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**Training Course facilitating**

**Entrepreneurial Skills**

# Aims & Objectives



By the end of this module, participants should be able to...

- understand the nuances of physical disabilities
- recognize societal biases and discrimination
- employ strategies for inclusive communication

# Key Words



- Disability
- Inclusivity
- Discrimination
- Empathy
- Empowerment

# Table of Contents

## **UNIT 1 – Understanding Disabilities**

- 1.1. Definition and Key Facts
- 1.2. Medical vs. Social Models of Disability
- 1.3. Types and Causes of Disabilities

## **UNIT 2 – Stories and Experiences**

- 2.1. Personal Stories and Experiences
- 2.1. Impact of Disabilities

## **UNIT 3 – Discrimination and Stigmatization**

- 3.1 Definitions and Types of Discrimination
- 3.2 Impact of Stigmatization
- 3.3 Tackling Stigmatization

## **UNIT 4 – Fostering Inclusivity**

- 4.1 Raising awareness
- 4.2. Strategies for raising awareness
- 4.3. Inclusive Communication
- 4.4. Inclusive Communication – 3 Principles
- 4.5 Reflection Exercise



**UNIT 1**



**Understanding  
Disabilities**

# 1.1. Definition and Key facts

## General Definition

The term disability refers to a wide range of conditions that might affect a person's physical, sensory, cognitive, or mental capacities and cause difficulties in a number of areas of everyday life (WHO, 2021)

There are many different kinds of disabilities, including ones that impact an individual's:

- Vision
- Action
- Thinking , Recalling, Acquiring
- Interacting
- Hearing
- Mental well-being
- Social interactions

## Key facts

- Significant impairment is experienced by an estimated **1.3 billion** people. This amounts to **1 in 6** of us, or **16%** of the global population.
- Disabled people are **twice as likely** to experience the onset of illnesses like obesity, diabetes, asthma, depression, and poor dental health.
- Many health disparities affect people with impairments.
- Accessible and reasonably priced transportation is **15 times** more difficult for people with impairments than it is for people without disabilities. (WHO 2023)



**+1** billion disabled people in the world

**6%** of the world's population affected by deafness or hearing loss

**1%** of the world's population need a wheelchair



**2,6%** of the world's population has an intellectual disability



**17%** of the world's population affected by blindness or visual impairment

# 1.2 Medical vs. Social Models of Disabilities

## MEDICAL MODEL

- Views disability as an individual defect.
- Disability is considered aberrant compared to "normal" traits.
- Focuses on curing, fixing, or eliminating disabilities.
- Professionals in healthcare and social services are responsible for correction.
- May lead to internalized stigma and negative societal messages about disability.

## SOCIAL MODEL

- Defines disability as the inability to fully participate in home and community life.
- Disabilities result from the interaction of impairments and societal barriers.
- Distinguishes between disabilities (societal restrictions) and impairments (individual effects).
- Emphasizes changing society, not fixing the person.
- Focuses on enhancing daily function, not curing impairments.
- Influences architectural design, legal considerations, education, and healthcare.





# 1.2 Medical vs. Social Models of Disabilities

How do each of the models interpret circumstances in the real world? – 2 Examples

A wheelchair-using woman is looking forward to her date at a new restaurant housed in a more ancient, historic structure. But before she may enter the restaurant, there are two steps to take.

An intellectually disabled man applies for a job at a retail establishment.

## Medical Model:

The woman could not go into the restaurant because she could not walk up the steps.

## Social Model:

There was no ramp to allow her entry. Additionally, it restricted access for families with young children in strollers and delivery personnel utilizing wheeled carts, which can lessen the likelihood of accidents.

## Medical Model:

The man's application is denied since it is believed that his learning disabilities will hinder him from carrying out the responsibilities of this position.

## Social Model:

The prospective employer is aware of the man's advantages for the store, including his loyalty, dependability, and consistency. The employer also acknowledges that the man's job coach finds possibilities to boost efficiency, relieves managers and supervisors of repetitive activities, and enhances training in addition to helping the man successfully carry out crucial job obligations.

# 1.3 Types and Causes of Disabilities

## Physical Disabilities



When a physical condition limits a person's range of motion, endurance, physical capability, or even agility.

### Examples

- Paralysis
- multiple Sclerosis
- respiratory conditions

### Possible causes

- Medical Conditions
- Acquired injuries
- Degenerative Disorders

## Sensory Disabilities



These have an impact on a person's sensory perception, including hearing and sight.

