

Meeting Thursday, April 19, 2018

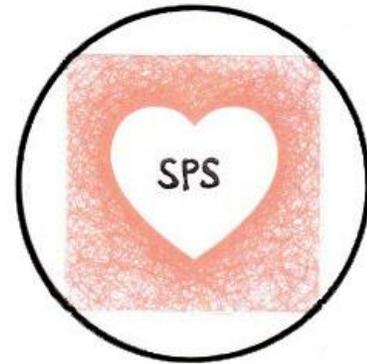
“Are There Supports That I Am Eligible for?”

Guest Speaker: Sam Turcott, Director of the Advocacy Access Program, Disability Alliance BC
Sam holds a degree in Law from UBC, and specializes in access to social justice.

Disability Alliance BC

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SQUARE PEG SOCIETY

Independence & Inclusion
For Aspergers, High Functioning Autistic, & Atypical Adults

Wading through the bureaucracy and required paperwork in order to gain the services and supports that are needed for ASD individuals is challenging for them & their families. Sometimes, if the disability is largely invisible, the degree to which these individuals struggle to function in their day to day activities, is underestimated. Disability Alliance BC exists to assist with this daunting process - to help people around BC with all types and degrees of disability to understand and access provincial and federal benefit programs.

We learned about provincial and federal disability support programs, including Persons with Disabilities benefits, the Disability Tax Credit, and the Registered Disability Savings Plan, and how Disability Alliance BC helps with applying for these supports.

Please see Sam’s Power Point included.

Sam’s presentation was thoughtful and thorough, and many of our families very much need supports and services. The discussion that followed however, provided insight on the consequences for some of our family members, of applying for supports. Primarily these are: 1) a negative psychology that is built in to the application process in that it is focused entirely on what an applicant cannot do, and 2) dependency, in that anyone receiving Person With Disability benefits is permitted to earn yearly only a very modest amount above his or her benefit income. Both of these represent a societal view of people with disabilities as people who need to be provided for as society sees fit, rather than as individuals who can contribute to the economy and community, and who should be encouraged rather than discouraged from doing so. A change of attitude is required, where supports are focused on helping people to be their best and most capable selves.