

## Session 11

### MAKING DECISIONS – Real life stories to use DO IT!

#### ACTION PLAN GOAL 6: You will learn to make decisions using **DO IT!**



You have used the **DO IT!** process to make some decisions about what you might want to learn through your educational plan. In the next lesson you will look at using **DO IT!** to make a decision about signing your IEP or transition plan.



Today, you are going to look at some real people and their real life stories. Not real life stories of the rich and famous. Real life stories of people with disabilities and some of the problems they had to make decisions about. You will look at the problem the person had and use the **DO IT!** process to make a decision. Then you can see what the person really did. Remember?

**Define your problem**

**Outline your options**

**Identify the outcome of each option**

**Take action**


**! Get excited**




Look in your backpack ,



desk or wherever you keep your

school stuff for a piece of paper.  Get

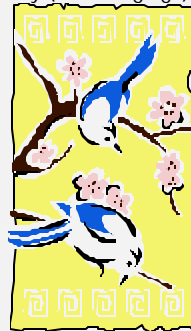
a pen or pencil, too.  I'll wait.

You may want to write your answers after each step of the **DO IT!** process after you read the story.

F. Jane Cameron

This first story is about a Canadian. Eh! A person who lives in Canada. You know, the country to the north of the United States.

This person's name is F. Jane Cameron. Now, right away you should know she's important because she uses an initial for her first name. Anyway, F. is talented. She designs tapestry (wall hangings)



F. does such a nice job with her designs that one sold for \$1,800. This is the point where F. faced a problem.

See, F. was born with Down syndrome (this isn't the problem, I'll get to that in a minute). Of course you know that a person with Down syndrome has Down syndrome for life. What happened to F. is that a lot of people thought she couldn't do much because she had Down

syndrome. So, F. went to a special school and didn't get to learn the same things as most other kids. When she graduated she went to work in a sheltered workshop because she didn't have any other choices. The sheltered workshop where F. worked taught her how to make crafts. The workshop people started taking F. Jane's crafts to places to sell them and people started to buy them. In fact, she could earn more money by selling tapestries than she had ever made.

But F. was only paid a little bit of the money when one of her tapestries was sold. It seemed unfair. Her work was selling for a lot of money and she was only getting a little bit of that money. She would like to begin working on her tapestries at her home instead of the workshop and would like to keep all the money she made from them. But, if she made too much money from her crafts, she would lose the government money she got to pay for some supports she needed every day, kind of like



MULES for adults! This is where F. had a problem. She wanted to earn money for her work. She could usually get anywhere from \$100 to \$1,000 for her tapestries. One big drawback is that a tapestry could take months to finish. At that rate she might make less than her government check during some months.

All right. There's the story.

Time to **DO IT!**

Take a look at F. Jane's story and see what you would decide to do.



As you work through these, try to do them yourself. Don't worry, nobody expects you to come up with the perfect answers. Only practice makes perfect! Then again, maybe you will come up with the perfect answer...who knows?

OK. Look back at F. Jane's story:

**Define her problem:**

**Outline her options**

**Identify the outcome of each option**

**Take action (what should she do?)**

**! Get excited!**

(Well, you don't have to since it's not your decision!)

One thing you should learn from this is that it is always easier to make someone else's decisions for them! If other people make decisions for you, you're the one who has to live with those decisions, not them. Like making decisions for you about your transition plan!

OK, back to F. Jane Cameron. Let's look at the answers to the different **DO IT!** steps.

#### Define her problem:

F. Jane could earn a lot of money making tapestries, but it would mean losing her government money. Her problem was "What should she do about getting money?"

#### Outline her options

F. Jane had two options for getting money:

1. She could keep getting her government money and a little money from her tapestries.
2. She could get all the money from her tapestries.

#### Identify the outcome of each option

1. If she chose to keep the government money she would:
  - o Keep working at the workshop.
  - o Get a regular check from the government.
  - o Not get to keep the money she could earn from her own work.
2. If she chose to keep the money from her tapestry work, she would:
  - o Make a lot more money than ever before.
  - o She would be her own boss and work at home, which she wanted to do.
  - o She would lose her government money and if she didn't earn enough money from the tapestries, she might not have enough to get by.

