

Acquaintanceship and Friendship

by Wolf Wolfensberger

In Citizen Advocacy, one should probably speak initially of the Citizen Advocacy office facilitating, or arranging, or making, an acquaintanceship rather than a friendship between two people (potential advocate and potential protégé), since no one can know at the start whether the advocacy relationship will "take," grow into a friendship or other close relationship, whether an advocate and protégé will "hit it off," etc. As we keep pointing out, the term "friendship" cannot be applied universally to all Citizen Advocacy relationships, not even where the protégé may be capable of reciprocating a friendship extended by an advocate.

The term friendship is particularly inappropriate when it is applied to the very first stages of a match. Also, one has to be clear that when the potential protégé is not capable of reciprocating (as when the person is an infant, comatose, profoundly retarded, or very senile), the acquaintanceship is one-sided, not reciprocal, and not a "partnership" as the new politically correct lingo in some Citizen Advocacy circles now puts it.