### Examples

- blindness
- deafness
- speech impediments

### Possible causes

- Infections or Diseases
- Trauma / Injuries
- Congenital Factors

## Cognitive Disabilities



These include developmental or intellectual problems that affect one's ability to think and behave.

### Examples

- Down Syndrome
- Autism
- Fragile X Syndrome

### Possible causes

- Prenatal Exposure
- Brain Injuries
- Genetic Conditions

## Invisible Disabilities



These may not be obvious right away, but they can have a big impact on someone's functioning or health.

### Examples

- Mental Health Conditions
- Autoimmune disorders
- Chronical Illnesses

### Possible causes

- Genetic factors
- Environmental factors
- Psychological factors



**UNIT 2**



**Stories and  
Experiences**

# 2.1 Personal Stories and Experiences

## Exercise:

Watch one of the two linked videos and answer the 5 reflection questions provided below. Write down your answers

You can access the videos by clicking on the graphics provided next to each other.

## Questions:

1. What aspects of the video resonated with you the most? Why?
1. How did the individuals' personal stories and advice challenge or change your preconceptions about disabilities?
1. How might the experiences and advice shared by the individuals in the video influence the way you approach inclusivity and accessibility in your community or workplace?
1. What steps can you personally take to promote a more inclusive and accepting society, based on the insights gained from the video?
1. Imagine you had the opportunity to share your own advice and experiences. What message or advice would you want to convey to others based on what you've learned from the video?



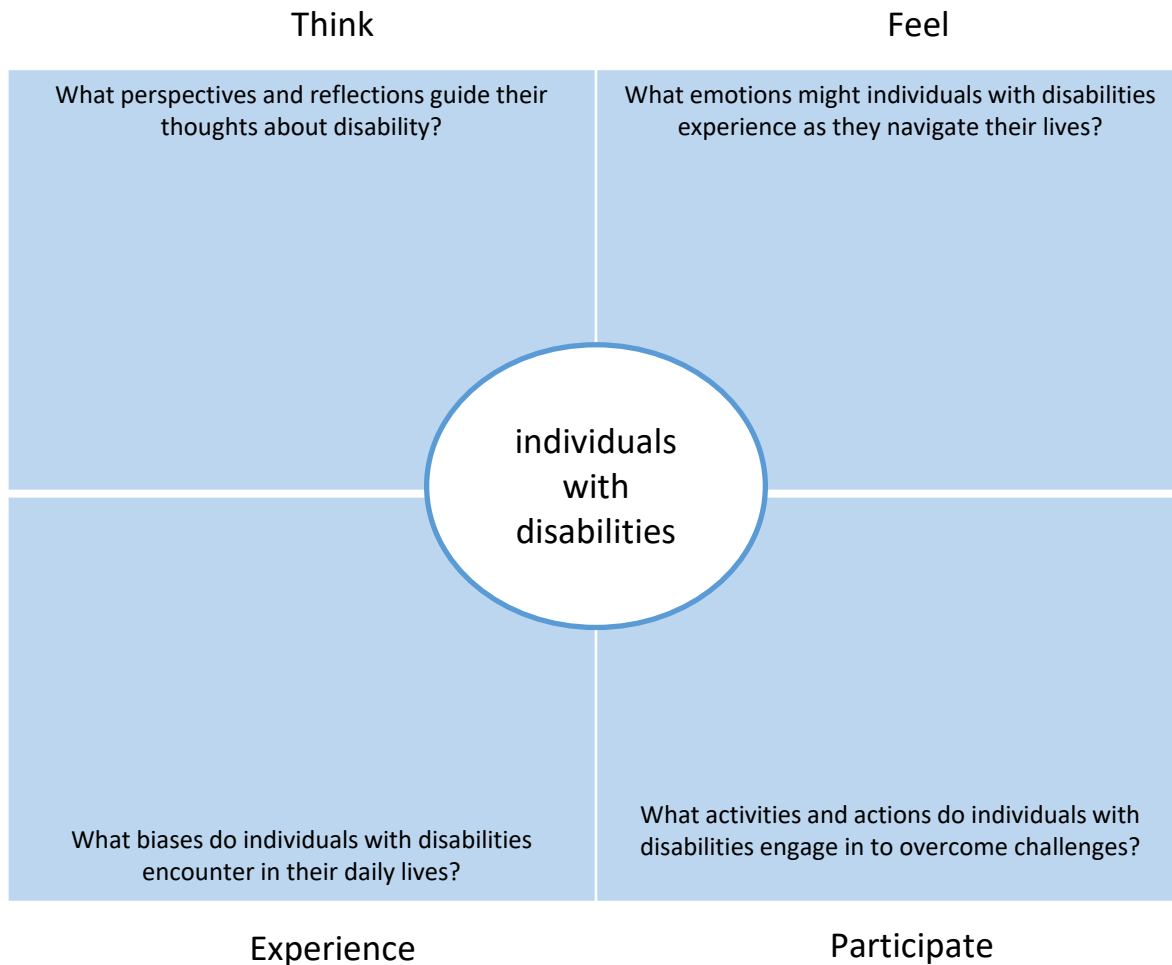
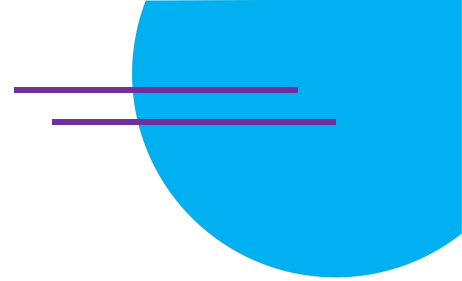
Video 1



