

# DREAM, DESIGN, DO

**Turning talents into  
opportunities**

September 2, 2025



1

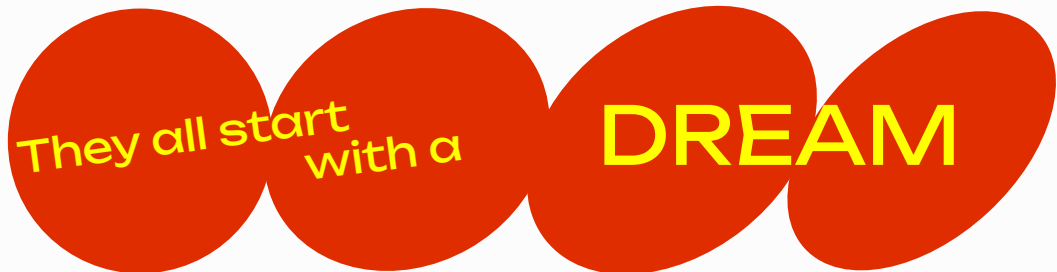
SHARON:

Welcome to Dream, Design, Do where Ashley, Rachel, and Ruthie will share IDEAS on how you can turn your talents into opportunities.

Be ready to write down your ideas on the handouts under the boxes DREAM, DESIGN DO and MY FIRST STEPS.

Next, Ashley will start by helping you learn how to think about what you might be good at. And why Dreaming is so important!

# Introduction



What do all of these have in common??

SELF-EMPLOYMENT...ENTREPRENEUR... SMALL BUSINESS...

MICROBUSINESS... SOCIAL ENTERPRISE



2

ASHLEY:

Some of you might see these words :

SELF-EMPLOYMENT...  
ENTREPRENEUR...  
SMALL BUSINESS...  
MICROBUSINESS...  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

And be a little confused.  
But the most important thing to know about all of these words is ...  
They all started with a DREAM!

## DREAMING IS ....about

*Just a Dollop of EVERYTHING*

It starts with thinking about  
Fun Ideas

What are you GOOD AT?  
Do you love to Organize  
things? Sort things?  
Help people? Fix things?

WHAT makes you happy? Like  
Playing with puppies or doing  
crafts. playing with kids?



3

ASHLEY:

Dreaming is about  
**JUST A DOLLOP of  
EVERYTHING**

It starts with thinking about fun  
ideas

What are you good at?

Do you love to organize things or  
Sort things?

Or fix and clean things?

Or maybe you like to Help people?

**IT IS ALSO about what makes you  
happy?**

**Like playing with puppies? Or  
making crafts? Or doing**

**Puzzles?**

**Even things like playing with kids  
or reading to them?**

**OUR DREAM is ....**

*Just a Dollop of COOKING*



Something I used to love to do with  
my mom was cooking

**NOW**

Take a minute to write down  
**YOUR** talents  
in the DREAM Box on your handout

while you watch a short video on the  
fun we have cooking together.



5

ASHLEY:

Something I used to love to do with  
my mom was cooking.  
So one of our dreams at 209 is  
Just a dollop of COOKING  
together.

**NOW.**

Take a minute to **THINK** about  
what **YOUR** talents are  
**OR** something you love to do.

**Write your ideas in the DREAM Box**

on your handout,  
while you watch a short video on  
the fun we have cooking  
together at our house.



5 min

ASHLEY;

**AFTER video**

Here is my roommate Rachel to  
talk about her favorite  
thing,  
Making Plans!

## DESIGNing is .....about

## Making plans



I love to make plans for our Just a Dollop business.

I search for new recipes to try out.

I look for pictures of foods that look like fun to make.

I love finding new desserts to share with family and friends.

I really like to plan business trips together.



RACHEL:

**I LOVE to make plans for our Just a Dollop business .**

**I search for new recipes to try out.**

**I look for pictures of food that looks fun to make.**

**I love finding new desserts to make for MY family and friends.**

**I really like to plan business trips together.**



Sometimes we all go together in  
our Camper!

NEXT

Here is my roommate Ruthie to talk  
about her favorite part of our Just  
a Dollop business.

Trying things out!

## DOing IS ....about

## Trying things out

I like to test out new recipes with friends.

We take our cookbooks to places to sell them.

My mom helps us with payments for our cookbooks and other things we sell.

I like to travel to talk about the work we do

I love to take business Trips with my

Just a Dollop Team!



7

RUTH:

I like to test out new recipes with friends.

I help take our cookbooks to different places to sell them.

My mom helps us when people pay for cookbooks and other things we sell.

