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"Predictors & indicators that influence the success of Circles of Support". Thoughts and comments from participants at the NRCCOSAM Forum, 1 December 2017, Inclusion Melbourne.

◊ The person is central to their Circle, Network or, Microboard - **centrality of the person is paramount**

◊ **Effort is intentional**, it's focussed, purpose driven and based on the goals, dreams and needs of the person at its centre

◊ **Pre-circle development:** relationship mapping (who does the person know now, previously and in what capacity - **preparation ensures commitment**)

◊ **Pre-planning** with the core person/people/ family regarding the purpose of Circle is essential.

◊ Each circle has its **defined intentions/visions** – Its purpose, should be clarified (this is useful when considering who to ask on to the Circle)

◊ Conflicts are identified

◊ Meeting should be held **regularly** (every 4 -8 weeks)

◊ Structure of underpinning - **Facilitator keeps the focus/vision at every opportunity**

◊ Group holds to the **VALUES, VISION**

◊ Reflection/planning and the **celebration of wins**

◊ The Purpose of Circle is **not to replace Paid Support**

◊ Build capacity in individuals, families, communities, agencies - **Circles don't replace family**

◊ **Increased contribution and involvement** in decision making by members (growth and progress)

◊ Average size 5- 8 (guideline) = **allow for individual variation**. Might start with two people and grow. Culturally may be larger

◊ **Autonomy and governance** sits with person and family

◊ Member have a **shared value base** (people belong in community, community should be inclusive. Relationships and connectedness are essential and citizenship is everyone's right)

◊ **Facilitator role is defined/clear** - the "art" of facilitation - safeguarding, maintaining vision, keeping the person at the centre of all discussion, planning and decision making.

◊ **Recognise the potential for collaboration in making things happen, involve all members to make things happen**

◊ **A key Goal** is to enable and support genuine and real community inclusion and participation

Contribution by Deb Rouget (Belonging Matters) post conference:

◊   **The person and family want** to have a circle of support

◊   Circles **take time** to develop

◊   **Succession planning of members** or at least vigilance to replace members rather than give up on the circle when people fall away

◊   **Capacity building** in regard to asking

◊   **Right relationship** is built with and between members (time is spent doing this)

◊   **Progress** is made – goals, actions are made

◊   **The willingness to identify/recognise** shortcomings, solve problems, reset goals – it's not just about celebrating the good things

◊   **Skilled, values based** facilitation