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.dqualitytrust.org
www.supporteddecisionmaking.org