



Disability

Inclusive Care

for Community Health Workers



Session Guides

For

CG-CHWI Specialty Track March 2026

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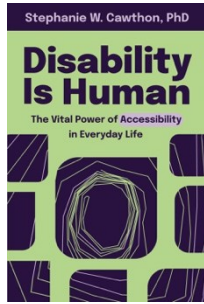
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Session 01 Guide

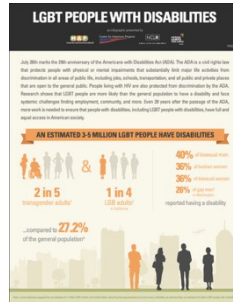
From Understanding to Action: Disability and Accessibility

Want to explore these topics more? Below are some additional resources, readings, and tools for understanding disability and accessibility!

Recommended Reading and Resources



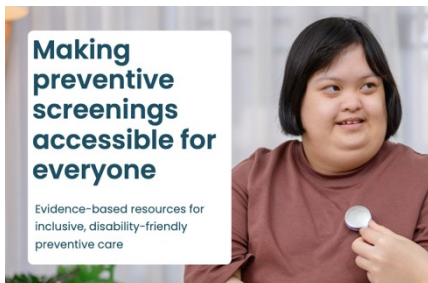
[Disability is Human](#) – Book written by a woman who is hard of hearing, an excellent quick read to get more familiar with disability and the power of accessibility in general.



[Disability Stats in the LGBTQ+ community](#)



[Guide to ADA Accessibility Standards](#)



Accessible Health Screening Guides ([Screenings for All](#)) Resources and accessible screening guidelines for preventative health screenings.



[Patient Checklists](#) for attending doctor's appointments
[Accessibility Checklists for Health Care Professionals](#)



[Hemingway App](#) to check for reading levels

Module 1: Disability is Human

Key Concepts:

1. Disability is an Arc and a Spectrum.

ARC: We all need help and care at birth and we will all need it at the end of life.

SPECTRUM: Severity of disability can fluctuate over the years or from day to day or hour to hour.

Takeaway:



2. Disability Models: [YouTube Link](#)

- Medical Model: Let's fix the person!
- Charity Model: Let's help and save the person!
- Social Model: Let's fix the environment
- Human Rights Model: Access is a Civil Right.

Takeaways:



3. Disability Tax: *Life costs more when the world isn't built for you...*

Takeaways:



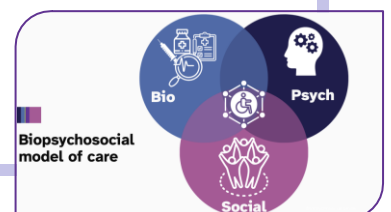
4. Biopsychosocial Model

Bio: Physical Reality

Psych: Mental State

Social: Community Relationships

Takeaways:



Module 2: Accessibility is a Mindset

Pre-Session Question: What does accessibility mean to you? Does the word have positive or negative connotations to? Why is that?

Thoughts:



Key Concepts:

Accessibility is a civil right

Takeaways:



Disabled by Society: Disability can be understood as a mismatch between a person and their environment. If we change the environment limitations disappear.

Takeaways:



Inclusive Design: Using basic universal design principles to make environments number of people increases accessibility without the need to make as many special accommodations.

Takeaways:



Walking in Someone else's Shoes: Cultivating a mindset of accessibility means learning to see how an environment works for many different people not just yourself!

- Aim for Independence
- Listen
- Improve
- Advocate

Takeaways:



Session 1 Wrap-up

Action Point:

What is one thing you would like to approach differently after this session?

Takeaways:

Explore Further:

What is something you would like to learn more about, or still have questions about?

Takeaways:

Tool to Remember:

Was there a tool, resource, or website that was mentioned that you want to remember?

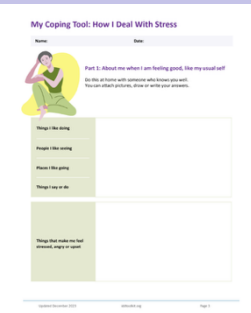
Takeaways:

Session 02 Guide

Understanding IDD and Communication Strategies for the Spectrum of Disabilities

Want to explore these topics more? Below are some additional resources, readings, and tools for understanding I/DD, ASD, and Communication!

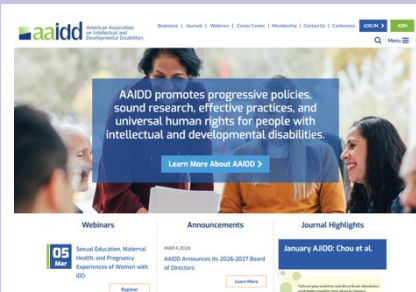
Recommended Reading and Resources



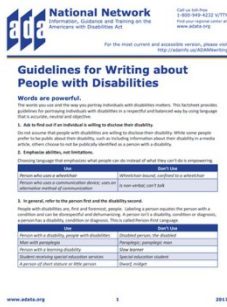
My coping tool: A tool for Individuals with I/DD and their caregivers to fill out to help in times of need. A good example of Plain Language writing



The Boggs Center on Disability and Human Development: Various resources, training, and information on IDD.



