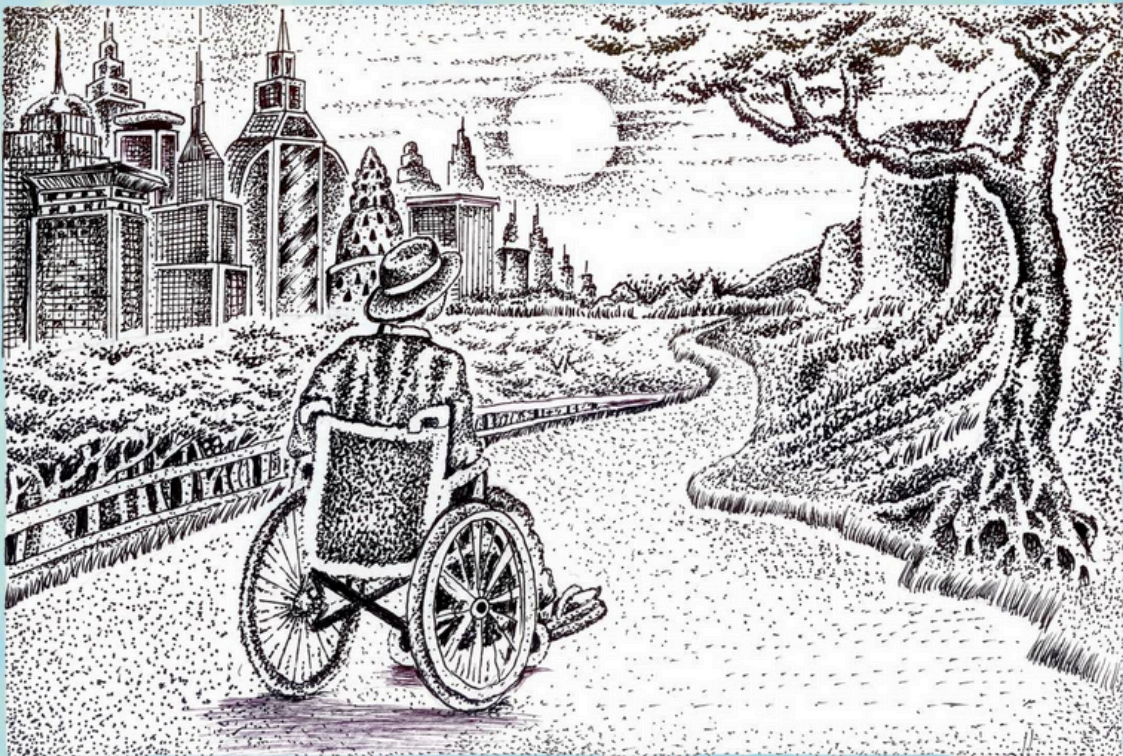


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WHAT DO I SAY?



A guide for language about disability

Developed by Epic Arts, supported by Felm.
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Talking about disability

Sometimes people worry about how to talk about disability without using ignorant or insensitive language.

The word 'disabled' is not a bad word. It is not a slur or an insult and should not be used as one.

Being disabled means that a person may perform certain tasks differently, but it is not the opposite of ability.

