

# People Leading Lives they Prefer through Supported Decision Making “Listening to those rarely heard”

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**scope**  
FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

We live in a time  
and place  
where  
“freedom and  
autonomy are  
valued above  
all else”

Schwartz 2000



# The trend is reflected in our laws

Disability policies and legislation in Australia and overseas are focused on individualism, autonomy, control and self-determination.



# In spite of all the 'words', many people are not living lives of their preference

## Scope focus groups 2005

“a lack of choice about everyday routines such as going to bed, showering, mealtimes, going to the toilet, using the phone, not getting to watch the last quarter of the footy because it finishes too late and staff need to go home or finish a shift”

“nagged constantly about lifestyle issues such as smoking, diet, weight management, usually by smoking, overweight staff”

“ Sex well what can I say, just to have relationship is a major issue, little less sex. I can't get agreement about gaining support from staff in this area of my life, one person will support one person won't and no-one wants to talk about it! I am usually told it is an “OH & S or Duty of Care issue, I think staff hide behind this, so they don't have to help”

# If this is the case for those who use words, what about those who don't?

People with  
Profound  
Intellectual  
Disabilities, do  
not enjoy the  
same  
opportunities to  
live lives we think  
they prefer as  
others.



Scope (Watson & Joseph) 2010

# Why?

We know that people with Profound Intellectual Disabilities are highly dependent on those who know and love them to make and act on their decisions.



Perhaps our society's obsession with independence undermines the important role of people like you in decision making for people with Profound Intellectual Disabilities?

We get by with a little help from our friends



Most of us use support networks in making decisions that are difficult for us

Some people simply needs more support than others to live the life they prefer.



Scope (Watson & Joseph) 2010

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# Supported Decision Making

Recognising the value of people  
working together



# Supported Decision Making

‘The starting point is not a test of capacity, but the presumption that every human being is communicating all the time and that this communication will include preferences. Preferences can be built up into expressions of choice and these into formal decisions. From this perspective, where someone lands on a continuum of capacity is not half as important as the amount and type of support they get to build preferences into choices’

(Beamer, 2001)

Scope (Watson & Joseph) 2010

# Listening to those rarely heard: a training video



View video at:

<http://www.scopevic.org.au/index.php/site/resources/listeningtothoserarelyheard>

Scope (Watson & Joseph) 2010

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