The Self Advocate Artistic Movement

Power of Poetry Workshop

Presented By SARTAC Fellow: Ocean C. Poet
How to turn microphone on/off

In the left corner of the black toolbar at the bottom of your Zoom screen is a picture of a microphone.

• Click the microphone button when you would like to talk.

• People will be able to hear you when there is no line across the microphone.

• When there is a red line across the microphone, other participants will not be able to hear you.
How to raise your hand

Towards the middle of the black toolbar, is the “Reactions” button. It looks like a smily face

• When you click on the “Reactions” button, a box opens on your Zoom screen.

• In the box are buttons you can use to send messages to the leader of the meeting and all participants without speaking.
Zoom Features

How to turn captions on

In the middle of the black toolbar at the bottom of your Zoom screen, is the “Show Captions” button.

- To turn on captioning, click the "Show Captions" button.
How to use the chat

In the middle of the black toolbar at the bottom of your Zoom screen is a "Chat" button.
- When you click on the “Chat” button, a chat box will appear.
- In the Chat box, you can type messages to the whole group. Or you can send a private message to one participant.
  - To send it privately to one participant, click the grey box that says “Everyone”.
  - A drop box will appear with a list of participant names. Select the participant you want to send the message to.
- You type your message in the space below where it says “Type message here...”
As part of our workshop, we have a release form that we would appreciate if you could sign.

• By signing this form, you give The Arc Minnesota permission to use and share your photographs, stories, poetry, and recordings for their public outreach and mission-related purposes.

• This includes publications, social media, videos, and other promotional materials.

• Please take a moment to read the form, ask any questions you may have, and sign if you feel comfortable.
Ground Rules

1. Please keep your microphone off while the host is speaking.

2. Be respectful of others.

3. Let the group know if you would like to talk about something that might be a difficult topic for others. This is called a trigger warning.

4. Raise your hand if you have something to say. Please do not interrupt others.

5. Say your piece then let others have a turn to share.

6. Please let the presenter lead the conversation. Put questions and comments in the chat, or wait until it is time to ask questions.

7. Please turn off your screen if you have a phone call or are having other conversations.
My name is Ocean C. Poet. I am a 58-year-old, multi-raced, transgender male, artist, writer, poet, musician, and animator, living in St. Paul Minnesota. I have been a self-advocate for 6 years.

I have published seven books including a graphic novel, self-help, and poetry. Visit my website to learn more.

I believe art is helpful in self-advocacy because it allows people to express what’s inside of them.

"Your art is your words. Your words are your art. Your art is your protest."
Workshop Agenda

1: Poetry Lesson
2: Self-Advocacy
3: Break
4: Writing Poetry exercise
5: Reflection and Share Out
6: Close Out
What is Protest Poetry?
What is Protest Poetry?

• A poem that is written to make a stand against injustices that are occurring at the time.

• Protest Poems can be very effective in creating interest, understanding, and empathy.

• Sometimes protest poetry is written like a song or a poem. But you don't have to follow strict rules. Just write from your heart!
How is Poetry A Form of Protest?

• Reading and writing poetry is inherently activist.

• Poetry gives voice to many who have been silenced by society.

• When our voices are published, they serve as a protest.
Combining Self-Advocacy with Poetry is Powerful!

Protest Poetry has the power to fuel social change and impact our Human Rights!
What Does it Mean to Be a Self-Advocate?
Self-Advocacy is learning how to speak for yourself and make your own decisions about your life.