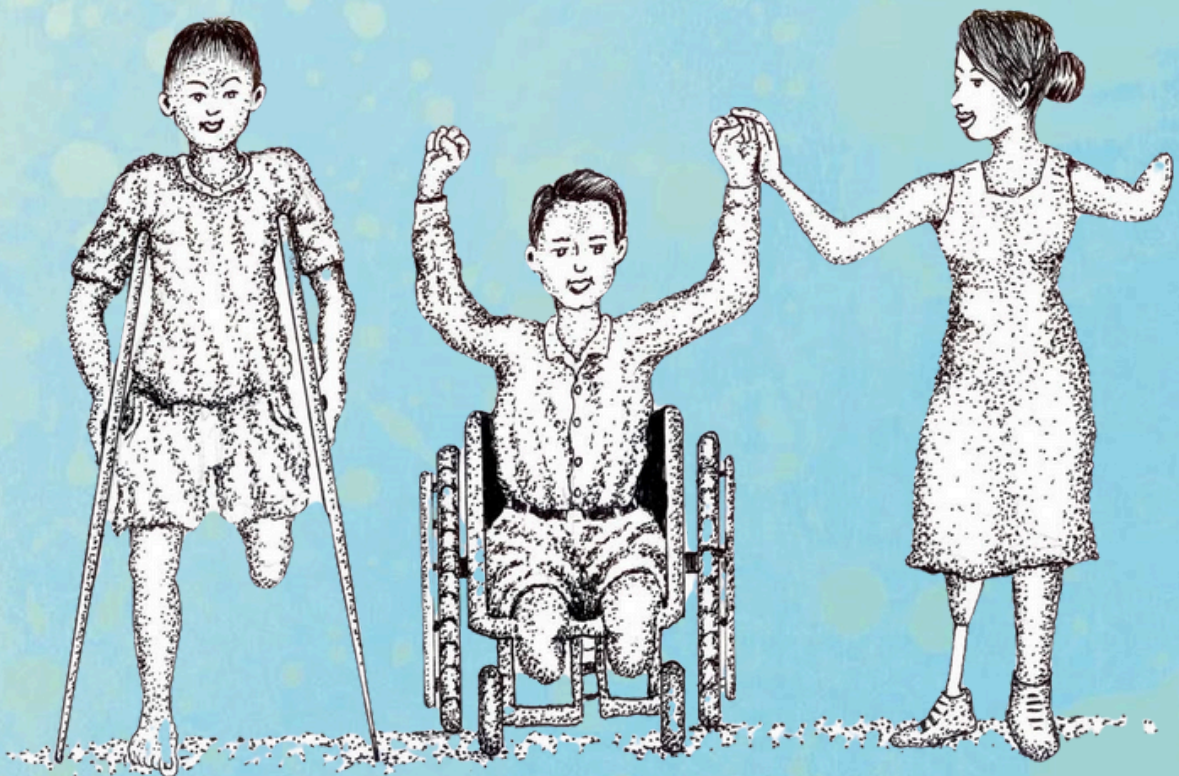


“Some people do not see my disability immediately, then when they do their facial expressions change and then they change their words and their behaviour.”

What is inclusive language?

Inclusive language is about being more mindful of how we talk. It's about recognizing that:

- language holds power
- language can help shift attitudes
- language can impact how we think of different groups
- language can help us promote equality, diversity and inclusion
- language can make people feel included or excluded

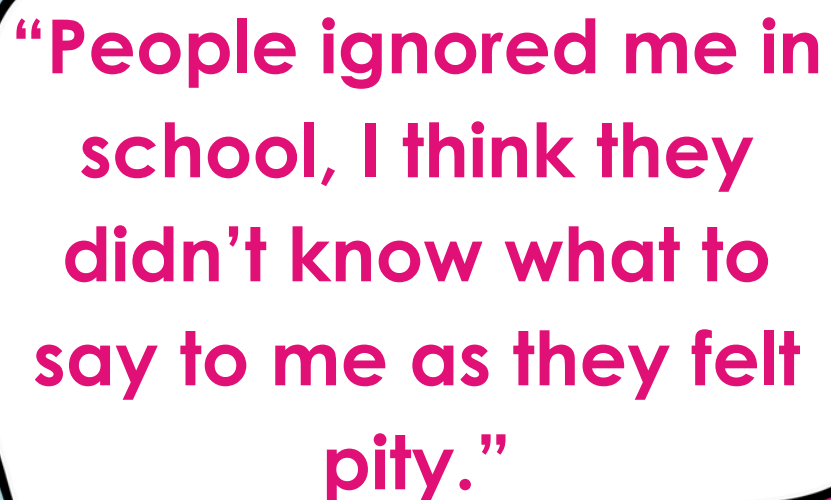


Why inclusive language is important in disability

Language can be powerful. This is particularly so for disability issues. The language that we use to refer to persons with disabilities has an impact. Historically, persons with disabilities may have been labelled or called names to emphasize that they are different.

