

Disability Etiquette

Puts the humanity of the person
first
...and their limitations second



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Remember: a person with a
disability is a **person with
feelings**. Treat him or her as
you would want to be
treated.



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What inner resources might you
most need when interacting with
people with disabilities?



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Do what you do with

- Understanding
- Humanity
- Sensitivity
- Appreciation
- Respect for
 - Autonomy
 - Dignity

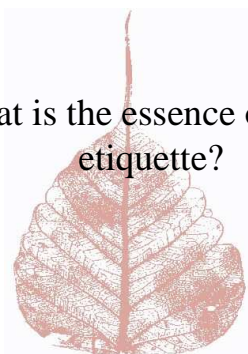


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What is the essence of good
etiquette?



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Good etiquette respects the right

- For personal freedom
- Avoids judgement



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What does “Disability” mean?



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Medical model

A persons disability is caused by the impairment, illness, disease or condition which they may have and as such they are unable to interact or function on the same level as the rest of society because of their disability.

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Social model

Disability is the loss or **limitation of opportunities** to take part in the mainstream of society due to physical and/or social barriers.

It is not a person's impairment or condition which disables them but it is **society's reaction** to it that limits their lives and opportunities.

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ASS-U-ME

Assumptions make an ASS out of U an ME

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True communication

Is enabled by

- An open heart-mind
- Compassion
- Time / patience

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Be Yourself

- If you are not sure what is appropriate...

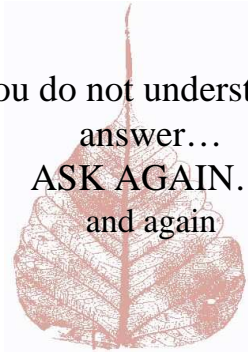
ASK

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If you do not understand the
answer...
ASK AGAIN...
and again



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- Give whole, unhurried attention when you're talking to a person who has difficulty speaking.
- Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting, and be patient rather than speak for the person.
- When necessary, ask questions that require short answers or a nod or shake of the head.
- Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Repeat what you understand.
- The person's reaction will guide you to understanding.

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Better another question than

- Putting someone at risk
- Causing embarrassment / offence
- ... making a fool of yourself



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Keep on questioning your

- Conditioning
- Assumptions
- Expectations

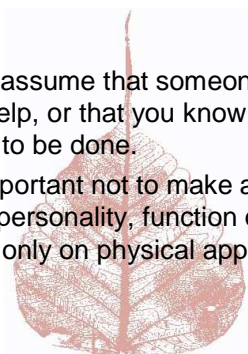


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- Never assume that someone needs your help, or that you know best what needs to be done.
- It is important not to make assumptions about personality, function or character based only on physical appearance



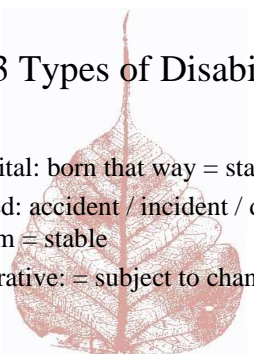
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3 Types of Disability

- Congenital: born that way = stable
- Acquired: accident / incident / deliberate self harm = stable
- Degenerative: = subject to change



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Invisible disabilities include

- Deafness
- Partial sight
- Cognitive impairment
- Dietary difficulties



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**The disability minority is one that any of us can join at any time.
Membership becomes more likely with age.**



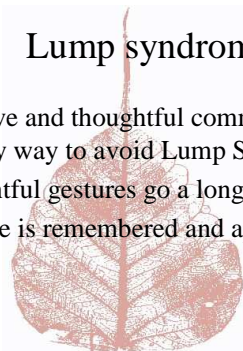
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Lump syndrome

- Effective and thoughtful communication is the only way to avoid Lump Syndrome
- Thoughtful gestures go a long way
- Patience is remembered and appreciated



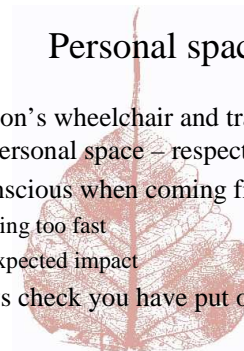
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Personal space

- A person's wheelchair and tray is part of their personal space – respect it
- Be conscious when coming from behind of
 - Moving too fast
 - Unexpected impact
- Always check you have put on the breaks



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Consult

- Before moving an aid – if possible leave it within reach or at least in sight
- Before moving their chair



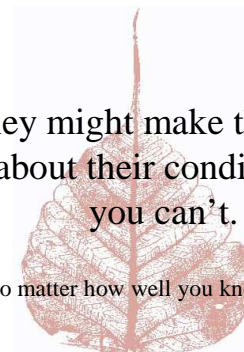
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They might make the jokes about their condition – you can't.

