

Disability Awareness Training

Enhancing Knowledge about People
with Disabilities

Presentation to AUMA
February 7, 2014

Mission Statement

The Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities actively promotes full participation in society and provides a voice for Albertans with disabilities.

WHO WE ARE

- Founded in 1973
- The voice of people with disabilities in Alberta
- Cross-disability (physical, mental, sensory, developmental, progressive)
- Many positive legislative and policy change
 - Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped
 - Home Adaptation Program
 - Alberta Aids to Daily Living

WHAT WE DO

- Education and Awareness
- Projects and Research
- Consumer Support and Referral
- Collaborations
- Bursaries and Awards
- Fundraising - Telemarketing, Door-to-Door, Special Events, Other
- Contract Services - Community Consultation, Research, Writing, Facilitation

What is a Disability – What's in a label?

An Example: A spinal cord damaged in an injury (IMPAIRMENT) results in the loss of movement to the lower limbs (DISABILITY), producing the inability to walk up a set of stairs (HANDICAP)

Disability “as umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions”

Handicap is “an environment or social barrier that limits an individual from fully participating in everyday activities”

Impairment is a problem in body function or structure as a result of an injury, disease or other disorder producing a reduction in physical or mental ability and activity”

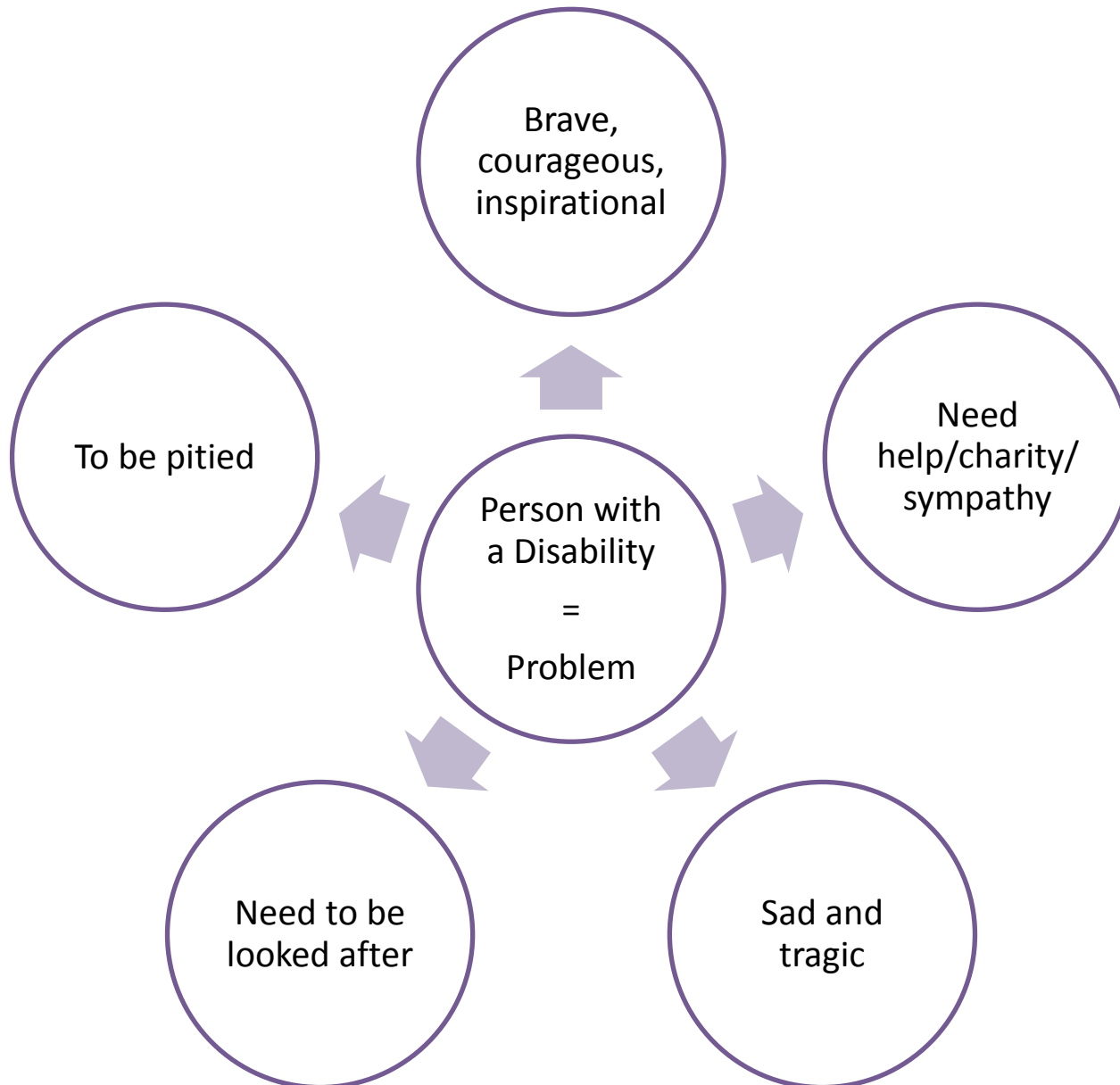
Models of Disability

Personal
Tragedy/
Charity
Model

Social Model
of Disability

Medical
Model

Personal Tragedy/ Charity Model of Disability



Medical Model of Disability

The Medical Model of Disability

The two main groups to think about are:
Impairment – your problem!



Disability – your problem!



Social Model of Disability

The Social Model of Disability

There are two main groups to think about in this model too.

Impairment – is part of me.



Disability – is society's problem.



Using the Social Model all disabled people have a right to be a part of society.



Society needs to change, not disabled people.



Myths and Assumptions

What is a myth?

A Myth is a popular belief or story that has become associated with a person, institution or occurrence. Something that we think is true.