Persons with disabilities have human rights and should be treated with dignity and respect just like everyone else.

We all have emotional needs, practical concerns, a need for clear and correct information and to be heard.



“People ignored me in school, I think they didn’t know what to say to me as they felt pity.”

How does it feel for persons with a disability to hear non inclusive language?

The words that we use to talk about disability are important. Our choice of words can make someone feel engaged and included or ignored and excluded.

Unfortunately, many unhelpful and negative stereotypes continue to exist around disability. Using words or phrases without thinking about their meaning can reinforce these stereotypes.

“Some people think that persons with disabilities like me cannot do any work or go to school like them or cannot have friends to communicate and so on. I would hear people say bad things about me and I know it wasn’t true, and it made me feel sad and ashamed”.

What language do persons with a disability prefer to use?

Language has evolved over time, and some terms that were commonly used some years ago are no longer acceptable. It is therefore important to raise awareness about language that it is appropriate to use when talking to or about persons with disabilities.

Treat persons with disabilities as people first, this emphasizes the person not the disability.



“We want to be a part of society. We want to party and make friends. Ask for our names before asking what’s wrong with your leg,”



- Call a person with a disability by his/her name.
- Refer to a person's disability only when it is related to what you are talking about.
- Don't refer to people in general or generic terms, such as "the girl in the wheelchair" or "that blind man".
- Use terminology where the person is mentioned first, such as “person with hearing impairment”.
- If in doubt, you can always ask what terms the person with a disability prefers to use.

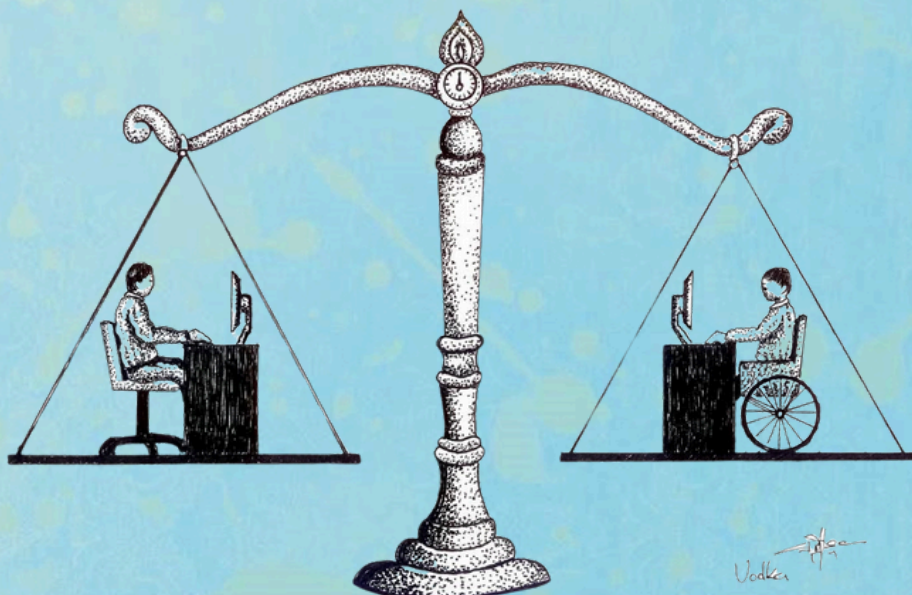
Social communication in daily life with persons with disabilities