No matter how well you know them



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Be part of the solution

- Look for accessible toilets, venues, parking
- Come into eye level & eye contact
- Use empowering language

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Be ready to take time

- Wait to be told what is needed
- Wait for a sentence to be completed
- It is Ok to ask for repetition until you understand – 20 questions
- Repeat back what you think you understand

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Client centred dignity...

Privacy – wait for them to disclose information, if they feel comfortable with you about their

- Wellness / illness experience
- Life goals
- Family

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...be ready to listen

As a yoga teacher you have a unique set of ears and may be confided in.

The ability to listen with an open heart is perhaps our greatest gift...

...to listen to the silence...

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Hearing impaired

Most older people have hearing loss

- Eliminate background noise – no music
- Ensure they know you are speaking to them
- Face them squarely
- Sit in full light
- Rephrase sentences

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Vision Impaired

- When you offer to assist someone with a vision impairment, allow the person to take your arm. This will help you to guide, rather than propel or lead, the person.

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A disabled person might have tubes about their person

They are perfectly well but use

- A urinary bag (usually on the right side)
- Fed directly into the stomach – ‘Peg-fed’

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Service animals are working

- Never distract them
 - Never touch them
 - Never feed them
- Unless you have been invited to do so

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Speak their language

- “Active” or “Physically Active” = very positive response
- “Exercise” = very negative response, too hard / difficult
- “Keep Fit” = very neutral response

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Health and Safety

- Once a wheelchair user has left the ground floor, they are stranded in the event of a fire
- At least keep your fingers active
- Seek to have a staff member present when teaching
- Constantly remind them to rest if they wish

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When meeting / talking with a person who has a disability...

1. A handshake is NOT a standard greeting for everyone. When in doubt, ASK the person whether he or she would like to shake hands with you. A smile along with a spoken greeting is always appropriate.

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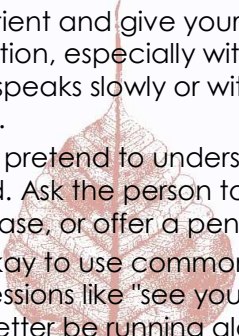
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2. Speak directly to the person with a disability, not just to the ones accompanying him or her.
3. Don't mention the person's disability, unless he or she talks about it or it is relevant to the conversation.
4. Treat adults as adults. Don't patronize or *talk down* to people with disabilities.

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5. Be patient and give your undivided attention, especially with someone who speaks slowly or with great effort.
 6. Never pretend to understand what is said. Ask the person to repeat or rephrase, or offer a pen & paper.
 7. It is okay to use common expressions like "see you soon" or "I'd better be running along."

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8. Relax. Anyone can make mistakes. Offer an apology if you forget some courtesy. Keep a sense of humor and a willingness to communicate.

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When meeting someone with a disability that affects learning, intelligence, or brain function...

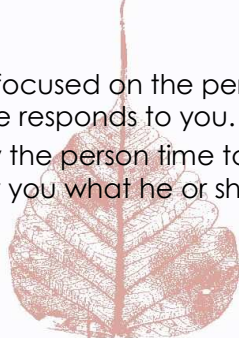


1. Keep your communication simple. Rephrase comments or questions for better clarity.

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2. Stay focused on the person as he or she responds to you.
 3. Allow the person time to tell or show you what he or she wants.

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When you are with a person who uses a wheelchair...

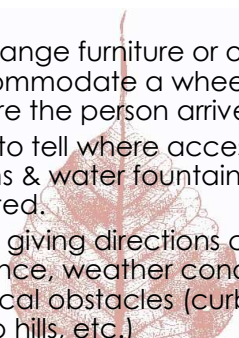


1. Do not push, lean on, or hold onto a person's wheelchair unless the person asks you to. The wheelchair is part of his or her personal space.
2. Try to put yourself at eye level when talking with someone in a wheelchair. Sit or kneel in front of the person.

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3. Rearrange furniture or objects to accommodate a wheelchair before the person arrives.
 4. Offer to tell where accessible rest rooms & water fountains are located.
 5. When giving directions consider distance, weather conditions, and physical obstacles (curbs, stairs, steep hills, etc.)

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Talking with a person who is deaf or uses a hearing aid...

1. Let the person take the lead in establishing the communication mode, such as lip-reading, sign language, or writing notes.
2. Talk directly to the person, even when a sign language interpreter is present.

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3. If the person lip-reads, face him or her directly, speak clearly and with a moderate pace.
4. With some people, it may help to simplify your sentences and use more facial expressions and body language.

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When meeting a person with a disability that affects speech...

1. Pay attention, be patient, and wait for the person to complete a word or thought. Do not finish it for the person.
2. Ask the person to repeat what is said, if you do not understand. Tell the person what you heard and see if it is close to what he or she is saying.