AAIDD: American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities



Guidelines on language and disabilities: This site has excellent guidelines on the best language to use regarding disabilities.



Why Amputees Disagree About Being Called "Inspiring": A piece on inspiration and disabilities

Stella Young's TED Talk



Stella Young
I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much
Posted Jun 2014

Stella Young TED Talk: A well known TED Talk on life with disabilities.



Autism Speaks: a non-profit that works toward an inclusive world for all individuals with Autism.

Module 3: Understanding I/DD and Autism Diagnoses and their Healthcare Implications

Key Concepts:

5. Developmental Disabilities and Intellectual Disabilities

Developmental Disabilities are life-long disabilities that occur in childhood before the age of 22.

Intellectual Disabilities are a sub-category of developmental disabilities.

[YouTube Video](#)

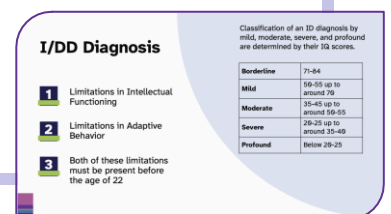
Takeaway:



6. Diagnosis

An I/DD diagnosis focuses on Cognitive functioning and Adaptive functioning.
Adaptive functioning looks at Conceptual, Practical, and Social Skills

Takeaway:



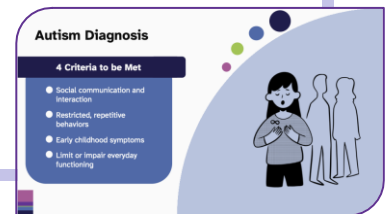
7. Autism Spectrum Disorder

ASD is a distinct diagnosis, that may or may not be accompanied by other disabilities.

4 Criteria must be met.

A small subset are diagnosed with Profound Autism and they face their own unique challenges and need high level of supports, they often have a co-occurring diagnosis of I/DD.

Takeaway:



8. Healthcare Implications and Social Determinants of Health

Individuals with IDD are at higher risk of poor outcomes regarding the social determinants of health

Takeaway:



Module 4: Communication Strategies

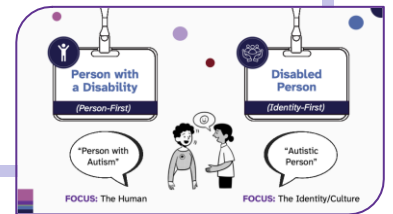
Key Concepts:

1. Shift your Lens

Person-first verses Identity-first language

Precision respects dignity

Takeaway:



2. CARE Model

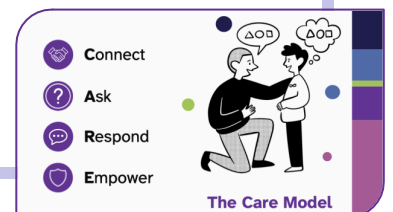
Connect

Ask

Respond

Empower

Takeaway:



3. Strategies for Specific Needs

Important considerations for different types of disabilities.

what they are witnessing. They see adaptation. They see courage. They see someone standing after something that might have flattened them.

Language is imperfect. Gratitude is awkward. Admiration sometimes comes out clumsy.

But it usually comes from a good place.

And life is bigger than a single word.

Limb loss is not a marketing slogan. It is not a personality trait. It is not a motivational speech. It is a deeply human experience wrapped in fear and grit and frustration and grace. Some days it feels heavy. Some days it feels powerful. Most days it simply feels like living.

If someone calls you inspiring and it feels right, receive it.

If someone calls you inspiring and it feels strange, let it pass.

If you are the one saying it, say it gently. Say it with respect. Say it knowing you are speaking into a story you cannot fully see.

At the end of the day, none of us chose every chapter of our lives. We are all adapting to something. We are all carrying something invisible. We are all learning to walk through parts of life we never trained for.

Maybe that is what people are really reacting to.

Not perfection. Not heroism.

Just the stubborn, ordinary miracle of a human being continuing forward.

And that is not about pedestal or pity. That is not about labels or debates.

That is just life.

And life, in all its broken and beautiful forms, is worth honoring.

~Rick Bontkowski

Takeaway:

CARE Model in Action

The diagram illustrates the CARE Model. On the left, four purple icons are listed vertically: a handshake for 'Connect', a question mark for 'Ask', two speech bubbles for 'Respond', and a shield for 'Empower'. To the right, an illustration shows a caregiver kneeling and talking to a standing client. Both have thought bubbles containing the letters 'A O M'. To the right of the illustration is a vertical bar with four colored segments: dark blue, light blue, purple, and magenta. Below the illustration, the text 'The Care Model' is written in purple.