Self-advocacy also includes:
- Learning about yourself
- Knowing your rights
- Practicing self-advocacy skills
- Problem solving
- Making decisions
- Asking for help
Poetry Tips with Lateef Mcleod

• Poetry can be used to articulate the power of your story.
• Start writing on a subject you’re most passionate about.
• Read as many other genres of poetry as you can to find your style of writing.
• Make time to edit and revise your poetry.
• Be vulnerable and share your truth with the world.
• Be confident in your story!
“I’m Too Pretty For Some Ugly Laws”
By Lateef Mcleod

I am not suppose to be here
in this body,
here
speaking to you.
My mere presence
of erratic moving limbs
and drooling smile
used to be scrubbed
off the public pavement.
Ugly laws used to be
on many U.S. cities’ law books,
beginning in Chicago in 1867,
stating that “any person who is
diseased, maimed, mutilated,
or in any way deformed
so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object,
or an improper person to be allowed
in or on the streets, highways, thoroughfares,
or public places in this city,
shall not therein or thereon
expose himself to public view,
under the penalty of $1 for each offense.”

Any person who looked like me
was deemed disgusting
and was locked away
from the eyes of the upstanding citizens.
I am too pretty for some Ugly Laws,
Too smooth to be shut in.
Too smart and eclectic
for any box you put me in.
My swagger is too bold
to be swept up in these public streets.
You can stare at me all you want.
No cop will buss in my head
and carry me away to an institution.
No doctor will diagnose me
a helpless invalid with an incurable disease.
No angry mob with clubs and torches
will try to run me out of town.
Whatever you do,
my roots are rigid
like a hundred-year-old tree.
I will stay right here
to glare at your ugly face too.
While self advocacy is important for everyone. Self advocacy is especially important for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

When people do not advocate for themselves, they may be pushed to do things that don’t feel right to them.

Learning to advocate for yourself may seem frightening or hard.

You don’t have to do it alone.

We are all learning and growing together.
I will continue to protest poetically. For we were all born free.
Disability rights are human rights. I will stand up and fight.

For we deserve safe and healthy places to live.
Jobs that pays wages so we can survive in this life.

Transportation that takes us to our destination on time.
We need people who will hear us, listen to us.
When a crime is committed against us.

This is why self advocacy empowers us.
Especially people of color with disabilities.

Learning about our rights enables us.
To stand strong, speak up if we are treated wrong.
Demand social security not take our funds.
When being awarded is our own.

Disability rights are needed.
If ever in jail and in healthcare.

Acquiring Self advocacy inspires the ability
To communicate and negotiate. Interests, desires and needs.

It Helps making safer and better decisions. For you and me.
I encourage you to educate and advocate. Gain self advocacy skills.

Join a program or a group.
Don't be afraid just be you.

Self Advocacy is.
Knowing yourself
Knowing your needs.
Knowing how to get what you need.
Let's Take A 3 Minute Stretch Break
Welcome Back!
Tips for Writing Poetry

• The easiest way to start writing a poem is to begin with a topic
• Think about what you want and need. Because your disability rights are human and civil rights
  • An example I came up with is equal pay for workers with disabilities.
• Next you want to write the first line
• Continue to write as many lines as you want describing why the topic you picked is important for you
• After you write, read your poem again. Decide if there is anything you want to change.
• Ask a friend or family member to read it and share their thoughts.
Writing Activity
Activity Directions

• Please grab the writing materials you need to write.
• You will practice writing your protest poem for 30 minutes.
• If don't want to write, we have volunteers here who can help write down the words you say. Please raise your hand if you'd like help.
• Please turn off your mic and video during the writing activity.
• If you have any questions feels free to ask.
Welcome Back!
Share Out

Raise your hand if you want to share your poem.

Please introduce yourself with:
• Your Name
• Your Pronouns
Thank you for joining us!
“This publication is supported in part by a cooperative agreement from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities policy.”

“The Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) seeks to strengthen the self-advocacy movement by supporting self advocacy organizations to grow in diversity and leadership. The resource center is a project of Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), the oldest national self-advocacy organization in the country. SARTAC is a Developmental Disabilities Project of National Significance, funded by the Administration For Community Living – Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). The information in this manual was written to provide guidance for self Advocates and their allies to assist in understanding policy issues affecting their lives. It is not to be used to determine a person's legal rights or an organization's legal responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, as amended or any other federal, state or local laws written to protect the rights of people with disabilities.”