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4. Be prepared for various devices or techniques used to enhance or augment speech.
 - an alphabet board
 - a computer with synthesized speech.

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Interacting with a person who is blind or has a disability that affects sight or vision...

1. When greeting the person, identify yourself and introduce others who may be present.
2. Don't leave the person without excusing yourself first.

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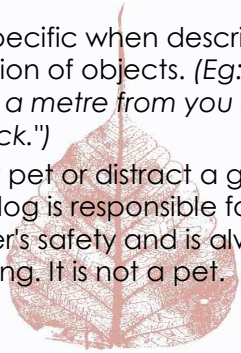
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3. When asked to guide someone with a sight disability, never push or pull the person. Allow him or her to take your arm, then walk slightly ahead. Point out doors, stairs, or curbs, as you approach them.
4. As you enter a room with the person, describe the layout and location of furniture, etc.

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5. Be specific when describing the location of objects. (Eg: "There is a chair a metre from you at eleven o'clock.")
 6. Don't pet or distract a guide dog. The dog is responsible for its owner's safety and is always working. It is not a pet.

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Myths and Facts About People with Disabilities

Myth 1: People with disabilities are brave and courageous.

Fact: Adjusting to a disability requires adapting to a lifestyle, not bravery and courage.

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Myth 2: All persons who use wheelchairs are chronically ill or sickly.

Fact: The association between wheelchair use and illness may have evolved through hospitals using wheelchairs to transport sick people. A person may use a wheelchair for a variety of reasons, none of which may have anything to do with lingering illness.

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Myth 3: Wheelchair use is confining; people who use wheelchairs are "wheelchair-bound."

Fact: A wheelchair, like a bicycle or an automobile, is a personal assistive device that enables someone to get around.

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Myth 4: All persons with hearing disabilities can read lips.

Fact: Lip-reading skills vary among people who use them and are never entirely reliable.

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Myth 5: People who are blind acquire a "sixth sense."

Fact: Although most people who are blind develop their remaining senses more fully, they do not have a "sixth sense."

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Myth 6: People with disabilities are more comfortable with "their own kind."

Fact: In the past, grouping people with disabilities in separate schools and institutions reinforced this misconception. Today, many people with disabilities take advantage of new opportunities to join mainstream society.

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Myth 7: Non-disabled people are obligated to "take care of" people with disabilities.

Fact: Anyone may offer assistance, but most people with disabilities prefer to be responsible for themselves.

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Myth 8: Curious children should never ask people about their disabilities.

Fact: Many children have a natural, uninhibited curiosity and may ask questions that some adults consider embarrassing. But scolding curious children may make them think having a disability is "wrong" or "bad." Most people with disabilities won't mind answering a child's question.

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Myth 9: The lives of people with disabilities are totally different than the lives of people without disabilities.

Fact: People with disabilities go to school, get married, work, have families, do laundry, grocery shop, laugh, cry, pay taxes, get angry, have prejudices, vote, plan and dream like everyone else.

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Myth 10: It is all right for people without disabilities to park in accessible parking spaces, if only for a few minutes.

Fact: Because accessible parking spaces are designed and situated to meet the needs of people who have disabilities, these spaces should only be used by people who need them.

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Myth 11: Most people with disabilities cannot have sexual relationships.

Fact: Anyone can have a sexual relationship by adapting the sexual activity. People with disabilities can have children naturally or through adoption. People with disabilities, like other people, are sexual beings.

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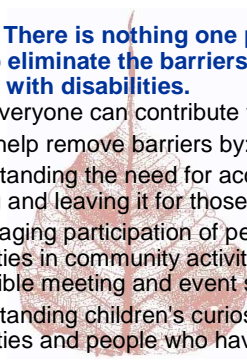
Myth 12: People with disabilities always need help.

Fact: Many people with disabilities are independent and capable of giving help. If you would like to help someone with a disability, ask if he or she needs it before you act.

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Myth 13: There is nothing one person can do to help eliminate the barriers confronting people with disabilities.

Fact: Everyone can contribute to change.

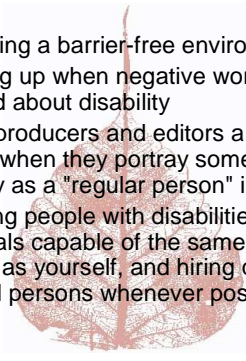
You can help remove barriers by:

- Understanding the need for accessible parking and leaving it for those who need it
- Encouraging participation of people with disabilities in community activities by using accessible meeting and event sites
- Understanding children's curiosity about disabilities and people who have them

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- Advocating a barrier-free environment
 - Speaking up when negative words or phrases are used about disability
 - Writing producers and editors a note of support when they portray someone with a disability as a "regular person" in the media
 - Accepting people with disabilities as individuals capable of the same needs and feelings as yourself, and hiring qualified disabled persons whenever possible

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