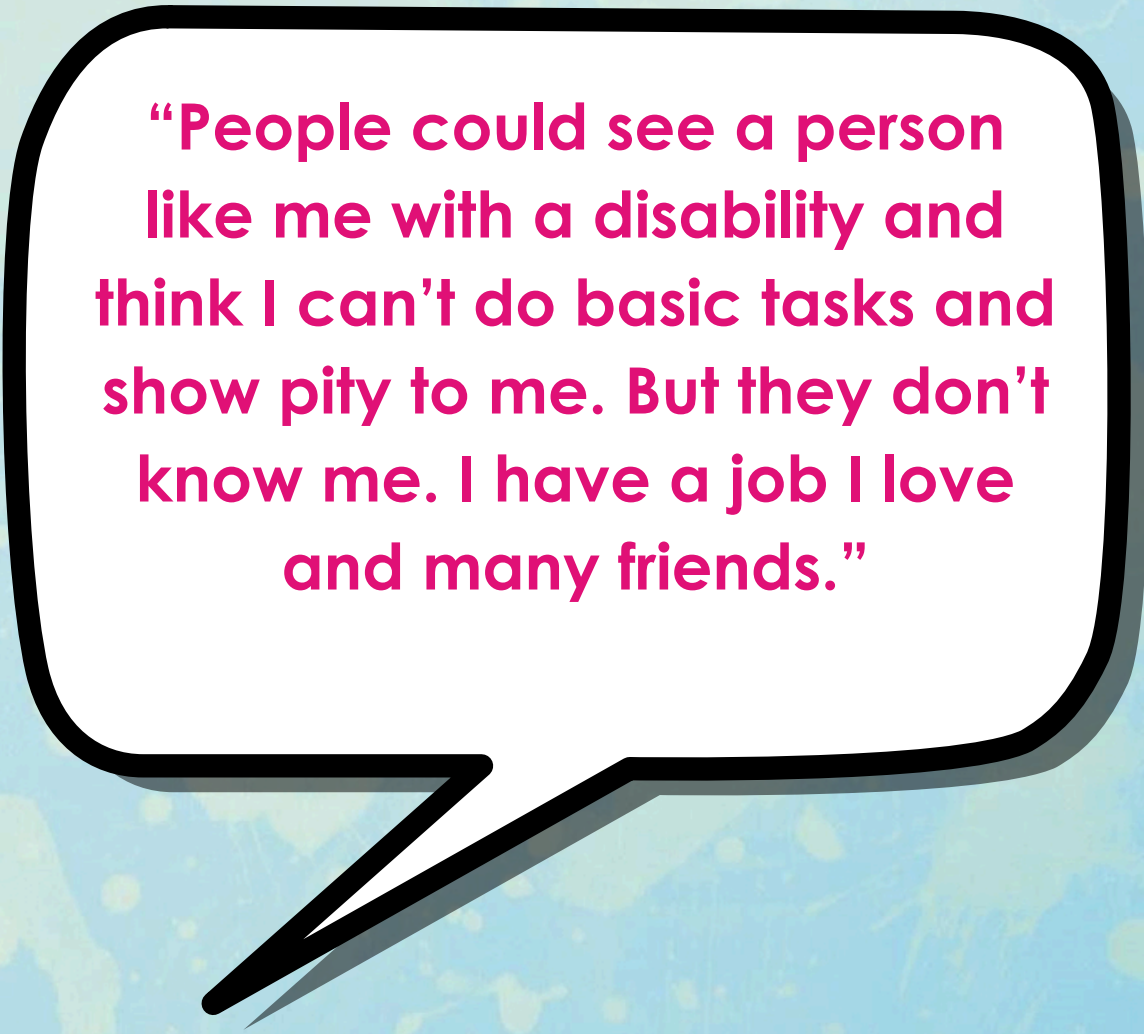
It is important to speak to and communicate with persons with disabilities as you would any other person. Persons with disabilities need friends and can be good lifelong friends.

Reach out by saying hello, smiling or Som Pas.

Build and develop friendships by asking questions about their interests and hobbies, what games they like to play or what shows they like to watch.

Ask persons with disabilities to hang out together, invite them to a party, enjoy holidays and celebrations together.






“People could see a person like me with a disability and think I can’t do basic tasks and show pity to me. But they don’t know me. I have a job I love and many friends.”

Do not presume that persons with disabilities need help. For example, a person using a wheelchair may not need help with opening a door, carrying a bag, or crossing the street. Always ask before helping someone and clarify how you can best assist them.

