

Employment for People with Developmental Disabilities

A LOOK BACK A LOOK FORWARD

**San Diego State University
March 23, 2006**

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A PATH OF DISCOVERY

- About People with Disabilities
- About Community
- About Ourselves

1984

- A New Idea that Captured Imaginations

And Now...

- Economic Independence and Belonging

We Learned Some Things Along the Way

We Learned that

- People Needed Something to do During the Day
- People with Disabilities Could Learn Complicated Things, and Could Work

And Then We Learned People Could Hold Regular Jobs in the Community with Support

And Then We Learned About Natural Supports and Working at Full Wage

And Then We Learned About Choice and Personalized Work

A Rejection of the Tyranny of the “or”

- Security OR Employment?
- Integration OR Wages?
- Support OR Integration?

The Power of “AND”...

- Good wages AND
- Integrated AND
- Personalized Supports AND
- Choices AND
- Negotiated Work Life

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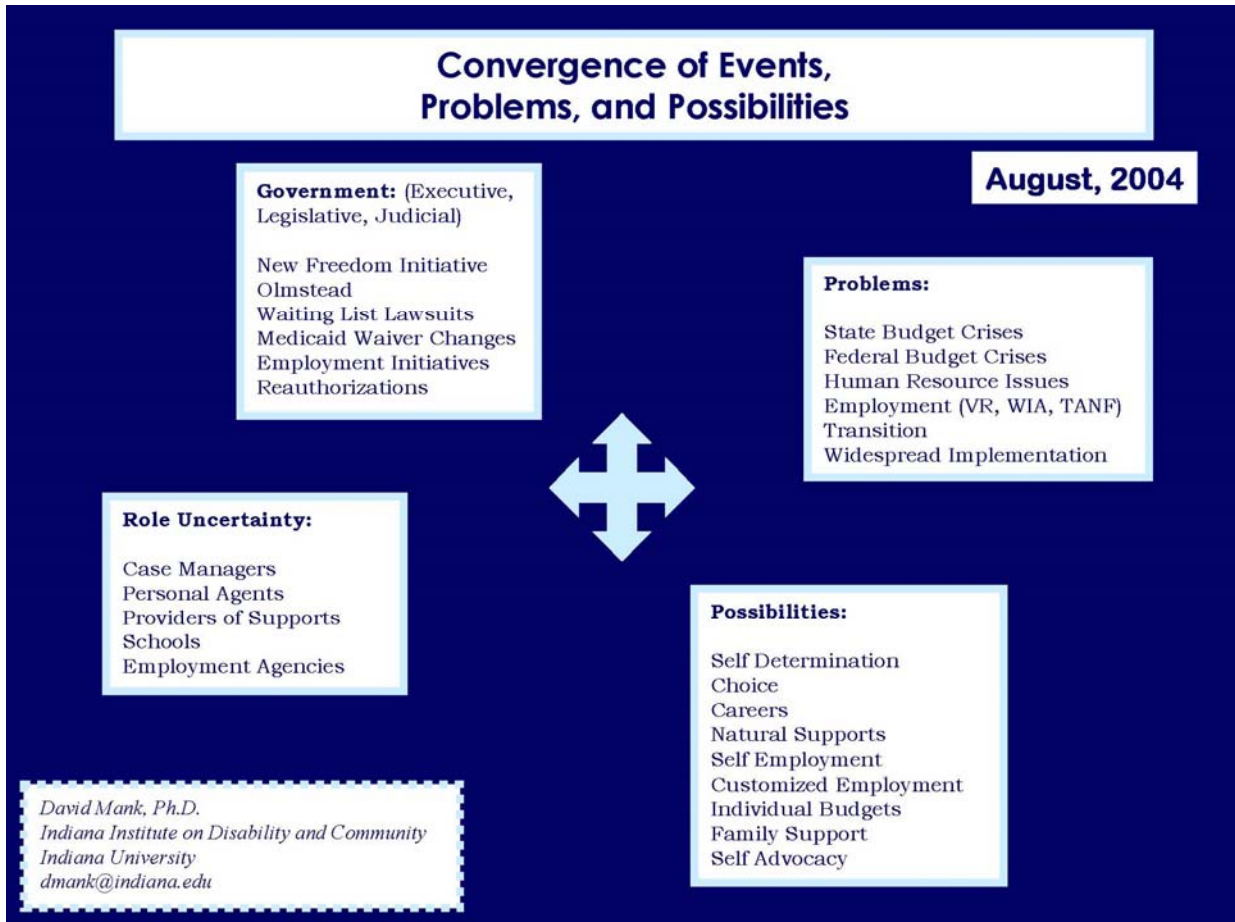
2006

