

Background: Why Do This Project?

“Most of the trainings I have attended have not been geared to my needs and were not generated from my own experiences and perspectives. I also think peer trainers are more effective. I think self-advocates would agree with me.”

Nancy Ward, Oklahoma People First President

The Center for Learning and Leadership, Oklahoma People First, Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council and Oklahoma Disability Law Center, partners of the Oklahoma Self-Advocacy Network, wanted to honor the request of self-advocates to “teach us to do it ourselves.”



The primary OKSAN Goal is:

- “Teach Us to Do It Ourselves” by developing a self-advocacy leadership training curriculum
 - Applied for and received a grant from the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC) to develop the training, train peer trainers and train self-advocates across the state
 - Got support from the Center for Learning and Leadership (CLL - OK/UCEDD) and Oklahoma Disability Law Center (ODLC)
 - Received funding after a year of preparation

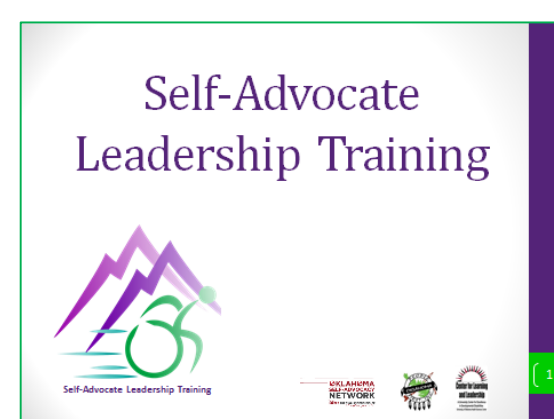
Self-Advocates wanted:

- A participatory type of leadership class
- Peer trainers
- A review and evaluation process
- Remove as many supports as possible so the peer trainers assume responsibility for the training



Development of Training

- Formed a training committee of self-advocates
- Facilitated by CLL and OPF
- Used flip chart paper to list skills they currently possess
- Used flip chart paper to list all the areas the self-advocates were interested in learning
- Sorted list until we decided the most important things to learn first.



Methodology: How We Did It

Step 1: Agreeing on Topics of first Self-Advocate Leadership Training (SALT)

- Trained committee on Leadership
- Asked committee what they really wanted to learn and what they thought other OPF members wanted to learn
- Used flip chart paper to record answers
- Narrowed down the topics



Step 2: Developing Training Materials

- Used flip chart paper to expand on each area
- Self-advocates reviewed leadership training material researched by CLL
- Prepared power point training presentation – used symbols & pictures to help self-advocates who could not read well
- Developed trainer’s manual in “our” (self-advocates) words
- Developed Participant’s Manual – used pictures, symbols and language that was easy to understand
- Piloted each section of the training at OPF chapters

Step 3: Training-the-Trainer

- After the manuals were completed, CLL conducted a 2-day training-the-trainer class.
- We trained not only on the SALT material, but on:
 - Colors and Myers Briggs Type Indicators – to help the trainers learn how different people communicate and learn
 - Team building
 - Person-Centered Practices
 - Developing learning activities
 - How to organize training materials
 - Developed a trainers checklist

Step 4: Mentoring

- CLL staff assumed the initial role of mentoring
- As the self-advocates became better at training and learning how to lead a team of trainers, they began to assume the role of mentor to new trainers
- These trainers were appointed as Master Trainers – their roles included:
 - deciding where trainings were to be held
 - assigning the training team
 - completing the training checklist
 - making sure all the training material gets to the training

Step 6: Evaluation

- Used Person Centered tools to evaluate trainings
- After each training, we reviewed what worked and didn’t work
- Developed a training satisfaction survey
- In the beginning each trainer was evaluated by project staff, but now the Master Trainers are involved in the evaluation of new trainers

Step 5 : Certification of Trainers

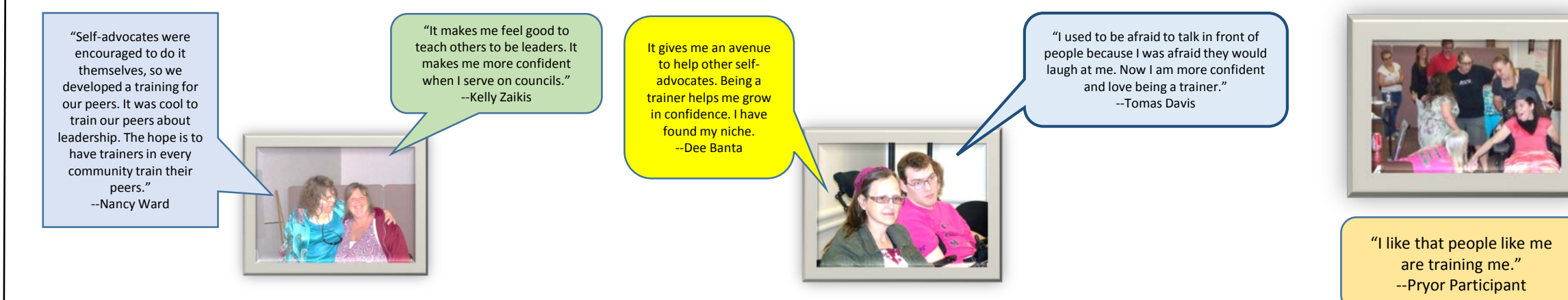
- We are held accountable and have to complete all the steps to be certified as a trainer – not everyone who attends a training-the-trainer class is allowed to train.
- In order to be a trainer we have to:
 - Attend the 2-day SALT class
 - Attend a 2-day training-the-trainer session
 - Successfully train SALT twice
 - Attend 75% of scheduled trainer meetings



The Work Process

Results and Lessons Learned

- Trained over 120 self-advocates during 12 classes across the state
- 9 self-advocates have been certified as trainers
- 8 self-advocates are in the certification process or are being re-certified as trainers
- 2 have been certified as Master Trainers and 2 are ready to be certified
- Very little support for the trainers has been required in the last 7 trainings
- Work has started on SALT II which will be a more advanced training
- These trainers are also developing an Emergency Preparedness training for self-advocates and first responders



LESSONS FOR PARTNERS

- It took a lot of time, patience and editing.
- Learned to trust self-advocates.
- Honored self-advocates’ wishes to “Teach Us to Do It Ourselves”.
- Took a willingness on the part of partners and funders to let self-advocates build their own training based on their experiences and knowledge.
- Learned to respect self-advocates’ ability to become peer trainers.
- Learned how to support and not try to control the process.
- All of us listen better to our peers.
- Going to the training site the night before, allowed the trainers time to review the material as a team, set up the room and prepare all the activities.

LESSONS FOR SELF-ADVOCATES

- As trainers, it makes us feel confident.
- If given the right training and tools, we can “do it ourselves.”
- We have pride in the training and feel we gained the respect of our partners.
- We can be important and successful partners.
- We can make better decisions that affect our lives.
- We can become leaders.
- With the SALT training, we feel more prepared to serve on boards, advisory committees and councils;