

# Circles of Support

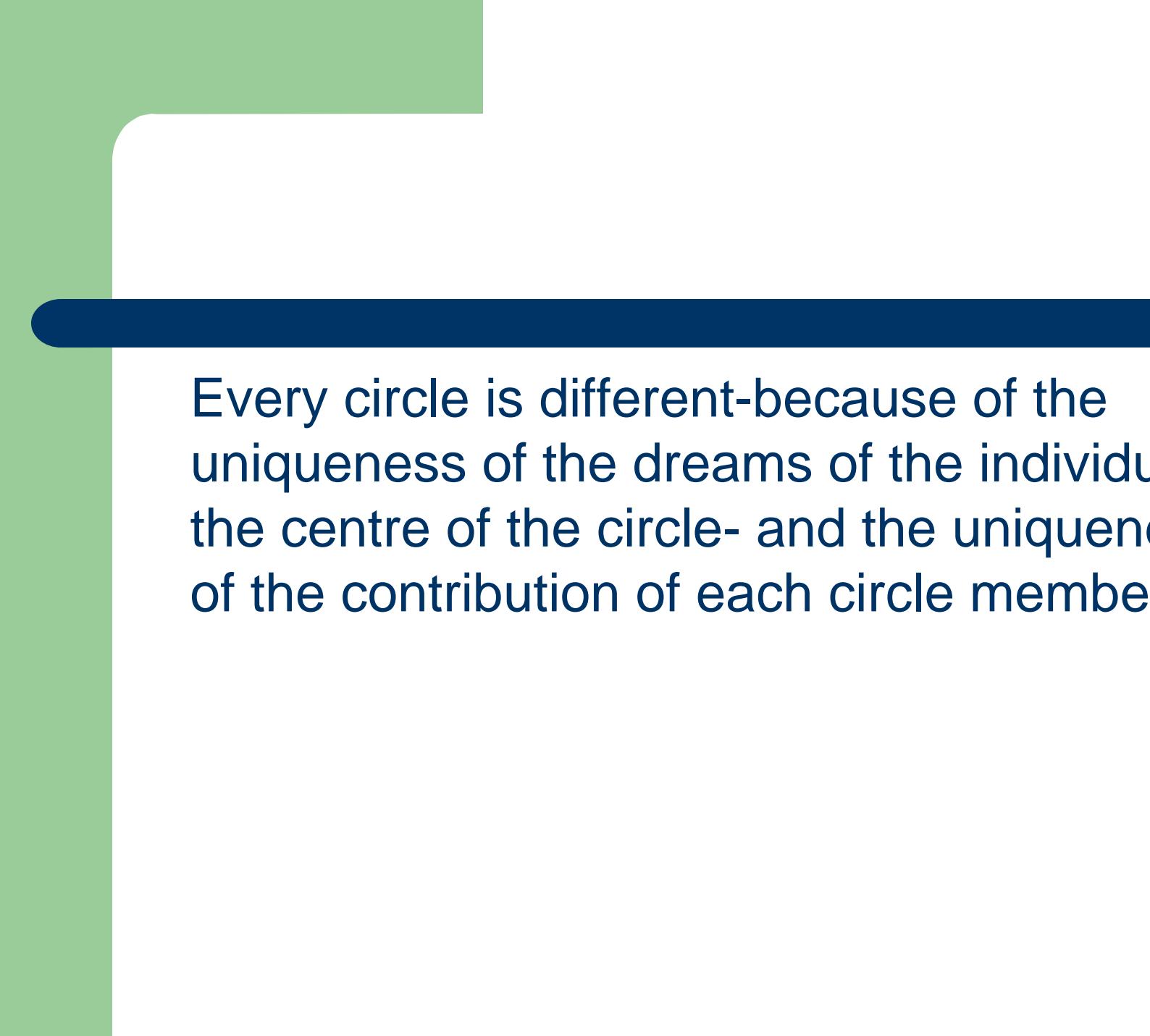
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# What is a Circle of Support?

- Involves a small number of people coming together regularly to provide support to a person with a disability, who they care about
- Circles are made up of ordinary people
- Facilitate ordinary people to play a role
- Invite people in to have a relationship with the person
- It is intentional and has to be

## What is a Circle? Contd.

- Circle can provide things that money can never buy
- People working together towards a common dream or Vision
- Add celebration to achievements
- Provides some relief for families, in terms of safeguarding the life of the person into the future
- Provide practical support, shopping, socialising, etc



Every circle is different-because of the uniqueness of the dreams of the individual at the centre of the circle- and the uniqueness of the contribution of each circle member

# Who are the People On the Circle?

- *Immediate Family*: Mom, Dad, siblings
- *Extended family*: grandparents, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, cousins
- *Community*: neighbours, friends of family, friends of person

# Who are the People On the Circle?

- No paid people on the Circle
- People of similar age to the person
- Three generational Circles

## What seems to work with Circles?

- The Vision for the person being very clear
- What is the purpose of the Circle? Short term/long term
- Finding like minded people-who understand the Vision and are committed to making it happen
- Giving people an amount of responsibility they are comfortable with-no pressure

- Having regular Circle meetings
- Commitment over a long time
- Creative brainstorming and honesty
- Having a facilitator initially
- Meeting over food

# Examples

- Paul
- Helen

# What have we learned?

- Commitment and conviction that the person with disability is entitled to a good and ordinary life
- Sibling involvement is really important
- Grow the Circle slowly-No rush to have 10 people
- Help the Circle members to get to know the person with a disability
- Have Patience
- Be Positive

- Two heads are better than one!
- Circles can be for the person, or for the person and the family



Thank You

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