Video 2



# 2.2 Impact of Disabilities



## Exercise: Empathy Map

Adjacent, is a so called "Empathy Map."

**Instructions:** Reflect on and answer the questions in each of the quadrants. For inspiration, you are welcome to return to one of the videos from the previous exercise.

You can answer the questions in a general manner or in relation to a specific type of disability.

Please keep in mind that there are various forms of disabilities, and some questions may not be answerable in every case.

**Goal:** The aim of this exercise is to promote empathy and enhance your understanding of the impacts of disabilities.



**UNIT 3**



**Discrimination and  
Stigmatization**

# 3.1. Definitions and Types and Discrimination

## Definition

According to the UN Convention on the rights of people with Disabilities, people with disabilities are defined as ***„those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”***.

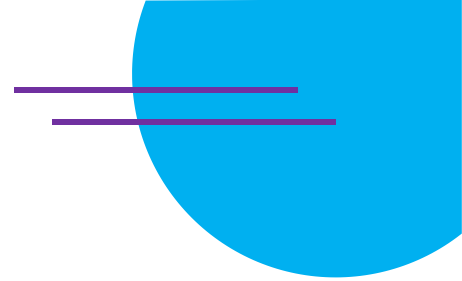
## Key Facts

- Compared to three out of four people without disabilities, only half of people with disabilities are employed.
- Compared to 17.8% of people without impairments, 28.4% of people with disabilities are at danger of poverty or social exclusion.
- Compared to 43.8% of those without impairments, just 29.4% of people with disabilities complete a tertiary degree.
- 52% of people with disabilities report experiencing discrimination.

(EU Commission, n.d.)



# 3.1. Definitions and Types and Discrimination



## Direct discrimination

- When someone is treated less favorably than someone else is, has been, or would be...
- ... in a circumstance that is similar to theirs and
- ... this treatment is on ground of their disability

## Indirect discrimination

- When a seemingly neutral rule, criterion, or practice is applied to members of a protected group (in our case: disability) and ...
- ... the rule, criterion, or practice would disadvantage that group more than other people
- ... the rule, criterion, or practice is not objectively justified

## Harassment

- Unwanted behavior that violates any of the protected categories &
- ...that has the intent or effect of fostering an environment that is intimidating, hostile, demeaning, humiliating, or offensive.

## Victimisation

When someone files a discrimination complaint, initiates legal action against another person, or assists another person in filing a complaint or initiating legal action, they are subjected to unfavorable treatment.



# 3.1. Definitions and Types and Discrimination

## Exercise

In the next slide, you will find 4 scenarios presented. Read the scenarios carefully and guess which type of discrimination applies to each scenario. You will find the answers in the following slide.



# 3.1. Definitions and Types and Discrimination

## Scenario A

A student with a hearing impairment is constantly subjected to derogatory comments and mimicking gestures from fellow students in their class. Despite the student's complaints to the school administration, the harassment continues, affecting their mental well-being and educational experience.