There are a lot of things we don't know about F. Jane's story that would help in making a decision. Like, does she live with someone who can help her get by if

she has some times when she can't sell her work? Will she really like working alone at home or will she want to have other people around? Who pays for all her supplies, the workshop or F. Jane?

It's not always possible to have all the information you need to make a decision. But, you probably came up with a decision anyway. What was your decision? Look at what you wrote under the **Take action** section. Now, read about the decision F. Jane made.

F. Jane Cameron left the workshop. A college professor discovered her, saw all the talent she

had and wrote about her in a book.

F. Jane became famous by showing her art work



around the world!

She took a risk and won!

Remember that for most of F. Jane's life, people thought she would never do much. (Just because she had Down syndrome.) Boy, did she prove them wrong! It just goes to show you that you can't believe everybody. You shouldn't believe people who don't believe in you. A **Can Do** attitude with a **DO IT!** formula may lead to the good life!

Sorry. I get carried away. I get excited!  
Isn't that a step in **DO IT!** ?

Enough already.

Let's look at another story. I just love to hear stories about people who are successful!

#### Herman

Herman McMurry has dyslexia. Some people think that having dyslexia means that a person writes backwards. For Herman, having dyslexia meant that he had trouble with numbers, reading, writing and even with colors.



He would sometimes look at one color and call it another.



Not great for traffic lights, eh?

Herman always did well in school. Since he was living at home with his parents, he was able to keep his learning disability a secret and get support from his family to accommodate for his disability. He was afraid that he would be teased if people knew he had a learning disability.

Then Herman graduated. When he got to college he still had his learning disability and his family wasn't there to provide support. He knew that without some support, he probably wasn't going to do real well. Herman really wanted to do well in college, just like when he was in high school, but he wasn't sure he wanted to tell anyone he had a learning disability. The college had a program to help students who needed support with their lessons. He also knew the types of supports he would need to learn since he had trouble reading and writing and couldn't type. Plus, Herman was pretty good at making friends and he thought that some of them might be able to help.

OK. See what decision you think Herman ought to make.

**Define his problem:**

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**Outline his options**

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**Identify the outcome of each option**

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**Take action (what should he do?)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**! Get excited**

(Well, you don't have to since it's not your decision!)

Got it? Good.

Now, look at the answers to the different **DO IT!** Steps.

### Define his problem:

Herman needed support to succeed in college, but the support he used in high school, his family, wasn't nearby. Also, he would have to tell someone he had dyslexia. His problem was "Should he find some support?"

### Outline his options

Herman had several options:

1. He could just keep his disability a secret and not get any support.
2. He could go to the college office that provides support and get the help he needed.
3. He could tell his friends and they could help him.

### Identify the outcome of each option

1. If Herman chose not to tell anyone and not get any support, he would:
  - o not have to be embarrassed about telling about his disability.
  - o probably not do very well in college.
2. If he chose to go to the college office for support, he would:
  - o Have to tell a stranger about his disability.
  - o Get the support he needed.
  - o Do well in college.
3. If Herman turned to his friend for support, he would:
  - o Have to tell his friend about his disability.
  - o Get the support he needed.
  - o Do well in college.

What was your decision? Look at what you wrote under the **Take action** section. Now, read about the decision Herman made.

Herman describes himself as being stubborn, so he chose to set up his own support system instead of using the campus program. He

turned to his friends for help accommodating for his disability. It was hard to admit to them that he needed some support, but once he did it, he knew it was the right thing for him to do. His friends didn't make fun of him, and his support came from people he liked to be around.

Herman is now a very successful teacher.



He did so well in college that a teacher wrote about him in a book .



You might have decided that Herman

should go to the college office.



That was a good decision, too. In this case, Herman just felt more comfortable talking with his friends



than with people he didn't know.

OK. Last story and then you're done with **DO IT!** Well, at least for a while!

### Judy

Judy Heumann (sounds like "human") grew up and went to school in New York City. She decided she wanted to be a teacher and went to college to get her education degree. She did well in college and took all the courses she needed to get her education degree. But, to be a teacher in the state of New York in 1970 you had to pass three exams or tests: a written exam, an oral exam (one you say out loud) and a medical test. Judy passed the written and oral exams. She could not pass the medical exam because she had a disability.

