

OUR RIGHTS
RIGHT

NOW!



**Universal Design:
Making Sure Everyone
Is Included In Our Work**

Growing the Community

When we bring different passions, abilities, experiences, and attitudes together with one main focus, the possibilities to change the status quo are endless.



What is a Disability?

The World Health Organization definition of disability states that a disability is not something that a person “has” but it occurs when the person, their functional limitation, and the environment interact.



“It’s All of Us”

Differences in ability is *ordinary*, not special, and something most of us will experience at sometime.



Universal Design = Inclusive Design

- Design of everything with everyone in mind
- Taking into account the widest range of people and situations without special or separate design

Universal Design

- 'User' experts fully participate
 - Think how you would do it for other groups
- Imagine how it can be done
- An idea well beyond 'just tell me what I have to do'
- Be more than ADA compliant
 - Universal design starts with accessible design and calls for creative inclusion for the widest possible group

The Power of Design

- Decreases everyone's limitations
- Helps everyone's performance
- Everyone has equal access
- Wide range of individual preferences and abilities
- Simple for all
- Comfortable and little fatigue

Environments

- How I get along depends on the environment
- There are different types of environments:
 - Communication environment
 - Information environment
 - Social and policy environment
 - Physical environment
- What can I change to make things better?

A New Way of Looking at Things

- From now on, when I think about the work I do, I will ask myself:

“Can everyone participate equally?”

- Universal design is not an afterthought

Accessible Meetings

- Communication
 - Before and After
 - Language, etc.
- Space
- Engagement

Including Women with Disabilities

- Nothing About Me Without Me
- The people who are most affected by the decisions are involved in making the decisions



Accommodations - 1

- Ask each member of the team what they need to fully participate
- Can have a short survey that each person completes
- Follow-up to see if the person is comfortable with the accommodation(s) and the partnership



Accommodations - 2

- Ask about
 - location
 - Time
 - Transportation
 - Material needs
 - Communication Methods
- Do not make assumptions
- Service animals

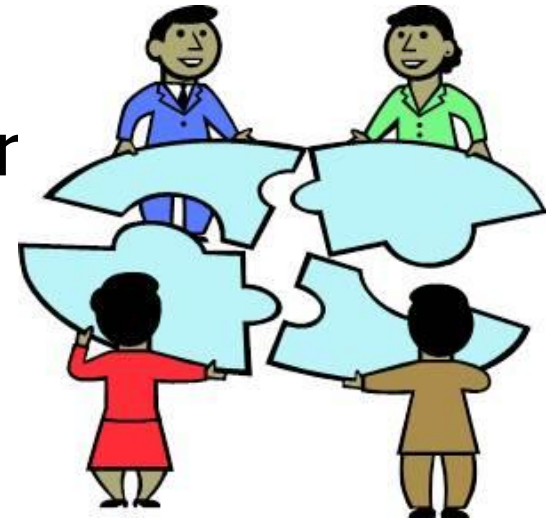
Examples of Accommodations -

- Communication
 - Pictures on Agenda, Large print, Braille, American Sign Language Interpreters
 - Phone calls before meetings
 - Meet before/after the meeting
 - Mail materials
 - Call on me or I will just listen
 - Sloooooow down



Examples of Accommodations - 3

- Physical
 - Location of Meeting
 - Chair with/out arms, Firm chair
 - Sitting near the door, who sit next to
 - Providing paper and a pen



Accommodations Enjoyed by Many

- Plain language
- Jargon and acronym-free zone
- Documents in multiple formats (Word, PDFs)
- Breaks
- Spacious meeting rooms



Meaningful Inclusion - 1

- We are all teachers and students
- Create an environment where it is ok to say, "I don't understand."
- Create an environment where every voice is valued (ask people what they think)
- Learn about and use respectful language
- Be aware of your own attitudes
- Believe in people's abilities

Meaningful Inclusion - 2

- Create opportunities for people to get to know each other's interests, dreams, abilities, etc.
- Find a balance between 'what' is done and 'how' it is done
- Listen deeply and pay attention
- Be open to new ways and new ideas
- Set an intention of shared power

Keeping Inclusion Alive - 1

- People feel respected
- People feel free to disagree
- People know the purpose of our work together
- People know their actions make a difference
- Group actions are meaningful
- There is enthusiasm and hope for positive change



Keeping Inclusion Alive - 2

- Accommodations are revisited and revised as needed and preferred
- Women with disabilities are valued as experts on their experience
- Those who desire leadership roles have the opportunity to lead
- Conflict is honored and respected.
- People enjoy being together



Leaders with Disabilities Have...

- Conducted training at victim services agency
- Completed victim services volunteer training
- Taught violence prevention classes with prevention educator
- Chaired Teams and Committees
- Trained nationally on violence and people with disabilities
- Spoken at Take Back the Night events



Leaders with Disabilities also...

- Wrote parts of statewide tool kit
- Lobbied for policy changes
- Written poems for victim service organizations
- Taken crisis calls
- Served on Boards
- Spoken up
- Made new friendships



In Addition, Leaders Have...

- Spoken out against disrespectful language in legislation
- Reviewed and analyzed disability accessibility reviews completed in 33 Rape Crisis Centers across Illinois; wrote a report with recommendations; and presented the report to the Governing Body of the State Coalition.
- Spoken out on DVD's



Thoughts on Growing the Community

“By demanding full participation in society and the accommodations to make that participation possible, the activist disabled women’s community offers a liberating vision of human connectedness - for everyone.”

~ Laura Hershey, Disability Activist