What type of discrimination could this be?

## Scenario B

John, a qualified candidate for a graphic design position, uses a wheelchair due to a mobility impairment. He applies for a job at a graphic design studio. During the interview, the hiring manager expresses concern that John's wheelchair may not fit through the office's narrow doorways. As a result, the hiring manager decides not to hire John, assuming that his wheelchair will be a hindrance.

What type of discrimination could this be?

## Scenario C

Scenario: A university sets a policy that all course materials must be provided in digital format only, as part of a paper-saving initiative. While this policy seems neutral, it creates barriers for a student with a visual impairment who relies on printed materials for accessible reading.

What type of discrimination could this be?

## Scenario D

An employee with a cognitive disability at a manufacturing plant is singled out by a supervisor who openly mocks the employee's condition. When the employee files a complaint with HR, they are threatened with job loss if they pursue the complaint further.

What type of discrimination could this be?



# 3.1. Definitions and Types and Discrimination

## Scenario A

A student with a hearing impairment is constantly subjected to derogatory comments and mimicking gestures from fellow students in their class. Despite the student's complaints to the school administration, the harassment continues, affecting their mental well-being and educational experience.

What type of discrimination could this be?

**ANSWER: HARASSMENT**

## Scenario B

John, a qualified candidate for a graphic design position, uses a wheelchair due to a mobility impairment. He applies for a job at a graphic design studio. During the interview, the hiring manager expresses concern that John's wheelchair may not fit through the office's narrow doorways. As a result, the hiring manager decides not to hire John, assuming that his wheelchair will be a hindrance.

What type of discrimination could this be?

**ANSWER: DIRECT DISCRIMINATION**

## Scenario C

Scenario: A university sets a policy that all course materials must be provided in digital format only, as part of a paper-saving initiative. While this policy seems neutral, it creates barriers for a student with a visual impairment who relies on printed materials for accessible reading.

What type of discrimination could this be?

**ANSWER: INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION**

## Scenario D

An employee with a cognitive disability at a manufacturing plant is singled out by a supervisor who openly mocks the employee's condition. When the employee files a complaint with HR, they are threatened with job loss if they pursue the complaint further.

What type of discrimination could this be? **ANSWER: VICTIMIZATION**



## 3.2. Impact of Stigmatization

### Definition of Stigmatization

„the act of treating someone or something unfairly by publicly disapproving of them”

(Cambridge Dictionary, 2023)

Stigma often stems from stereotypes, misconceptions, and biases, which can lead to negative attitudes, prejudice, and discriminatory behavior towards those who are stigmatized

### Implications in the Context of Disabilities

In the context of disabilities, stigmatization can take on unique characteristics and challenges. Individuals with disabilities may experience stigma due to their visible or invisible impairments, which can include physical, sensory, cognitive, or mental health conditions. The implications of stigmatization are profound and can manifest in various ways.

### Overt and Subtle Forms of Stigmatization

Stigmatization can manifest in both **overt** and **subtle** forms. **Overt stigmatization** includes explicit acts of discrimination, such as **name-calling**, **exclusion**, or **denial of opportunities** based on disability. **Subtle stigmatization**, on the other hand, often goes unnoticed but can be equally harmful. It includes **microaggressions**, **patronizing attitudes**, or the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes. Subtle stigmatization can be insidious, as it may be unintentional and subtle, yet it has a significant impact on individuals' well-being and self-esteem.

