

Disability Awareness



Definition of Disability

- Has a physical/mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.
- Has a record of such impairment.
- Is regarded as having such an impairment.



Disability is a Diversity Issue

- Disabilities are a normal part of a life.
- Disability is like other characteristics: race, ethnicity, religion, gender.
- Cultural judgment of disability has decided it's a bad thing and it's not.



What is considered a disability is generally much broader than the typical media images we see.



80% of disabilities are hidden or “non-visible” disabilities

BiPolar Disorder

Fibromyalgia Diabetes

Brain Injury

Schizophrenia

Learning Disability Hearing Loss

Blindness/Low Vision

Cerebral Palsy

Multiple Sclerosis

Parkinson's Disease

Muscular Dystrophy Attention Deficit Disorder

Deafness

Depression

Autism

That means disabilities might look like this



Disability Etiquette

- Presume Competence.
- Talk to the person.
- Ask the person to repeat something.
- It's okay to use phrases that everyone uses.
- Get to know someone as a whole person.
- Don't assume.
- Ask the person if they need assistance. If they say no. Then that means NO.

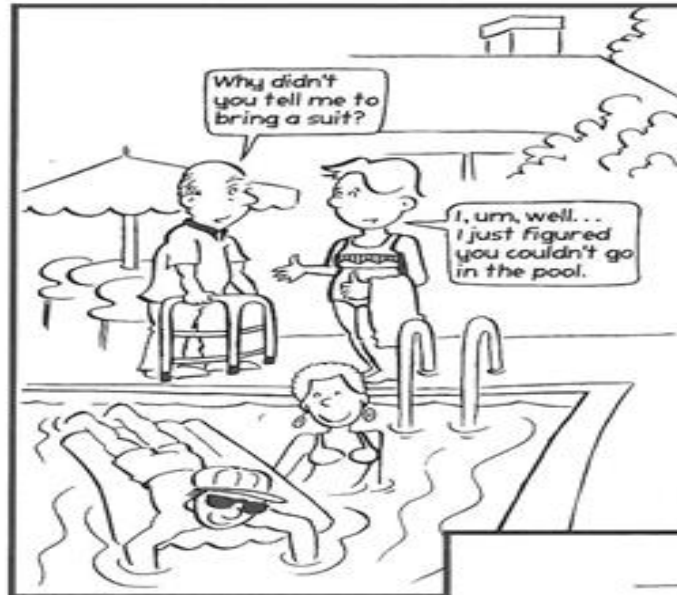
End the Awkward

Talking about disability can be awkward but this video will give you some tips to help it become natural.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv1aDEF1Xq8&list=UUrd8W0u23ND2XxxjqHq5-aA>

People with Disabilities are their own best expert



**Don't make
decisions for
people with
disabilities....**

**.... about what
they can or
can't do.**



Tips for Quality Customer Service

- Make eye contact.
- Speak naturally and directly to the person.
- Ask questions and wait for response.
- Explain any written material in everyday words.
- Respect the person as an adult.
- Approach the person from the front.
- Respect the person: assistive technology and personal space.

Words Matter

Words can inform our mind, caress and comfort our feelings, excite and thrill our spirit, or warm and kindle the flame of our hearts.

They can also slap our face, punch us in the stomach, rattle our nerves, kill our desire, or destroy our self-confidence.

Of course this is metaphorical, but these metaphors capture in words our physical reactions to what is said, and that is the power of language.

The Power of Language
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Person First Language

- Puts the person first.
- Thought to eliminate assumptions by focusing on the person rather than the disability.
- It indicates a disability as a secondary aspect of a person.
- Person with a disability or a person with a learning disability.

Disability is Neutral and our Language needs to be

Words or phrases that show a negative view of people with disabilities	What we say to model language that is neutral and non-judgmental
Handicapped person, differently abled person	Person with a disability
Handicapped parking, handicapped bathrooms	Accessible parking, accessible bathrooms
Abled-bodied, normal	Person with out a disability
That's crazy, that's insane	That's wild
disABILITY	Disability
Special accommodations	Accommodations

People with Disabilities are People



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THE MOST APPROPRIATE LABEL IS
USUALLY THE ONE PEOPLE'S PARENTS
HAVE GIVEN THEM.

Are People with Disabilities Extraordinary, Inspiring, Exceptional?



https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much?language=en

More Information

- www.dnswm.org Disability Network Southwest Michigan is a portal for getting involved in disability issues with information on accessibility, housing, transportation, employment, and voting.
- www.michigan.gov/mrs Michigan Rehabilitation Services is a statewide network of vocational rehabilitation (VR) professionals developing creative, customized solutions that meet the needs of individual and businesses.
- www.rootedinrights.org Rooted in Rights tells authentic, accessible stories to challenge stigma and redefine narratives around disability.
- www.autisticadvocacy.org Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) is a nonprofit organization run by and for autistic people. ASAN was created to serve as a national grassroots disability rights organization for the autistic community, advocating for systems change and ensuring that the voices of autistic people are heard in policy debates and the halls of power
- www.disabilityisnatural.com Disability is Natural is a sources for new ways of thinking, life-changing strategies, and moving beyond the status quo.

Disability Awareness

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