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**WASHINGTON, D.C. — May 6, 2007** — Erica Nash, President and CEO of Help-Your-Self, Inc.<sup>®</sup>, introduces *PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT MANUAL: ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE THROUGH PERSONAL ASSISTANCE*.<sup>©</sup>

This Manual is designed to help people with disabilities learn to live independently and teach Personal Assistants (PA) how to assist them so they can achieve that independence. Although the Manual highlights specific needs of people with disabilities and caregivers, it contains advice to help improve anyone's interpersonal private as well as professional relationships. The publication teaches when, why and how to manage PAs as well as self-direct one's own care, it is a practical tool for individuals with disabilities, family members, caregivers, hospitals, nursing homes, Independent Living Centers (ILCs), teaching institutions, government agencies, and community centers.

"Independent living does not mean you have to do everything by yourself: whereas you may choose to think that having to use a PA robs you of your independence, in reality having a PA may be your means of living your life the way you want," says Nash. "Generally, most of us have had little or no experience as an employer or supervisor. When you hire an attendant, you become a boss, and you enter the complex world of business management." This manual supplies business management concepts as they apply to the PA-employer relationship and teaches people how to incorporate these concepts into their daily lives.

The manual includes practical examples, charts, worksheets and takes a comprehensive approach to managing life and personnel outside of a medical model of care. Starting with the assessment of one's own needs, the reader is easily guided through the steps of recruiting, interviewing, hiring, training, supervising, and living with a PA.

Nash says, "I want to teach people life management skills, best communication techniques, how to improve personal interaction, and empower people with disabilities to live with confidence."

Dr. Gerben DeJong, PhD, Director of Research, National Rehabilitation Hospital, Washington, DC says: "Nash's Personnel Management Manual is an excellent piece of work, comprehensive, down-to-earth, practical, and sensitive to the needs of both consumers and PAs. I believe it is a breakthrough and will have a long shelf life; something this good has been needed for a long time. It is practical, user friendly, and easy to navigate. This work will become a classic reference."

Erica Nash holds a Master's degree in Non-profit Management and has worked many years developing policy and programs for healthcare delivery. She suffered a (C4) complete spinal cord injury in a vehicle collision in 1982 when she was 23 years old. She has lived on her own ever since. The information in this manual comes from her over 20 years experience of managing personnel bringing to the forefront knowledge gained from her trials and errors, struggles and accomplishments, and includes the perspective of other consumers, PAs and prominent independent living advocates.

Erica Nash is the founder of Help-Your-Self, Inc.<sup>®</sup> a non-profit corporation dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities and resides in Washington, DC, where she continues her efforts to promote independent living, community integration, and prevention of injuries. Proceeds from the sales of this manual go to providing services for people with disabilities.

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