I like to travel to talk about the work we do.

Mostly, I love to take business Trips with my Just a Dollop Team. Especially in the camper!

## OUR DREAM Team .... of

Helps us with Just a Dollop



[www.justadollop.org](http://www.justadollop.org)

Everything  
Everyone needs a team.  
Write down who YOUR team is  
under MY FIRST STEPS

OUR DREAM TEAM includes  
Our staff in our 209 Home  
Our family  
Our friends

Two of our friends, Erika and  
Bridget have helped us  
In our Just a Dollop business in  
many ways.

*We use the money we make from our  
cookbooks to advocate for people with  
disabilities in Illinois.*

12

RUTH:

Everyone needs a team to help  
THEM in life.

Think about who YOUR Dream  
team is to help you try out your  
new ideas.

Write down their names under  
MY FIRST STEPS in your notes.

OUR DREAM TEAM includes  
The staff in our 209 Home

## Our families and Our friends

Two of our friends, Erika and Bridget have helped us  
In our Just a Dollop business in many ways.

We use the money we make from our cookbooks to advocate for people with disabilities in Illinois.

We are all part of Engage IL, a coalition we started together in 2023 to speak up for each other for equal opportunities to live and work in the communities we choose.

Next,  
we have one of our friends Erika, to tell you about her work experiences.

## ERIKA'S WORKLIFE



9

ERIKA;

Erika's presentation

At the end:

Sharon:

Next,  
I would like to Introduce Emily  
Raming, the Executive Director of  
TotalLink to Community.

Total Link to Community providers  
Customized Employment services  
for people with disabilities.

Emily is going to help everyone  
understand what CE is and how it  
is different from Supported  
Employment.

# Customized Employment

What is Customized Employment?

How is this different from Supported Employment?

How can I learn more?



**Emily Raming**

Emily Raming is the Executive Director of TotalLink to Community. She has helped to grow the employment, program and will share some of the important things to know about how Customized Employment can help use your talents and skills to find jobs.

10

EMILY'S PRESENTATION



# Next Steps

## 01 Brainstorming

Gather your family and a few friends (develop your Dream Team). Talk about the things you are good at and the things that bring you joy. DREAM together!!

## 02 Design

Start thinking about what you can DO with your talents. What are your goals? To earn money, have a business with a social purpose? Network?

## 03 Do

Try out some of your ideas, see what you like and get feedback from others.

## 04 Resources

Research some of the resources in your packet. Call **36 Squared Business Incubator**. Make an appointment with some of your Dream Team to talk about choices. Read the **Self-Employment and You** guide by Amanda Hedberg and the **NDSS Entrepreneurship Guide** for more ideas.



17

ASHLEY;

## Here are some things you can do next:

## 01 Brainstorming

Gather your family and a few friends (develop your Dream Team). Talk about the things you are good at and the things that bring you joy. DREAM together!!

## 02 Design

Start thinking about what you can DO with your talents. What are your goals? To earn money, have a business with a social purpose? Network?

## 03 Do

Try out some of your ideas, see what you like and get feedback from others.

## 04 Resources

Research some of the resources in your packet. Call

**36 Squared Business Incubator.** Make an appointment with some of your Dream Team to talk about choices. Read the ***Self- Employment and You*** guide by Amanda Hedberg and the ***NDSS Entrepreneurship Guide*** for more ideas.

# ENGAGE IL IS ADVOCATING....



SO folks with disabilities  
can Live their Life  
with Choices!



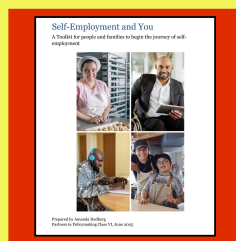
12

ERIKA:

Please join us to advocate so that  
we can all  
**LIVE AND WORK** where we  
**CHOOSE** in ILLINOIS.

We will be starting **NEW SELF  
ADVOCATE TRAINING CLASSES**  
this fall.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
**EMAIL: [Ashley@engageil.org](mailto:Ashley@engageil.org)**



Look at the [JustAdollop.org](http://JustAdollop.org) website for more ideas!



....makes everything sweeter

Look up the Employment First Information on the IDHS website.



# Resources & Questions?

Look up more about Customized Employment at [TotalLink.org](http://TotalLink.org).



**36 Sq Business Incubator  
Supports Entrepreneurs of ALL  
ABILITIES  
Grants for Boost Awards Annually**

**Call for an appointment to  
discuss your ideas!**



SHARON:

Thank you for joining us. Check out all the resources in your Handouts. Open for any questions.