

People First: *Practicing* Accessibility

One Contact at a Time

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It's not only buildings
that can be inaccessible

⇒ **People can be Inaccessible** ⇐

My Strength / My Intention

I Listen ...

I Empower ...

I Advocate ...

I Support ...

My Strength / Intention

- ⇒ **Her/His POV** (point of view)
 - ⇒ *they tell me what to do*
 - ⇒ *they give permission, or not*
 - ⇒ *for what they want for me or think I need; their timeline*
 - ⇒ *when I do what they want, sometimes they dismiss me*

I'm just trying to help

*If I had known, I could have...
I would not have...*

Humility

Mindfulness (Attention)

The intention to be... (*helpful*) is not always understood or experienced as... (*help*)

- Experience is in the body;
nervous system
- Understanding is based on
learning & past events

the intention to be

... *informative*
... *encouraging*
... *trustworthy*
... *respectful*

- ❑ Adults with developmental disabilities had 3X the rate of physical or sexual abuse as other adults
- ❑ 80% of psychiatric inpatients & 68% of outpatients reported physical or sexual abuse in their lifetime

Trauma as **effects** of an event(s)
on the nervous system & thinking
as they relate to feelings of (un)safety

Developmental Trauma as **effects**
that emerge later with new
information & understanding

⇒ **Accumulated effects** of others having
power & control over you (e.g. placements,
goals, rules, schedules, behavior plans)

“Trauma Informed”

→ Services

→ Care

→ Supports

→ Organizations

... *now what*

Thinking

- ▶ If something interfered...?

Energy / Mood Regulation

- ▶ If you couldn't quickly adjust to situations or expectations ...?

- ☐ Who might have trouble with thinking and energy / mood regulation?

People living with

- ▶ intellectual disabilities
- ▶ autism
- ▶ brain injuries & other changes
- ▶ thought disorders
- ▶ mood disorders
- ▶ sexual assault / interpersonal abuse
- ▶ trauma

(Interpersonal) **ACCESS** includes

- how you are experienced & understood
- one contact at a time
- from her/his POV

...now what

Trauma & Power Aware Interactions

POV

↓ You

↓ Other

⇒ time & schedule

⇒ activity & goals

⇒ expectations

⇒ what's 'appropriate'

⇒ what's wrong

↘ **wanting energy**

↓ Your POV

- time & schedule
- activity
- expectations
- rules
- what's wrong

↓ Other's POV

- **thoughts, senses**
- **interests, concerns**
- **coping & history**
- **understanding**
- **emotions**

↘ **wanting energy** vs. **wanting energy** ↙
→ control in support relationships
→ *brain lock*

Brains Lock → when we Characterize

- ▶ *out of control*
- ▶ *angry*
- ▶ *difficult*
- ▶ *doing it for attention*
- ▶ *aggressive*
- ▶ *lazy, doesn't care*
- ▶ ***manipulative***
- ▶ *has challenges*

→ use population talk

⇒ **Characterizations Subvert Access**

Babies: sounds, facial expressions,
gestures & movement

Adults: curious detectives, interpreters
↳ to help them cope,
assert & accomplish

⇒ Babies → Children ... (disability)

↳ curiosity → judgment

↳ lead with characterizations & diagnoses

Behavior

= **Action** (everything we do)
↳ in context

= **Coping**

= **Asserting**

= **Trying to Accomplish**

Bottom-Up mind vs. Top-Down mind
Thinking Fast vs. Thinking Slow
Old Brain vs. New Brain

Old Brain Emotional, fast, automatic
New Brain Rational, slower, deliberate

- Old Brain can Overrule New Brain**
& reduce attention to another person

□ How do you want to engage?

Reactive
Automatic
Habitual
Impulsive
Judgmental
Your POV

Cue ↓

↑ Reactive

Responsive
Present
Listening
Flexible
Curious
Her/His POV

Cue ↓

↑ Responsive

To better appreciate her/his POV ... ask

- ☑ What are you **seeing or hearing** ...?
- ☑ **When** is s/he more likely to ...?
- ☑ What does s/he probably **understand** ...?
- ☑ What is s/he probably **experiencing** (sensations) and **feeling** (emotions)?
- ☑ What is s/he **trying to cope with, assert or accomplish**?
- ☑ **What might be helpful?**

⇒ Trying to be accessible

- is not an add-on
- is not a special occasion switch

⇒ We do not need proof of harm

⇒ **Accessible is what we strive to be,
one contact at a time, with everyone**

1: **When** are you more likely to be **out of your comfort zone** or slip into **automatic**;
When are you *chunking*?

2: **What adjustments** might help you to be more attentive ⇨ accessible?

3: **What reminders** will help you to practice those adjustments; **to be more accessible one contact at time?**

Free resources: disabilityrightswi.org

- ⇒ Access from an Interpersonal Angle
- ⇒ Creating Safety by asking *what makes people vulnerable?*
- ⇒ Conversations about Interpersonal Safety
- ⇒ When Deaf & Hearing Meet (parts 1 & 2)

click: publications
search: (title)