Think about client you are currently working with. How could you implement the CARE model to better communicate with them? Jot down some idea below.

CARE Model:

Session 2 Wrap-up

Action Point:

What is one thing you would like to approach differently after this session?

Takeaways:

Explore Further:

What is something you would like to learn more about, or still have questions about?

Takeaways:

Tool to Remember:

Was there a tool, resource, or website that was mentioned that you want to remember?

Takeaways:

Module 5

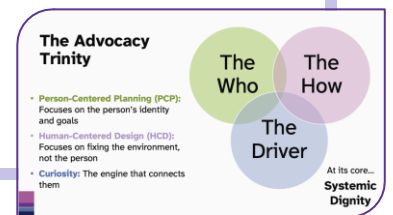
Key Concepts:

9. Advocacy Trinity

Curiosity and Empathy

The Who – The How -The Driver

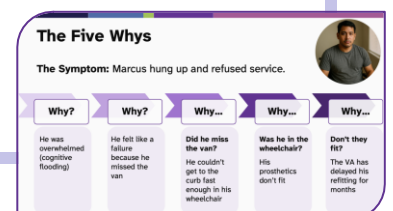
Takeaway:



10. The 5 Whys

Ask why 5 times to get at the real heart of what is going on.

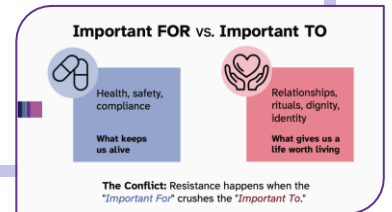
Takeaway:



11. Important FOR versus Important TO

Consider both what is known to be important FOR a person
And what is important TO them.

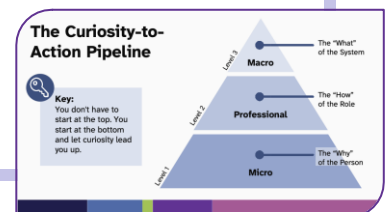
Takeaway:



12. Levels of Advocacy

- Micro – Advocating for a person
- Professional – Advocated for your role
- Macro – Advocating for systems change

Takeaway:



Module 6

Key Concepts:

1. Definitions of Disabilities

ADA: Civil Rights

Social Security: Eligibility

Takeaway:



2. Coordinating Care

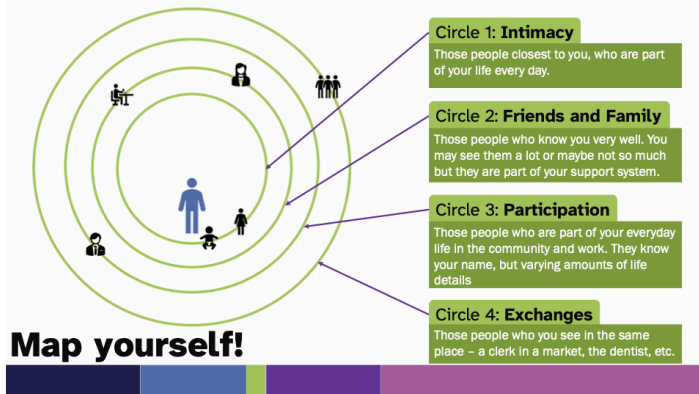
Steps to consider for supporting care coordination for People with Disabilities.

Importance of Community

Takeaway:



Community Mapping



Instructions: On the next page work on mapping your community. Consider the 4 circles. These categories will be uniquely personal to you. It is more important to be realistic about a relationship than placing a person where you think they should go. A relationship which might go in circle 1 for you could be category 3 for another person if that relationship is different for them.

Circle 1: Intimacy

Those people closest to you, who are part of your life every day. This may be spouses, children, best friends, parents

Circle 2: Friends and Family

Those people who know you very well. You may see them a lot or maybe not so much but they are part of your support system. This may be brothers, sisters, other extended family, close friends, neighbors, work friends

Circle 3: Participation

Those people who are part of your everyday life in the community and work. They know your name, but varying amounts of life details. This may be people from religious communities or other community groups, teachers, work colleagues.

Circle 4: Exchanges

Those people who you see in the same place on a regular basis – a clerk in a market, the dentist, etc.

Circle 1: Intimacy

Circle 2: Family and Friends

Community Map



Circle 3: Participation

Circle 4: Exchanges

3. Disability Services

Eligibility

Pathways to Services

Takeaway:



4. Coordinating Together

Collaboration and Communication

Safety and Boundaries

Tracking and Follow-up

Takeaway:

**Coordinating
Together**



Session 3 Wrap-up

Action Point:

What is one thing you would like to approach differently after this session?

Takeaways:

Explore Further:

What is something you would like to learn more about, or still have questions about?

Takeaways:

Tool to Remember:

Was there a tool, resource, or website that was mentioned that you want to remember?

Takeaways:

References

References are for all three sessions in the Specialty Track.

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