

An Introduction to Neurodiversity and Ableism

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Disclosures

As today's speaker and contributor to the ECHO Hub Team I have **NO** financial relationships with an ineligible company relevant to this presentation to disclose.

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Presentation Objectives

Following today's presentation participants will:

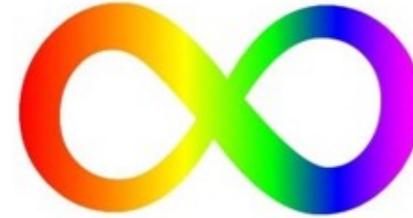
1. Define neurodiversity and ableism.
2. Understand the value of neurodiversity in the context of WISE practice.
3. Understand ableism as a barrier to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
4. Prepare to engage in future opportunities to learn from one and ALL.



Modern societies operate in ways that often disadvantage autistic people, which makes autism

A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

What do we mean by Neurodiversity?



- Origin in the Autistic Rights Movement of the 1990s and expanded by Judy Singer, Autistic Australian Sociologist
- Diversity of neurology is as natural and valuable as racial and cultural diversity.



The neurodiversity paradigm has broadened beyond autism to encompass other forms of neurodivergence (ADHD, Schizophrenia) gaining a foothold in research and practice. As an emerging paradigm, neurodiversity as a form of human diversity is subject to the same social dynamics as other forms of diversity (including dynamics of power and oppression).

“Probably one of the biggest mental hurdles for me was the concept of neurodiversity, meaning that people like my son whose brains work differently not only matter, but have value and rights like anyone else.”

Shannon Des Roches Rosa [How listening to autistic adults helped me understand and support my son (Washington Post, 10.17.19)]

I remember a time where the only approach to a diagnosis of ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia or Tourette syndrome was to fix what was perceived as “broken.”

While this belief may still be true for many. I have also witnessed the fallout from raising an autistic son to think of himself this way only and its impact on his self esteem and awareness of his own gifts and skills.



My 19-year-old son, Gabe diagnosed with autism since 2006.



WHAT MESSAGE ARE YOU SENDING?

Disability Model

Message: *You are disabled.*
Goal: *Fix the problem.*

Neurodiversity Model

Message: *You are unique.*
Goal: *Observe, Learn, Optimize*

Disability Model

Neurodiversity Model

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Ableism in our communities takes many forms. Let's see, there's:

Ableism as religious retribution, absolution or abomination.

Ableism as pity.

Ableism as disgust.

Ableism as "weakness."

Ableism as inspiration.

Ableism as "actin' up."

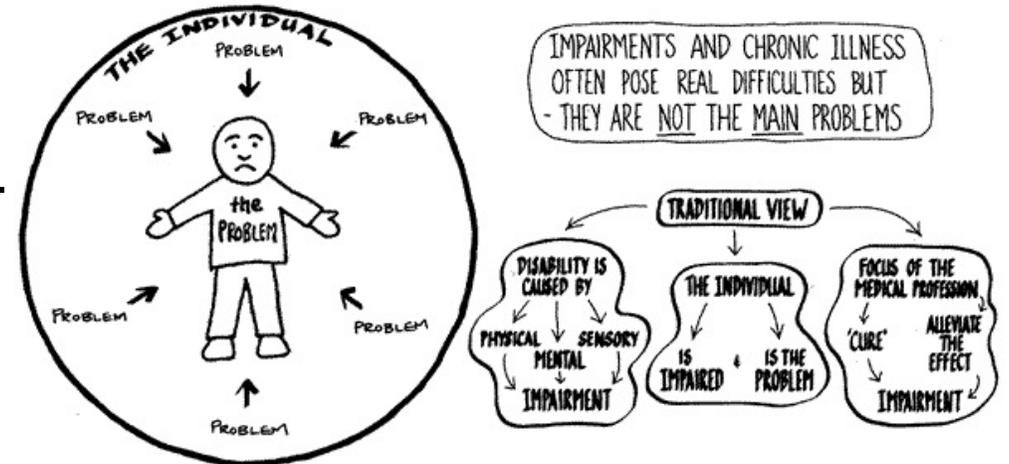
Ableism as "actin' out."

Ableism as euphemism.

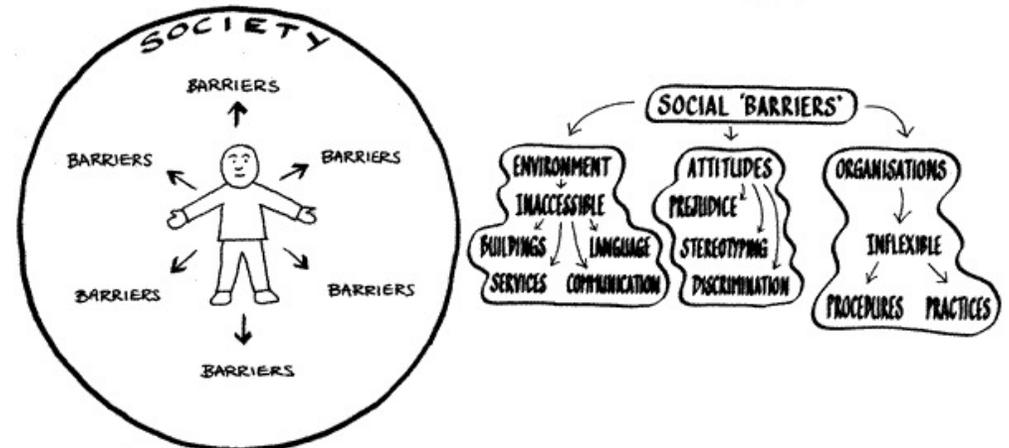
Ableism as "disrespectful."