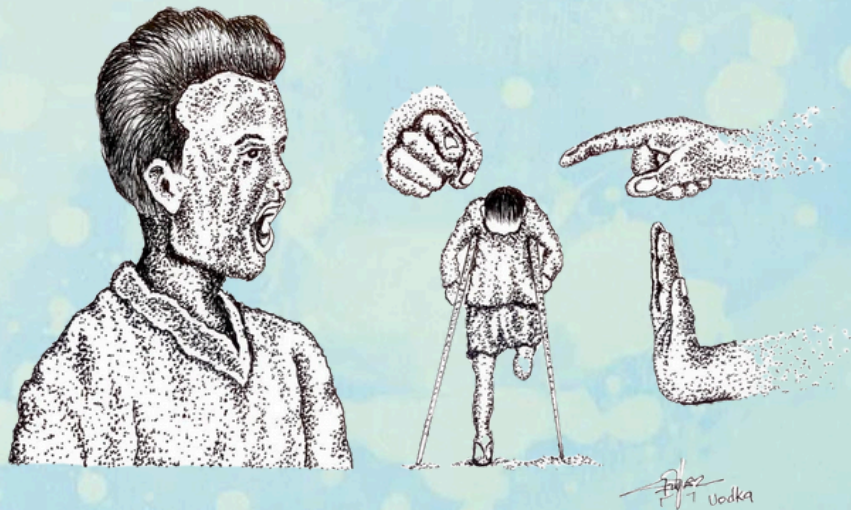
Be yourself. The more natural you are with your communication, the more the person with a disability will respond – just as with any person. Tell a joke, make them laugh.

Treat others as you would like others to treat you



“Some people think I am less intelligent and discriminate against me because of my disability. I wish that people would value and respect me for the person I am”.

The choices people make about language have an impact on the way persons with disability feel and are perceived in society. Disrespectful language can make persons with disability feel hurt and excluded and be a barrier to full participation in society.



Disrespectful language: these describe persons with disabilities as victims, they focus on what a person can't do. They are words that are patronizing and express hatred or disgust.



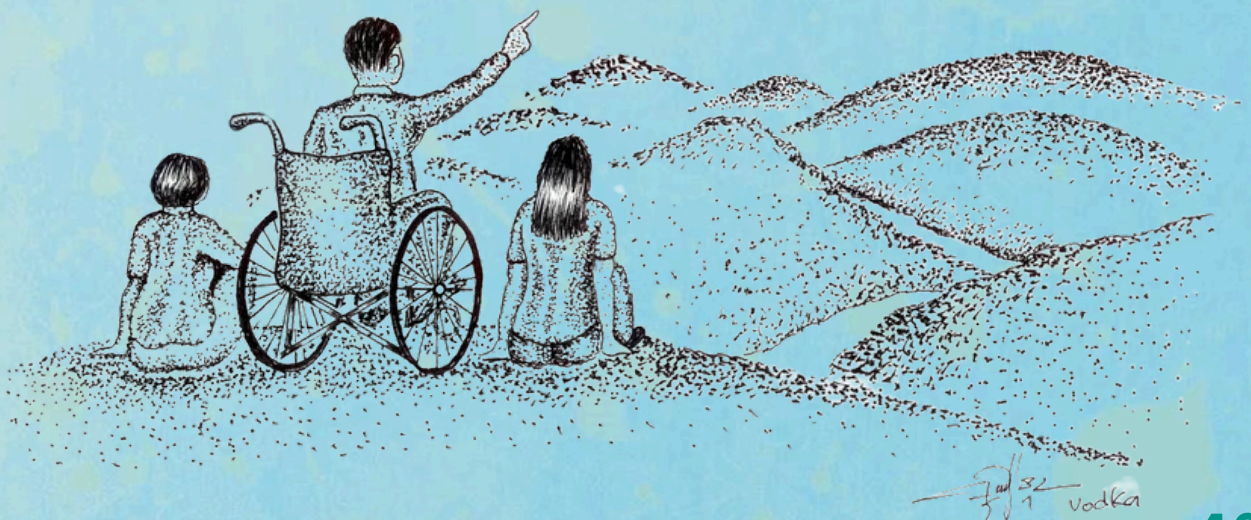
Respectful language: these are words that focus on what persons with disabilities are capable of doing. They express equality. They do not hurt the person but are natural and positive.

