Working with Users with Disabilities

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• ASERL may also notify the accused person’s employer of the incident.
What is disability?

Why might we need laws about disability rights?

“Deviant” and disabled people were *forcefully sterilized* in an eugenics program in **North Carolina until 1978**.

American Disabilities Act of 1990

“Physical, sensory, mental, and emotional disabilities are all covered by the ADA. A mental impairment is defined by the ADA as: ‘any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.’ Thus, mental illness is recognized by the law as a disability, with the same protections as other disabilities such as paraplegia, blindness, or hearing impairment.”

Some Numbers

• 1 in 5 adults (18.6%) have a mental disorder of some kind in a given year.

• 57.4% of the population will experience a mental disorder during their lifetime.

• In any given year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Mental Disorder</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety Disorders</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Depressive Disorder</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Disorder</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipolar Disorders</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating Disorders</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Mental Disorder</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Mental Health Findings
What is the average time between onset of a mental disorder and seeking assistance?

**About 10 YEARS**

Mental Health First Aid Association. (2013). *Mental Health First Aid.*
What kind of language do we use when we are referring to people who may be having a mental health problem?
Solution

• Training such as Mental Health First Aid
• Creative use of communication strategies
  • Non-verbal communication like having people write on the board, email you in real time, have a chat client open, communication boards
  • Clickers or some other real time surveying software
• Compassion and Empathy
A few words on language

• People first
• Handicap vs. Disabled vs. Functionally Diverse
Compassion vs. Empathy vs. Sympathy

• Compassion: The motivation we feel when others are hurting to reach out and help them, to reach them where they are, a physical interaction

• Empathy: Understanding what someone is feeling, to identify yourself with their feelings and experience, an emotional state

• Sympathy: Feeling pity or sorrow for another, “I’m so sorry” or “That’s horrible”. It’s an othering technique that creates distance between two people.

Brene Brown: Empathy vs. Sympathy

• https://youtu.be/1Evwgu369Jw
Problem: Hidden Disabilities

• Dyslexia
• Low Vision/Poor Vision
• Many mental health issues like Depression or PTSD
Solution

• Compassion and empathy
• Awareness of accessibility software and hardware (and the knowledge to use it)
  • Hathitrust Proxy
  • Kurzweil 3000, JAWS, etc.
  • Out of the box thinking and be willing to go an extra step

*IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to Persons with Dyslexia*, 2014.


Conclusions

• This is the tip of a very large iceberg. Not discussed were things like web accessibility or OCR.

• Many of our institutions conform to the letter of the law for physical disabilities but mental disabilities are often ignored.

• Compliance means minimum.

• We can do a lot better.....and we should.
Works Cited - Statistics

• Mental Health Association of Maryland, Missouri Department of Mental Health, and National Council for Behavioral Health. (2013). *Mental Health First Aid USA*, Revised First Edition.

• National Alliance on Mental Illness. “Mental Health by the Numbers” [http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers](http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers)

Questions?

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• Library Accessibility Alliance webinar #2: Disability Awareness - Use of physical spaces by persons with disabilities
  October 23, 2020 at 2pm ET / 1pm Central Time
  REGISTER: https://emory.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYtduCurD4oE9WIXhZlWZsZl8lo2c75AoWs

• Library Accessibility Alliance webinar #3: Website Accessibility 101 & Library Resources
  November 10, 2020 at 2pm ET / 1pm Central Time
  REGISTER: https://emory.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMocu2hrTv4vHtzSyDLVpcQMn0sfmR8j0F

• Library Accessibility Alliance webinar #4: Overview of E-Resource Assessment Process
  December 1, 2020 at 2pm Eastern Time / 1pm Central Time
  REGISTER: https://emory.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwpcumtDqoiHdCMql9Kbsfs_i6HjGx30R9g