

Independent Perspective #1902 with Julia Lange

Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 1

Welcome to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living.

00:00:06 Speaker 1

I'm your host, Ernie Churchwell.

00:00:09 Speaker 1

Self-advocacy is the ability to understand and assert one's own needs, rights, and interests effectively.

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It involves communicating, negotiating for oneself, and making informed decisions.

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This skill is crucial in daily life.

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Joining us today to talk about an upcoming workshop series at Western New York Independent Living is Julia Lang, ACCES-VR Peer Support Specialist.

00:00:40 Speaker 1

Welcome to the program, Julia.

00:00:43 Speaker 2

Hi, Ernie.

00:00:43 Speaker 2

It's so nice to be here.

00:00:46 Speaker 1

Our pleasure.

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And let's see, getting into the main topic.

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Let's start the discussion with a general overview of the Self-Advocacy Workshop series.

00:01:00 Speaker 1

What prompted the creation of the series?

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Who did you anticipate would benefit from attending it?

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So, this year's theme is "Self-Advocacy Begins with Me" and it really centers on understanding yourself and learning how to accept your disability.

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For me, that's something personal.

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I grew up with a learning disability and for a long time I tried to hide it because I didn't want to stand out.

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And honestly, it took a toll on me.

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I remember feeling drained because I felt like all the teachers were

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focusing on what I struggled with and not what I was actually good at.

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At some point, things changed for me when I learned to focus on my strengths and values and what I needed to succeed.

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And over time, I got more comfortable asking for what I needed and accepted my disability.

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So that was really my biggest inspiration behind the series, knowing that self-awareness and acceptance are foundational for becoming a successful self-advocate.

00:02:04 Speaker 2

I'd say this series is for anyone with a disability, whether you're new at advocating for yourself or you've been doing it for a long time.

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I believe that you can always learn something new about yourself or there's always something new to take away.

00:02:23 Speaker 1

Each month is a different topic for discussion.

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The next session on April 29th is focused on your personal values.

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What can someone expect to learn during this session?

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So personal values are the things that influence your decisions and can shape your life into something meaningful.

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If you're not sure what your values are, it can be very hard to stand up for yourself because you might not have a clear direction.

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So, in this workshop, we work on clarifying what's important to you.

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We also talk about how those values relate to your self-worth.

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So, when you start living within those values, it could be really grounding and transformational.

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And coming up on May 20th,

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is the next session, Emotions 101.

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What is the focus for that session?

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So, Emotions 101 is all about learning how to recognize and name what you're feeling.

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This is something that people struggle with, and that's okay.

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But once you learn how to label those feelings and know what you're feeling, it's

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easier to advocate for yourself.

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For example, if you're feeling anxious or overwhelmed, that might make it harder to speak up for what you need.

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So, in this session, we talk about how you can start noticing your feelings and learn how to work through them so you can communicate your needs and get what you need.

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How can someone, as we're running short on time, how can someone get more information about the entire workshop series?

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Is there a contact number?

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Of course.

00:04:09 Speaker 2

If someone's interested in signing up for either one of these sessions or just wants to learn more in general, they can call me at 716-848-8053.

00:04:24 Speaker 2

I'm always happy to talk about it or get you set up to attend.

00:04:30 Speaker 1

That's wonderful.

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Thank you so much for being with us.

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for this to introduce people to this workshop series.

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Of course, it's been my pleasure.

00:04:45 Speaker 1

We appreciate you coming to Independent Perspective: A Public Affairs presentation on Western New York Independent Living.

00:04:52 Speaker 1

I've been the host, Ernie Churchwell.