Ableism as bars, wordplay & punchline.

THE MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

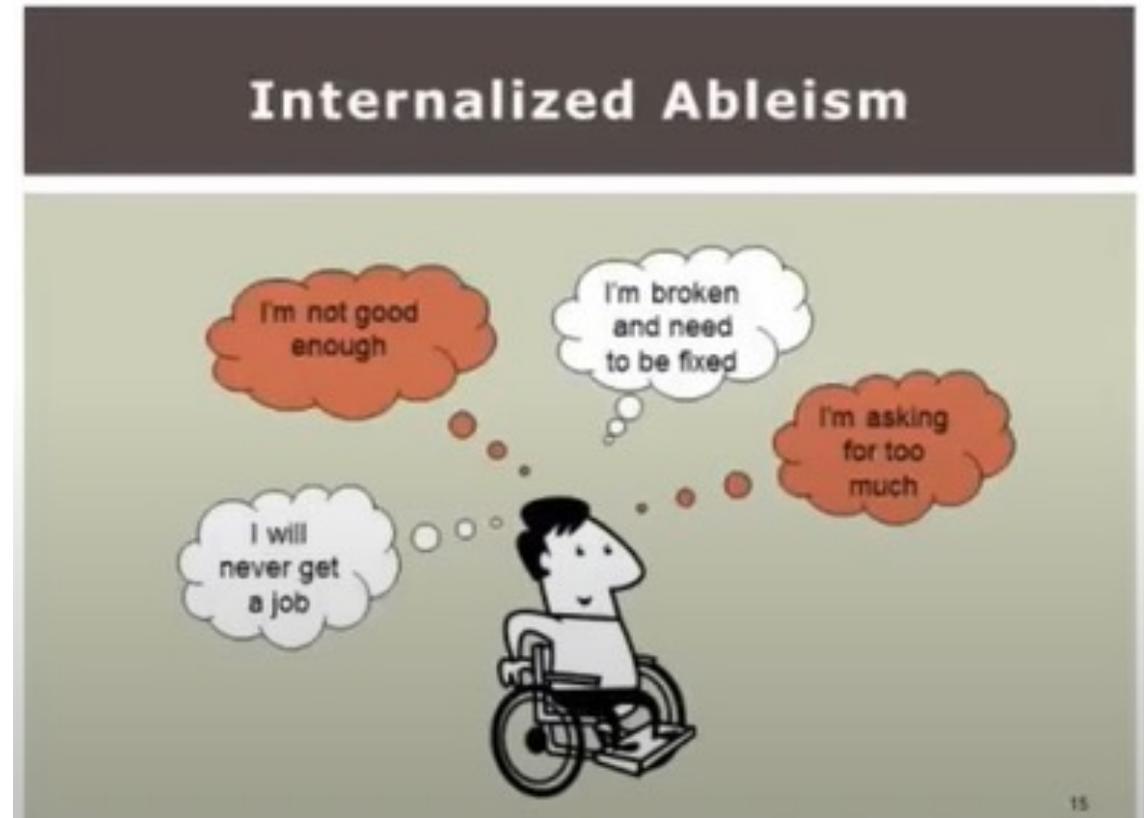


What do we mean by Ableism?

Ableism is a prejudice or stereotyping against people with disabilities. People are treated negatively because of their disabilities.

Ableism can be internal or external, conscious or not.

Examples of ableism include forgetting to provide sign translations and accommodations for people who are deaf or blind, etc.



WHAT IS ABLEISM?

Ableism is discrimination based on a person's perceived ability. At its root, ableism believes that there is only one "correct" way to have a body.



Ableism can happen in any conversation. It is folded into the language we use. By moving away from using ableist language, we show we see disabled people as equals.

CRIP
CAMP

NO TO ABLEISM: tips on fighting it

1. Educate yourself about disability issues
2. Research the varied opinions of the disability community
3. Read about common stereotypes that are imposed on people with disabilities
4. Pay attention to intersectionality issues
5. Support Disability Organizations

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ACCEPTANCE allows us to be our *Best Selves* and take care of our **PHYSICAL** and **MENTAL** health.

"Rather than using **THERAPIES** that **SQUELCH**

our **NATURAL** behavior and coping mechanisms just so those around us can feel more comfortable, realize that these therapies are **UNHEALTHY** for us"



OUR **ABILITY TO THRIVE** often relies on **ACCEPTANCE**



By accepting us **AS WE ARE** and taking our **STATED NEEDS SERIOUSLY**, we are able to practice the kind of **Self-Care** that maintains good mental and physical health.

SOCIETY often **FORCES** us to **CONFORM**

We want to be **OURSELVES** just like everyone else does.

By **-ACCEPTING AUTISM-** people are **ACCEPTING US**, just as we are.



Questions?

THANK YOU!

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