ask in Earnest is an online support site for farmers. They have listed a number of ways to help farmers with their general well-being. They have divided it into 4 different areas of self-care and offer tips specific to farming to help.

- **Sleep.** The birthing of livestock, calm winds at dawn that allow for spraying, the threat of impending hail storms and many other factors can mandate the farmers forego a “regular” sleep schedule.
- **Nutrition.** With long, hectic days, it can be easy to overlook nutrition and sacrifice good choices for convenience and speed.
- **Exercise.** Farmers and ranchers get plenty of exercise, right? Well, most of the time, probably yes. However, it’s important to keep fitness in mind year round.
- **Stress Management.** Unmanaged stress is severely hazardous to a farmer’s health. This can cause headache or chest pain, stomach upset, fatigue and muscle tension and more.

They also offer help for friends and family to reach out. You don't have to be a professional mental health counselor to help save a life. Just as their name indicates, "asking in earnest" can make a difference. They have a number of tips for starting those difficult conversations and listening sessions. Connecting and getting them to talk about their plans can be a big help. Check out their website for the details of helping our local farmers and ranchers.
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

www.dacnw.org

3726 E Mullan Ave
Post Falls, ID 83854
208-457-3891 VOICE-TDD
208-457-3893 FAX

330 5th Street
Lewiston, ID 83501
208-746-9033 VOICE -TDD
208-746-1004 FAX
888-746-9033

505 N Main St
Moscow, ID 83843
208-883-0523 VOICE-TDD
208-883-0524
800-475-0070

INDEX
25 W Main,
3rd floor #West 9
Spokane, WA 99201
509-606-INDx

www.idlife.org

640 Pershing Ave Ste A
Pocatello, ID 83204
208-232-2747 VOICE-TDD
208-232-2754 FAX
800-631-2747

725 Jensen Grove Dr Ste5
Blackfoot, ID 83221
208-785-9648 VOICE
208-785-2398

250 S Skyline Ste 1
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
208-529-8610 VOICE
208-529-8610 TDD
208-529-6804 FAX

2311 Park Ave Ste 7
Burley, ID 83318
208-678-7705 VOICE
208-678-7771 FAX

www.lincidaho.org

1182 Eastland Dr. N. Suite C
Twin Falls, ID 83301
208-733-1712 VOICE
208-733-7711 TDD

1878 West Overland Rd
Boise, ID 83705
208-336-3335 VOICE
208-336-3335 TDD

703 S Kimball Ave
Caldwell, ID 83605
208-454-5511 VOICE
208-454-5511 TDD
208-454-5515 FAX