

# What is Self-Determination?

Self-determination is the desire, ability, and practice of directing one's own life. It is often referred to as "The BIG Picture" because it has so much to do with the person you are and the person you want to be.

Being a self-determined person helps you make important choices and informed decisions in your life based on your abilities, interests, and attitudes.

Self-determined people accept themselves, respect themselves, and value themselves for who they are and what they have to offer others.

## Self-Determination is:

- Setting long-term and short-term goals
- Achieving goals
- Making informed decisions independently
- Making informed decisions with others
- Knowing when to seek help
- Understanding my strengths
- Describing my strengths to others
- Understanding my disability and limitations
- Disclosing (or not) my disability to others
- Describing my disability to others
- Knowing which accommodations are effective in school and at work

Adapted from National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2005).

The 411 on Disability Disclosure Workbook.

Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership.

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