What is an assumption?

The act of taking for granted: assumption of a false theory.
Something taken for granted or accepted as true without proof.

Recognize the difference between the following

- a **FACT** about the disability
- a **GENERALIZATION** based on personal experience with someone who has a disability (Taking something specific and applying it more broadly)
- a **STEREOTYPE** held to be true about the disability (a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing)



Reacting to Disability

Important points to remember which may help in our attempt to **not react** to disabilities but to **respond** to the people who have disabilities. We often make decisions or come to conclusions based on what we don't know or what we think we know about disabilities. There are problems with this:

- Any two people with the same disability will have **differences** in how the disability has affected their lives
- Much of what we think we know about a disability is **out-dated or incorrect**.
- With no information, we tend to imagine a **worst-case scenario** or assume that the person has the highest level of the disabling condition.
- There is a tremendous **range** within each category of disability in terms of the nature, the extent and the effect of the disability on the person.

Top 5 Things to Consider

Ask before you help: People want to be independent and treated with respect

Be Sensitive about Physical Contact: People depend on their arms for balance, consider equipment part of their personal space

Think before you speak: Speak directly to the person

Don't make assumptions: People are the best judge of what they can and cannot do

Respond graciously to requests: An accommodation is not a complaint

Language

Communicating with People with Disabilities

Don't Say

- Handicapped, Disabled, Invalid
- Crippled, lame
- The blind
- Suffers from hearing loss
- Mute
- Nuts, Crazy
- Retarded, Mentally Retarded
- Confined to a wheelchair
- Normal

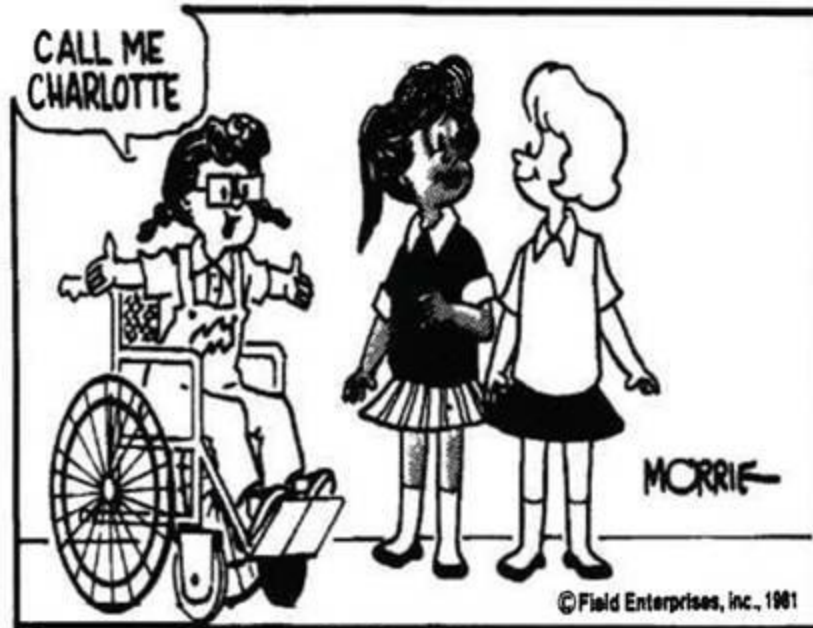
Say (Use Person first)

Person with a disability
Person who has ___ or person with ___
Person who is blind
Person who is hard of hearing
Person who communicates differently
Person with a mental disability
Person with a developmental disability
Wheelchair user
Non-disabled

