



OBJECTIVES

- Promote continued self-evaluation to overcome judgment and/or biases in advocating for clients/patients.
- Encourage utilization and consideration of the necessary elements of the Dimensions of Diversity when seeking to understand clients and develop plans to promote advocacy (individual/self/peer, et)
- Promote considerations for understanding special and vulnerable populations (i.e. Transgender, PIPs, Welfare/TANF/FS/Sec 8 recipients)
- Generate discussion on skills and strategies that promote advocacy and lessons learned from professionals.

"Experience is, for me, the highest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience. No other person's ideas, and none of my own ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me."

Carl Rogers (founder of Client-Centered Therapy)





Advocacy is....

- Active support for a cause, position, or person
- Any action that speaks in favor of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others https://mffh.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/AFJ_what-is-advocacy.pdf
- Advocacy is Action



Who in your organization is an advocate?





Advocacy should be client-centered

- Seek to establish a relationship and develop knowledge about individuals and/or groups you serve.
- Research and identify ways to access resources that provide support for individuals or groups that are served.
- Focus on ways in which we can better meet the needs of clients
 - Culturally, contextually and or geographically

3 Key Qualities to provide effective Client Centered Advocacy (taken from client centered therapies)

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/client-centered-therapy>

- **Unconditional Positive Regard:** accept the client for who s/he is and provide support and care no matter what s/he is going through.
- **Genuineness:** provides the client with a model of good communication and shows the client that it's okay to be vulnerable.
- **Empathetic Understanding:** must extend empathy to the client, both to form a positive relationship and to act as a sort of mirror, reflecting the client's thoughts and feelings back to him or her; this will allow the client to better understand him- or herself

Idea: Advocacy should be Intentional

Organizational Advocacy

- The idea that I am an advocate for the clients that my organization serves regardless of my job description.
- Based on my point of contact with clients, how can I be an effective/good advocate for our clients.
- Utilizing "after 5" opportunities to advocate in your natural network

Individual Advocacy (via job description)

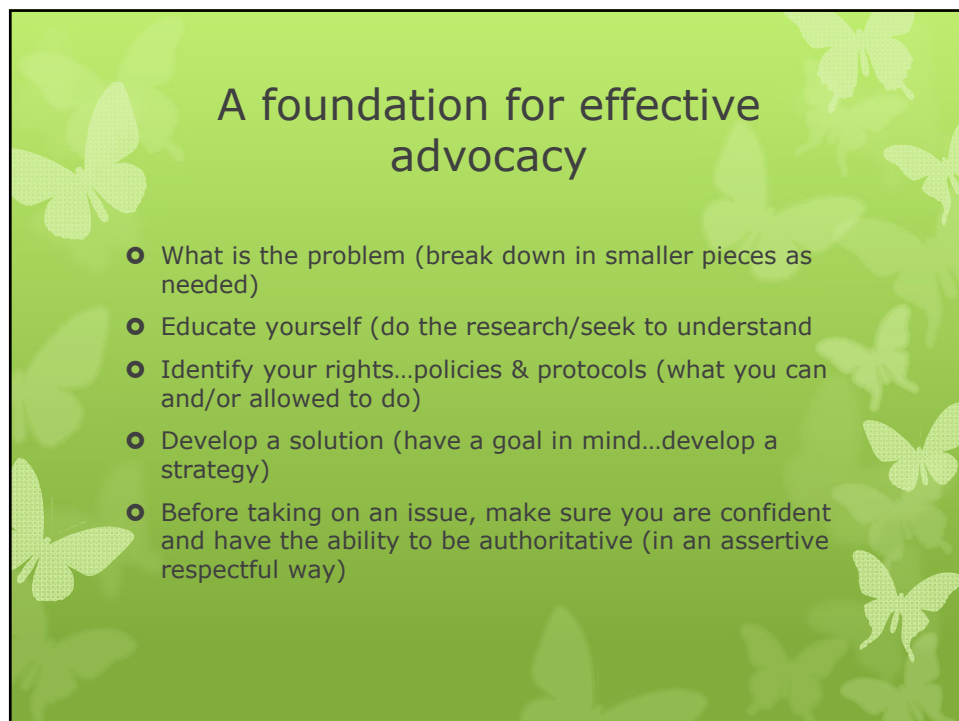
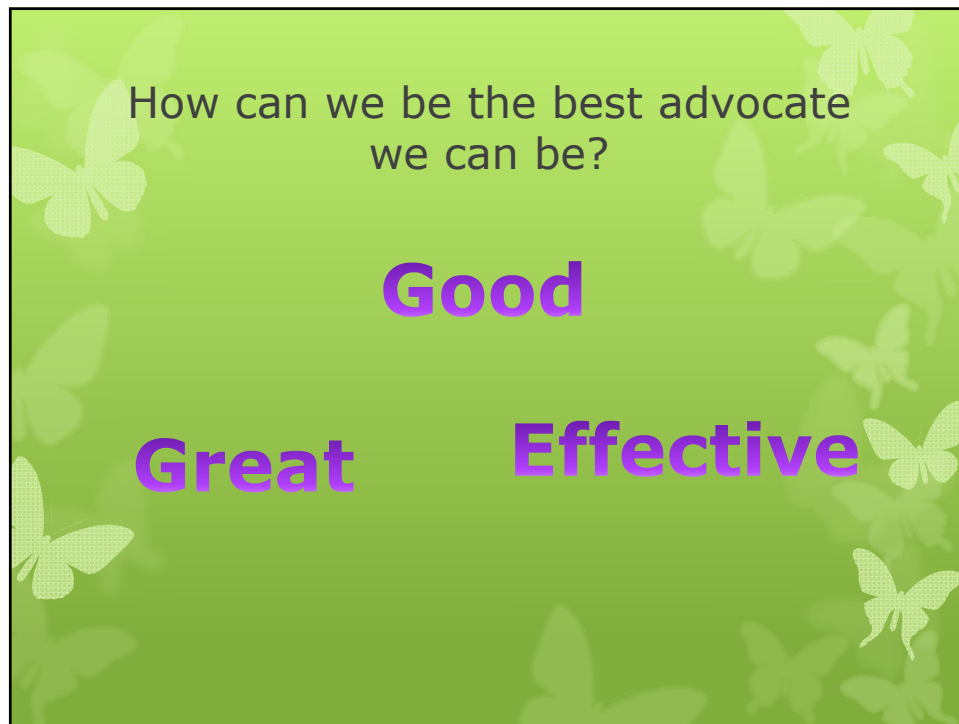
- One assigned to assist a client in finding resources
- Empowering an individual to be able to advocate for themselves
- Helping an individual to know and understand their rights