Judy had polio when she was three years old. She



uses a wheelchair to get around. Judy wanted to teach but there were no teachers who used wheelchairs at the time. Because she was not able to pass the medical test, the state of New York would not give Judy her teacher certificate and she could not teach.

OK. See what decision you think Judy should make.

**Define her problem:**

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**Outline her options**

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**Identify the outcome of each option**

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**Take action (what should she do?)**

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**! Get excited**

(Well, you don't have to since it's not your decision!)

Got it? Good.

Now, look at the answers to the different **DO IT!** steps.

**Define her problem:**

Judy had her education degree and wanted to teach in the state of New York. The state had said she couldn't because she had not passed a medical examination. She couldn't pass their exam because she had polio and used a wheelchair. Her problem was "What should she do about teaching?"

**Outline her options**

Judy had several options:



1. She could stay in New York and work at a job other than teaching.
2. She could move to a different state that didn't require a medical examination and teach there.
3. She could fight the system and try to get her teaching certificate and teach in New York.

**Identify the outcome of each option**

1. If Judy chose to work in another job:
  - o She would be able to earn money to live on her own.
  - o She would not have to get in a big fight with the state.
  - o She would not be able to teach.


2. If Judy moved to another state to teach:
  - o She would be able to teach like she wanted.
  - o She would earn money she needed to be independent.
  - o She would have to move away from her friends and family.
3. If Judy chose to fight the state system:
  - o She might get to stay where she wanted, work as a teacher and make enough money to be independent.
  - o She might have to spend a lot of money to fight the system and there was no guarantee that she would win.

What was your decision? Look at what you wrote under the **Take action** section. Now, read about the decision Judy made. Judy decided to fight the system. She talked to a reporter at the New York Times who put her

story in the paper . She was invited to be on The Today Show  to talk about the discrimination she was facing. She decided to hire some lawyers and sued the school board. Judy won and became the first teacher in the state of New York with a physical

disability. 

But her story doesn't really end there. Judy's decision taught her that it paid to stand up and fight for her rights. She moved to California and started the first Independent Living Center. She led protests against the city for discriminating

against people with disabilities .

Judy worked for the United States government.



She became the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Service, United States Department of Education during the Clinton presidency. She was responsible for all special education programs in the country during the 1990's. Every day, she made decisions that affected students with disabilities.

I don't know about you, but I get excited when I hear about successful people. I love to hear about people doing things that others said they couldn't do.



If you have any time left, talk with someone else about decisions they have made that were important in their lives. When you get home, you could talk with your folks (I know, gross, but try it anyway) about decisions that were important in their lives.



Okay. Let's look at what you've covered this session.

- ☒ You used the **DO IT!** process to see how other people with disabilities made d\_\_\_\_\_.
- ☒ You learned that it is easier to make decisions for o\_\_\_\_\_ people because you don't have to do what is decided!

- ☑ You saw that there were times when you didn't have all the i\_\_\_\_\_ you wanted to make a decision, but you could make a better decision with what information you had than with none at all.
- ☑ You learned not to believe anyone who doesn't b\_\_\_\_\_ in you and your abilities!
- ☑ You saw that good decision-making can lead to g\_\_\_\_\_ things as an adult.



Before the next session,  
you should have:

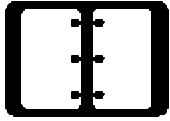
- ✎ Talked with some adults, maybe your parents, about the types of decisions that they have had to make.
- ✎ Thought about some of the non-school decisions you have had to make.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.





## Session 11 Summary Sheet - Real life stories to use **Do It!**

### **WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 6:** You will learn to make decisions using **DO IT!**

- ☒ You used the **DO IT!** process to see how other people with disabilities made decisions.
- ☒ You learned that it is easier to make decisions for other people because you don't have to do what is decided!
- ☒ You saw that there were times when you didn't have all the information you wanted to make a decision, but you could make a better decision with what information you had than with none at all.
- ☒ You learned not to believe in anyone who doesn't believe in you and your abilities!
- ☒ You saw that good decision-making can lead to good things as adults.