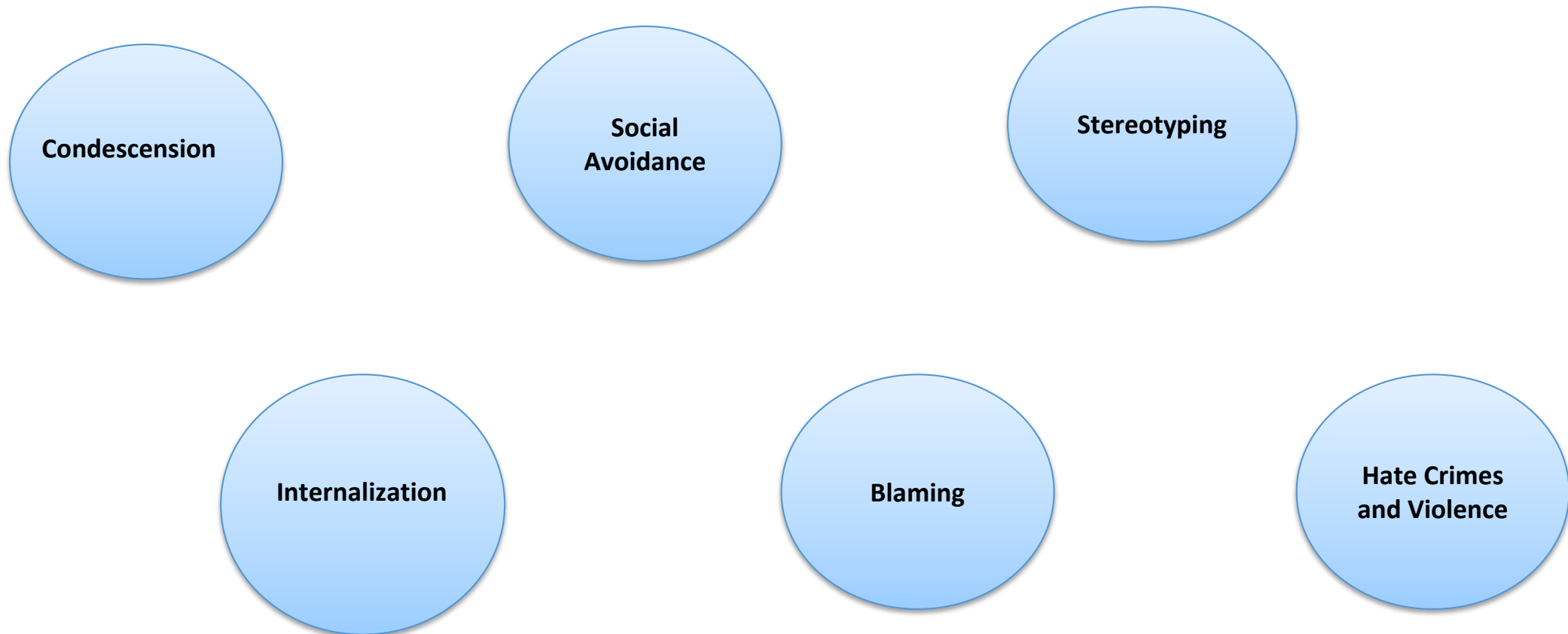


## 3.2. Impact of Stigmatization

For an explanation of the terms and more information:



How can disability stigma play out?



# 3.3 Tackling Stigmatization

Below and on the following slide , several methods are presented that are already being used by different organizations to tackle stigmatization.

## Method: Self-help

- Self-help groups
- Peer groups
- Training groups
- Parents support

### Goal/Objective:

Combating stigma by providing information and assistance to individuals with disabilities and the parents of children with disabilities.

### Impact:

Dispelling misconceptions, such as the belief that individuals with disabilities can never achieve financial independence. Instead, they instill new hope and confidence in people with disabilities and their families.

## Method: Alliances

Inclusive self care and self help projects

### Goal/Objective:

The goal of these projects combating stigma and promoting social inclusion. By bringing together individuals with different types of disabilities, as well as those considered vulnerable, the projects aim to help people overcome self-stigma and foster solidarity within the communities.

### Impact:

The impact of these initiatives includes reduced stigma, increased confidence among affected individuals, improved awareness, and positive changes in educational support for those with disabilities, ultimately leading to greater inclusion and respect within society.

## Method: Staff training

Disability training for staff within organizations

### Goal/Objective:

Promoting an understanding of the social model of disability and establishing inclusion as an accepted development practice (mainstreaming).

### Impact:

Increase in staff motivation to actively pursue disability inclusion in their work, indicating a positive impact on organizational culture and practices.

## 3.3 Tackling Stigmatization

### Method: Skills training

Training for people with disabilities

### Goal/Objective:

Combating stigma. This is achieved by providing training to young individuals with disabilities, thereby transforming the self-stigmatizing attitudes of the youth and addressing negative societal attitudes in the broader community.

### Impact:

- Reduction of stigma
- changing the attitudes of young people with disabilities
- challenging negative societal perceptions through the demonstration of the skills and capabilities of these individuals

### Method: Wider awareness raising

Disability awareness campaigns

### Goal/Objective:

The goal of disability awareness campaigns is to bring about changes in perceptions and knowledge related to disabilities.