- Interesting Events...
- Intractable Problems...
- Intriguing Possibilities

Convergence of Events, Problems, and Possibilities

- **Government:** (Executive, Legislative, Judicial)
 - New Freedom Initiative
 - Olmstead
 - Waiting List Lawsuits
 - Medicaid Waiver Changes
 - Employment Initiatives
 - New Emphasis on Transition
 - Reauthorizations
- **Problems:**
 - State Budget Crises
 - Federal Budget Crises
 - Human Resource Issues
 - Employment (VR, WIA, TANF)
 - Transition
 - Widespread Implementation
- **Role Uncertainty:**
 - Case Managers
 - Personal Agents
 - Providers of Supports
 - Schools
 - Employment Agencies
- **Possibilities:**
 - Self Determination
 - Choice
 - Careers
 - Natural Supports
 - Self Employment
 - Customized Employment
 - Individual Budgets
 - Family Support
 - Self Advocacy

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Evolving Mission: Twenty Five Years of Change

- A safe place for people to go during the day.
- A place for people to go to learn daily living skills.
- A place for people to go to prepare for work.
- A place for people to go to work with others who have disabilities.
- Support for people to work in the community.
- Support for people with disabilities to choose and prosper in community jobs.

Arguments Against Expansion of Community, Integrated Employment

- People choose to congregate.
- People are happy where they are.
- It's too expensive.
- The community is not a friendly place.
- Some people aren't "ready."

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- Some people are too severely disabled.
- Community employment is simply a different - not a better – paradigm

Choice

- Depends on preference which . . .
- Depends on experiencing options which . . .
- Depends on making options available which . . .
- Depends on decisions to explore options

“Choice” and Other Values

- Choice in the context of normalization
- “It is easier to go along with choices which mean less work, expense, and caring than to assist someone to identify the larger universe of options” (D. Ferliger)

A New Path to Change

- Put control of resources in the hands of people with disabilities.
- Invest in self-determination.
- Eradicate policy conflicts.
- Close the door of entry into segregated programs.
- Use the new information to create quality employment.
- Expand investment with employers.
- Invest in the broader community.

Problems with Systems Change

- Internal resistance builds
- External resistance builds
- It gets more and more complicated

Problems After Change Has Begun

- Slow pace
- Questions about quality
- Limited access
- Little control by people and families
- Continuation of the continuum

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Systems Change

- Strategies for Getting Started
 - ✓ Create demonstrations of quality
 - ✓ Build consensus
 - ✓ Develop interagency agreements

Strategies for Empowering Individuals

- Invest in the leadership of people with disabilities and their families
- Create an emphasis on person-centered planning
- Use vouchers and other methods of expanding choice and control by people with disabilities

Strategies for Community Programs

- Create a focus on conversion of resources
- Make use of training and technical assistance
- Organize people with disabilities and advocates in local communities

Strategies at the Top

- Develop clear policy statements about future services
- Align funding with policy and vision for the future
- Use data to track progress and adjust strategies
- Invest in continuous improvement

Success takes ...

- An Idea (Our “Craft”)
- Resources
- Operations (Implementation)
- Vision with Leadership

A New Mission

- Choice
- Satisfaction
- Friends
- Inclusion
- Careers
- Contribution
- Self Determination
- Quality of Life
- Lifestyle Change