

Book Review

Title: *Make the Day Matter! Promoting Typical Lifestyles for Adults with Significant Disabilities*

Editors: Pamela M. Walker and Patricia Rogan

Publisher: Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2007

Paperback, ISBN: 978-1-55766713-7, 162 pages

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Reviewer: Courtney E. Rice

Make the Day Matter! Promoting Typical Lifestyles for Adults with Significant Disabilities is a comprehensive book detailing the history of special education and rehabilitation for people with significant disabilities, and outlining policies, strategies, and programs for parents and professionals to inform the reader about navigating the process of providing individuals with disabilities self-direction. The conceptual framework revolves around the following five concepts: community presence, choice, community participation, respect, and competence. The book has 12 contributors, academic professionals specializing in the fields of special education and disability studies, research associates, and program directors prominent within the disability community.

The book begins with a chapter chronicling the history of special education and rehabilitation, which spans the era of institutionalization (1800-1960) to the self-advocacy movement (1980s-present). The work also highlights major disability legislation and the Olmstead Decision, the Supreme Court case that “affirmed the right of individuals with disabilities ‘to live in the most integrated setting’” (p. 9).

Following the historical background, *Make the Day Matter!* sequentially moves through an individual’s developmental lifecycle from preschool to postsecondary education, eventually addressing the elderly years, in regards to discussing person-centered avenues for self-determination. Throughout the work, the authors provide poignant case examples within each period of an individual’s lifespan, in which successful strategies for societal inclusion were attained. Frequently, suggestions are made about transition planning beginning at a young age, and recommend inclusive education geared toward an individual leading a meaningful adult life. Many planning tools such as, Person-centered Approach to Habilitation (PATH) and personal futures planning, are discussed in the book to provide readers with examples to assist in transition planning. In addition, two options for transition services for youth ages 18 to 21 are also described providing parents and professionals various examples of appropriate supported transition programs for individuals of this age group.

Make the Day Matter! presents readers with a thorough concept of person-centered planning for individuals with significant disabilities. For the interested reader, the work focuses on three major areas of an individual’s life: education, employment, and social and leisure opportunities. The contributors suggest purposeful transition planning,

inclusive education, and a person-centered approach could benefit individuals with significant disabilities to lead fulfilling and rewarding lives.

Although this book was written for parents and professionals, a theme within this work proposes developing an individual's self-advocacy skills to increase independence and self-determination. For example, information about self-advocacy groups (i.e., Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), ADAPT (formerly American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today), and Grassroots Regional Organizing Program (GROP) are provided as well as helpful suggestions; such as, encouraging self-advocacy work as a volunteer to eventually gain employment in this area. *Make the Day Matter!* instills in the reader a paradigm shift that includes the individual with a significant disability as an active participant in the planning of his or her life.

Make the Day Matter! is well organized and detailed in its presentation, which allows the reader to utilize this work as a reference tool when working with adults with significant disabilities. It appears to be a valuable resource for parents, service providers, advocates, and educators who wish to increase their knowledge of appropriate avenues for assisting individuals with significant disabilities to create satisfying and active lives within their community.

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