Supported Decision-Making (SDM)
Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities

1. What is SDM?
A process in which people who need assistance with decision-making receive the help they need and want to make life decisions for themselves.
A way to preserve rights and build on existing capacity with real life experience and learning.
An essential element for achieving self-determination and meaningful inclusion in community.
An empowering, skill building and transformative approach to assisting people.

2. What happens now?
Little to no emphasis on "teaching" decision-making skills.
Low expectations for children or adults with disabilities to be involved in decision-making in meaningful ways.
Superficial use of "preferences" in structured programming.
Bias toward use of substituted decision making methods (e.g., guardianship) as a primary support.

3. Rethinking Support
How do all people become good decision-makers?
What role and responsibility do professional "helpers" have to support individual decision-making?
What about the role of families?
What could support look like? (one size will not work for all).

4. Providing Support
Take direction from the person and his or her will and preferences.
Customize actions to and with the person.
Find new tools for your toolbox:
Communication
Peer Support
Practical Experiences
Life Coaching
Be flexible and try multiple ways.

Reference

www.dqqualitytrust.org
www.supporteddecisionmaking.org