Victim Advocate/ Case Manager

<https://www.indeed.com/q-Community-Advocate-l-Alabama-jobs.html?vjk=6a9455b3a1d594d7>

- QUALIFICATIONS:
 - Bachelor Degree or Two years of college preferred; or in the alternative, a high school degree/G.E.D. plus relevant experience is required. **Survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault preferred.** Ability to relate effectively appropriate culturally sensitive manner to community resources and client population.
 - **Must be calm**, responsible, and self-motivated.
 - Must have good, **non-judgmental listening skills.**
- RESPONSIBILITIES:
 - Interacts with shelter residents in a **culturally sensitive supportive manner.**



Do's and Don't in Advocate

Do's

- Be genuine and sincere in your motives
- Understand that change does not happen overnight
- Seek advice when your thoughts and intentions may seem questionable to you
- Keep your issues separate

Don't

- Assume
- Make judgments
- Become overly aggressive
- Make your stance and argument
- Forget that it could be you

Small Diversity Wheel

The **center of the wheel represents internal dimensions that are usually most permanent or visible.** The **outside of the wheel represents dimensions that are acquired and change over the course of a lifetime.** The combinations of all of these dimensions influence our values, beliefs, behaviors, experiences and expectations and make us all unique as individuals.

http://web.jhu.edu/dlc/resources/diversity_wheel/index.html John Hopkins University





Advocating for Diverse Populations

- Sex offenders
- Substance Abusers/Drug Tx vs Incarceration
- Mental Health clients
- Hospice patients
- LGBTQ Communities
- Welfare/TANF/Food Stamp Recipients
- Previously Incarcerated Persons
- People living with HIV/AIDS

When I can no longer be an Effective Advocate...

What do I do?

- Self Evaluate**
- Reevaluate**
- Reconsider**
- Restructure**
- Seek Rest**
- Move on**

When you've spent your whole life listening to others, it takes courage to pay attention to the sound of your own voice
Eleanor Brown

CONCLUSION

Lessons Learned

FEEDBACK, IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS, CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM