



# Community Living Skills

## Snapshots

## Disability Identity

“The way we view ourselves internally and in the context of a constructed society is key to learning to love, be loved and build love.”

– **Dustin Gibson, disability advocate**

### Introduction

The Disability Identity session leads off the Community Living Skills workshop.

It covers topics that guide and encourage participants to think about their understanding of themselves through the lens of disability, their relationship with their identity and disability, and how discovering and defining one's personal identity is fundamental to developing other skills to further independence and self-determination.

### Content Summary

**Disability:** Some definitions and types

**Disclosure:** Definition and discussions of when to disclose or not

**Labels & Stereotypes:** Societal views around disability that may create challenges

**Discrimination:** Discrimination and ableism definitions and brief introduction to self-advocacy

**Accommodations:** Rights and responsibilities on accommodations and brief introduction to peer support

**Adjustment & Acknowledgment:** Exploring shared and personal feelings and thoughts around disability





## Healthy Community Living

is a program to support opportunities for people with disabilities to live well and participate fully in their communities.

It includes two peer-led independent living skills workshops, **Community Living Skills** and **Living Well in the Community**, which are each divided into ten specific content sessions.

RTC:Rural used an iterative participatory curriculum development (IPCD) process to involve key stakeholder engagement in the development, implementation, and evaluation of each workshop.

Each workshop has been developed through partnerships with people with disabilities with the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) and Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

The HCL Snapshots series explores how partner participation through the IPCD process was fundamental in shaping the HCL program to improve people's wellbeing by providing support, health promotion, education, and opportunities for people with disabilities to succeed in reaching personal goals.



## Learning Objectives

Workshop participants can learn that there are many types of disabilities, and various ways to talk and think about disability.

They learn that people with disabilities have a right to decide if they tell someone about their disability or not, which has both benefits and risks, and that it is OK to have both positive and negative thoughts about their own disability.

## Disability Community Partnership Shaped Content

The Disability Identity session was significantly shaped by HCL project partners through an iterative participatory curriculum development (IPCD) process. Personal stories from CIL staff illustrated how their own self-examination and discovery of their own disability identity became the basis in guiding their own journeys to self-improvement.

CIL project partners decided having content that suggested that life changes and events may constantly restructure how people think about their own disability felt appropriate and relevant for this session. Discussion questions around this information were added to the session to support participants in articulating their own self-identity and in finding commonalities with classmates, which helps facilitate the rest of the Community Living Skills workshop.

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© 2018 RTC: Rural. This project is supported by grant #90DP0073 from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research within the Administration on Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents and opinions expressed reflect those of the author(s), are not necessarily those of the funding agency, and should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.