Creating Blue Space is a beautifully written, ground breaking book. It offers profound thinking about how service agencies, systems, and professionally organized efforts can authentically value and build the gifts and capacities of people on the margin. It makes the connection between the importance of an authentic internal culture and the good form we wish bring into our communities in our wish to reduce human suffering. It is one example of how systems can possibly deliver authentic care. While focused on the developmentally disabled world, the wisdom on leadership, conversation, practices and learning applies to all efforts to restore humanity to organizational life. The book is the calm, clear eye at the center of the storm of modernism.

–Peter Block, Author of The Abundant Community

From the book…

Over the past thirty years, my perception of people with developmental disabilities has deeply shifted. I am currently an executive of an agency grappling with how to assist people who have been historically excluded from our communities to experience ordinary, if not extraordinary, lives.…

This book explores three core themes: 1) The breakdown of the delegated approach to serving people with developmental disabilities and the search for good support forms through innovation in an evolving developmental disabilities field; 2) Moving from client-hood and consumerism to citizenship by undertaking a quest for communities of diversity and mutuality; 3) The design and delivery of individualized supports through the development of blue spaces that encourage generative action in self, relationships and organizations. It presents what we have learned from changing the way our organization solves these nine problems.

- How the culture of an agency creates core beliefs that guide support practices
- How underlying design principles serve as the foundation for service delivery
- How outcomes are defined
- How increased complexity and competing commitments are understood and managed
- How leadership develops
- How the roles and relationships between those who provide assistance and those who receive it change
- How assistance is delivered and experienced
- How organizational conditions facilitate the emergence and sustainability of individualized arrangements
- How innovation is generated

Hanns Meissner serves as CEO of The Arc of Rensselaer County, NY where he has worked in a variety of roles since 1979.

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Organizations and agencies looking to transform their existing services to more innovative, individualized supports will find a fantastically helpful guide in Creating Blue Space. The powerful exercises and reflections will change the ways people help individuals with developmental disabilities to have exceptional lives in the community.

–Ann Hardiman, Executive Director
New York State Association of Residential and Community Agencies