Communicating with People with Disabilities

Presented by:
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WHO I AM.

Why I’m here.

I might look familiar . . .

My first job was as a model.
Ground Rules

1. Vegas training (safe room)
2. I’m funny
3. Your input is wanted and needed*

* Your questions/comments will enrich this training. Please speak even if it feels awkward
SESSION GOALS

• After today
  — Will know how to create a welcoming place for people with disabilities

  — Know better language related to disability

  — Know how to start a conversation

• Know when to tell someone with a disability they are an inspiration.*

*NEVER
ADA Defines Disability

1. Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, \textit{or}

2. Record of such impairment, \textit{or}

3. Regarded as having such impairment.\textasteriskcentered
Major Life Activity

The ADA identifies two categories of major life activity – general and bodily functions. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Functions</th>
<th>Bodily Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring for oneself</td>
<td>Functions of the immune system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing manual tasks</td>
<td>Normal cell growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeing</td>
<td>The following bodily functions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>- Digestive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
<td>- Bowel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td>- Bladder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>- Neurological</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
<td>- Brain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifting</td>
<td>- Respiratory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bending</td>
<td>- Circulatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>- Endocrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing</td>
<td>- Reproductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concentrating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your First Encounter With A Person with A Disability
Close Your Eyes...
Brief Timeline of Disability History

Discard → Patronize → Recognize as People

ADA: promise vs. delivery
WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE U.S. POPULATION HAS A DISABILITY?

3%  13%  19%  7%
WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE U.S. POPULATION HAS A DISABILITY?

19% = 1 in 5 or about 57 million people in the U.S.

At OHSU 3 in 100
Disabilities – *roughly one in five people*

The problem with this logo.
Disabilities – *roughly one in five people*

*not every disability is visible*
Language and Culture

Discard → Patronize → Recognize as People

Invalid
Simple
Cripple
Gimp
Spaz

Delayed
Handicapped
Handicapable
Differently-abled
Retarded

Person with a disability
People with disabilities
TERMINOLOGY: DO ALL OF THESE TERMS HAVE THE SAME MEANING?

- Person with a disability
- Physically challenged
- Differently-abled
- Handicapped
- Handicapable!
- The disabled
- Crippled
How do you start a conversation?

Start with the obvious?

Relate via family member/friend?

Try to be cutesy?

Talk louder? Stoop to talk to?
How do you start a conversation?

Just say

Hey, hello, how are you, what up or even just hi.
The inspiration fallacy and other things not to say.

You are an inspiration.
I couldn’t do what you do
Your arms/legs/hands must be really strong.
You should wear gloves, etc.
Another way to think about disability

Disabilities have added to every life:
1. Curb Cuts
2. Automatic Doors
3. Wider bathroom stalls

You Are Welcome.
RECAP

• After today
  — We will see the person, not the disability
  — Speak to a person with a disability as a person
  — Say hi, hello, good day, etc.

• Know when to tell someone with a disability they are an inspiration.

• Tell kids it's okay to look and it is okay to ask.
Thank You

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