

TOOLKIT · VERSION 1

Self-Advocacy Workbook

Know what you need. Ask for it. Document the answer.

How to use this toolkit

Skim once, then choose one practice to try this week. Toolkits are living documents — mark them up, share them with your team, and revisit as your needs evolve.

Overview

Self-advocacy is a skill, not a personality trait. It can be learned, scripted, and practiced. This workbook walks you through the parts.

Why it matters

People who can name what they need and ask for it have better outcomes across healthcare, education, work, and relationships. The skill scales — it changes how the world treats you.

Research summary

Self-determination theory links autonomy, competence, and relatedness to wellbeing across populations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Self-advocacy training improves outcomes in education and employment.

Practical strategies

Know yourself

- What helps you do your best work?
- What recovery do you need after high-load events?
- What is non-negotiable for your safety or dignity?

Ask clearly

- Lead with the function, not the diagnosis.
- Bring a specific request, not a complaint.
- Offer one or two viable options.

Document

- Confirm verbal agreements in writing.
- Keep a copy of every accommodation conversation.

- Re-ask when context changes.

Ready-to-use scripts & worksheets

Request template

“When [situation], I work best with [accommodation]. Could we try [specific change] for the next [time period] and check back?”

Recommended lessons & next steps

- Toolkit: Self-Advocacy, Workplace Strategies — /toolbox
- Workplace Toolkit — /workplace

Selected references & further reading

- Ryan RM, Deci EL. *Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation. Am Psychol.* 2000.
- Test DW, et al. *A conceptual framework of self-advocacy. Remedial Spec Educ.* 2005.

Ask the AI Companion

Visit understandingneurodiversity.org/companion to ask follow-up questions about **Self-Advocacy Workbook**. The Companion will recommend lessons, conditions, and research tailored to your role.