

**Together We Connect! Supporting Meaningful Communication for Minimally Speaking  
Individuals  
Marci Laurel, MA, CCC-SLP**

**Session Description:**

This presentation focuses on supporting meaningful communication for minimally speaking autistic individuals. The presenter will discuss key concepts to consider when thinking about interventions that promote an individual's ability to express their needs, thoughts and intentions with a focus on quality of life, membership and a personal sense of agency. Specific skills to teach are suggested with examples of implementation.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. State at least three ways that an individual can communicate.
2. Name at least three reasons why people communicate.
3. Highlight two skills to target to support meaningful communication.

**Marci Laurel** is a Speech-Language Pathologist with the University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities Program. Marci has practiced in Albuquerque for over 40 years, providing direct service, consultation, training and student supervision in public school, private practice and university settings. She has lectured nationally and internationally on topics related to communication, sensory processing and autism spectrum disorder. Marci is co-author of several related publications, including *Our Hearts' Desire: For Families Navigating the Journey of Sensory Processing Challenges* and *Social Engagement & the Steps to Being Social*.