

**July 3, 2024**

## **Self-Advocacy (speaking up for ourselves)**

Our struggle with abstract concepts → boundaries;  
Context supports us to understand and develop

Boundaries → like a contract between people; can be different between people and for different people

We focus on others and their needs; our sensitivity to feedback; our sensitivity to sensory input

Need for specific instruction, explanation

Otherwise we may go off of the response, reaction

How do we know what we need? How do we know what we can have?

“Metaconversation” can support deeper understanding of what’s actually being said and what’s meant

Especially if we’ve been told we’re too much, have been shamed repeatedly; don’t believe we’re worthy; rejection sensitivity

Advocate for self seems counterintuitive when other’s focus;

*You are able to tell people about your thoughts and feelings. You are able to ask for what you need and want. You know your rights and you speak up for your rights. You are able to make choices and decisions that affect your life and take responsibility for the choices you make.*

*(Lupus Foundation)*

### **The 3 Parts of Self-Advocacy**

- *Know Yourself. The first step in self-advocacy is learning everything you can about your needs, disability, strengths, and challenges. ...*
- *Know Your Needs. Identify your needs and wants and ask for help in meeting them. ...*
- *Know How to Get What You Need.*

*(covey.org)*

*The three key elements of self-advocacy are understanding one's needs, knowing what kind of support is available, and communicating those needs to others.*

*(study.com)*

### **The 5 Steps**

- *Step 1: Communicate needs. Communicating what you need to another person is at the heart of all self-advocacy. ...*

- *Step 2: Choose the best setting. ...*
- *Step 3: Be polite and use social skills. ...*
- *Step 4: Use disability language. ...*
- *Step 5: Offer alternatives.*

Examples of self-advocating:

Remember to check our expectations rather than operate from assumptions

Remember to be specific in our requests

Remember to share how the thing makes you feel

Remember to consider possible options and alternatives

ADHD is “invisible” and can feel guilty asking for our needs, asking for support

Second guess ourselves after we ask, after we engage

Taking care of ourselves as necessary as the work we do to make a living

Building a supportive community where we are truly cared for

Sense of release and relief that comes when feel supported, heard in expressing needs and having them met

**DOPAMINE!!**

What the brain wants and needs → playing things over and over again

Connection of sensory stimuli and memories

VAST (Variable Attention Stimuli Trait)

Link to the two attention systems

Linking biology of the body to self-advocacy

TOPICS: FRIENDSHIP; PRACTICAL THINGS; Learning about ADHD in general

Start discussion → practical things we struggle with for next week