Persons with disabilities are people first, who have families, who work and who participate in our communities.

Do not describe people without disabilities as “normal” as this implies that persons with disabilities are not normal. If you must make a comparison, speak of “persons with disabilities” versus those without.

Use language that respects persons with disabilities as active individuals with control over their own lives.

Following simple courtesy and showing respect for individuals can go a long way to creating an inclusive and respectful environment for persons with disabilities.



Glossary

Type of impairment	Disrespectful	Respectful
Physical impairment	Ah Kabak	Pika Cheung
	Ah Kabot	Pika Day
	Ah Kvin	Pika Cheung
	Ah Dach Cheung	Pika Cheung
	Ah Kangev	Pika Day
	Ah Peach	Pika Cheung
	Ah Kra Ngeanh	Pika Day
	Ah Kve	Pika Cheung
	Ah Kaem	Pika Khnorng
	Ah Skon Choan	Cerebral Palsy
	Ah Bra kach	Cerebral Palsy or Fit
Visual impairment	Ah Khvak	Pika Phnech
	Ah Ngo Ngit	Pika Khnung kar Meul
	Ah Lev	Pika Phnech
Hearing impairment	Ah Kor (Mute)	Kor Thlong (Deaf)
	Ah Thlong	Pika Khnung Ka Niyeay
	Ah Tamlorng	Pika Khnung Ka Sdab
	Ah Ka Nguor	Pika Khnung Ka Niyeay
	Ah Talan	Pika Khnung Ka Niyeay
Intellectual impairment	Ah Chkuot	Pika Panha
	Ah Lorb	Pika Panha
	Ah Phleu	Pika Panha
	Ah Chkuot Chrouk	Pika Panha
	Ah Ort Krob Teuk	Pika Panha
	Ah Kreas Kralong	Pika Panha
	Ah Brasay Brasat	Pika Panha
	Ah Leukeu	Pika Panha

Glossary

Disability	Negative Language	Positive language
General	Handicapped person, invalid, the impaired, the disabled, PWD, CWD, WWD	Person with a disability
Blind or Visual Impairment	Dumb, Invalid	Blind/Visually Impaired; Person who is blind/visually impaired
Deaf or Hearing Impairment	Invalid, Deaf-and-Dumb, Deaf-Mute	Deaf or Hard-of-hearing; Person who is deaf or hard of hearing
Speech/Communication Disability	Dumb, "One who talks bad"	Person with a speech / communication disability
Learning Disability	Retarded, Slow, Brain-Damaged, "Special Ed"	Person with a learning or cognitive disability
Psychosocial Disability	Hyper-sensitive, Psycho, Crazy, Insane, Wacko, Nuts	Person with a Psychosocial disability
Mobility/Physical Disability	Handicapped, Physically Challenged, "Special," Deformed, Cripple, Gimp, Spastic, Spaz, Wheelchair-bound, Lamé	Wheelchair user, Person with a mobility or physical disability
Emotional Disability	Emotionally disturbed	Person with an emotional disability
Intellectual Disability	Retard, Mentally retarded, "Special Ed"	Person with a cognitive or developmental disability
Short Stature, Little Person	Dwarf, Midget	Someone of short stature
Health Conditions	Victim, Someone "stricken with" a disability (i.e. "someone stricken with cancer" or "an AIDS victim")	Someone "living with" a specific disability (i.e. "someone living with cancer or AIDS")

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EVERY PERSON COUNTS

Creating a world where people with disabilities are
included,
valued and free from discrimination

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Felm¹⁸⁵⁹



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