### Impact:

As a result of such campaigns, parents who had previously concealed their child's disabilities began openly acknowledging them, and incidents of abuse and discrimination against children with disabilities decreased. This demonstrates how awareness campaigns can lead to improved acceptance and support for individuals with disabilities within their communities.

Want to learn more about stigmatization and disability?

[CLICK HERE](#) 



# Fostering Inclusivity



# 4.1. Raising Awareness

## Why raise awareness?

Disability awareness plays a significant part in establishing inclusion for people with disabilities. Oftentimes the discomfort of interacting with people with disabilities stems from **lack of knowledge , uncertainties and stereotypes** that influences people's attitudes and perceptions.

Therefore raising awareness about this important topic is crucial in **challenging stereotypes**. Awareness about disabilities can serve as a **catalyst for positive change**, as it helps address **misconceptions, biases and misinformation**.



# 4.2. Strategies for Raising Awareness

## Consider your resources



- Think about your resources and field of action: Consider and address diverse disabilities, implement accessibility measures, and identify and bridge resource gaps for inclusivity in your field of action.
- This could be: organizing events, participate in or organize educational campaigns, leverage social media

## Model appropriate behaviour



- Open your eyes to potential social exclusion in your organization, school, area
- Stand up against mistreatment and bullying if witnessed
- Educate yourself and use sensitive language, etc.

## Look for role models in your community



- Explore real-world examples of disability awareness beyond your own organization
- Collaborate with like-minded people & organizations
- work together on projects, campaigns, events, ... promoting disability awareness

## Beyond awareness



- Move beyond just being aware: actively work on becoming accepting and inclusive
- Actively encourage inclusive policies and practices in the community to foster a more inclusive society

## Turn ideas into action



- Do you have an idea for fostering inclusivity and diversity awareness?  
Take active steps to translate your vision into meaningful, real-world impact!

Want to learn more about raising awareness?

[CLICK HERE](#) 

[CLICK HERE](#)

# 4.3. Inclusive Communication

## Inclusive Communication- What does it mean?

- **Beyond Diversity:** Inclusive communication is about more than just having a diverse mix of people with and without disabilities; it's about creating an environment where everyone, regardless of their abilities, feels welcomed, respected, and valued.
- **Equal Opportunities:** It ensures that individuals with disabilities are not at a disadvantage and encourages equal opportunities for all to participate meaningfully in the workplace.
- **The Power of Words:** Inclusive communication acknowledges that the words and communication style used can significantly impact how individuals with disabilities feel included and valued.
- **Shaping Inclusivity:** Verbal and written communication play a critical role in shaping a person's sense of inclusion within the workplace, particularly for those with disabilities



Want to learn more about  
inclusive communication?

[CLICK HERE](#)

# 4.4. Inclusive communication – 3 Principles

## Empathy

- Know, that inclusion is an ongoing exercise
- Avoid treating inclusion as a checklist to complete, instead:
- Connect empathetically with your audience and understand their experiences.
- Consider how language and communication impact the way individuals absorb your message.

## Culture

- Communication is just one facet of culture.
- Work with your organization to build an inclusive culture from the bottom up.
- Empower community groups, like employee resource groups.
- Seek their experiences, listen, and integrate their stories into official communication.
- This approach lends authenticity to your communication efforts.

## Empowerment

- Help individuals build supportive networks and connect with peer support groups or advocacy organizations
- Encourage individuals to take on leadership roles and share their experiences, promoting inclusivity from positions of influence.
- Teach self-advocacy skills, empowering individuals to voice their needs and advocate for accessibility.

# 4.4. Reflection Exercise

## Exercise:

Below, you will find some reflection questions related to the content of this module. Reflect on the questions and answer them in writing in your journal.

## Questions:

- How has this module deepened your understanding of inclusivity and its importance in working with individuals with disabilities?
- What specific actions or changes in communication can you implement to promote inclusivity in your work or community?
- Have you had any personal realizations or a change in perspective as a result of this module? If so, what are they?
- What challenges do you anticipate in fostering inclusivity, and how can you address them?



# Synopsis

Now that you have completed this module, you should be able to:

- Define disability broadly, covering various types of disabilities.
- Recognize the significance of inclusive communication.
- Understand the impact of stigmatization on individuals with disabilities.
- Acknowledge the role of empowerment in promoting inclusivity & employ strategies for inclusive communication.

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