WEE PALS



by MORRIE TURNER



Duty of Accommodate

- **Physical environment:** (ramps, ample space to turn a wheelchair, accessible washrooms, high or low desks)
- **Communication:** (large print, Braille, hearing aids, technology, interpreters)
- **Visual:** (materials presented before class so the student can read them before coming to class)
- **Learning:** (tape recorders, classroom assistance, extra time to write exams)

People with Disabilities: Experiencing Barriers

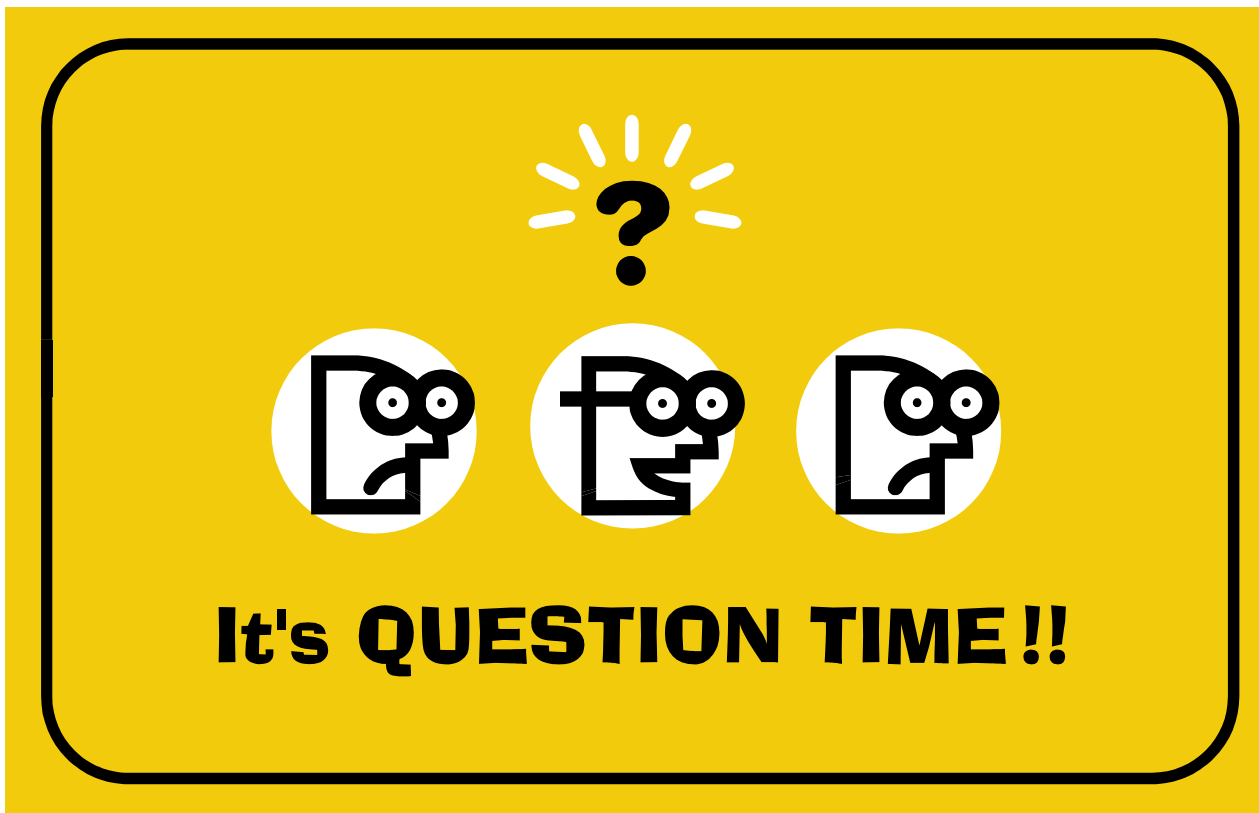
- **Attitudinal Barriers**
- **Environmental Barriers**
- **Communication Barriers**
- **Transportation Barriers**
- **Barriers to Access Health and Medical Services**

ACCD Accessibility Audits

- **Audit Tool based on the Alberta Building Code, Barrier Free Section**
- **Go with the City of Edmonton safety codes officers**
- **5 audits per month**
- **ACCD reviews architectural drawings upon request**
- **Performing audits for over 20 years**

Barrier-free Health and Medical Services for People with Disabilities Project

- Phone call in the office re having annual physical in a van
- 3-year research project
- People with disabilities cannot access health care services
- E.g. physician examining room, diagnostic clinic, medical equipment





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