

ADRC Presentation

Disability-Related Issues & Diversity Culture & Awareness

June 9, 2015

Peggy Cosner, Executive Director
HOCTIL

Peggy.cosner@hoctilc.org



www.hoctilc.org

Partner with CTCOG ADRC &
HOTCOG ADRC

Purpose

- The purpose of this presentation is to expand and strengthen awareness, knowledge, and positive approaches towards cultural diversity and persons with Disabilities.



Cartoon images of diverse sizes, colors, and body shapes holding hands. One figure is in a wheelchair.

Disability

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) includes a three-part definition of disability.
- Under the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who:
 - ❖ Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
 - ❖ Has a record of such an impairment.
 - ❖ Is regarded as having such an impairment.

Disability Awareness

What is that?

There are multiple schools of thought surrounding the concepts of Disability Culture

1. Biggest barriers people with disabilities encounter are **Attitudes**
2. Disability Awareness means educating people regarding disabilities and giving people the knowledge.
3. No longer enough just to know that disability discrimination is unlawful.

What is a Disability

- A disability is a function judged to be significantly impaired relative to the usual standard of an individual or group.
- Disability is conceptualized as being a multidimensional experience for the person involved – Function – Activity - & Participation
- Physical, Vision, Hearing, Cognitive or Learning and Psychological are different types of disabilities.

Disability Culture

A Positive Viewpoint of Self-Identity

“People with disabilities have forged a group identity. We share a common history of oppression and a common bond of resilience. We generate art, music, literature, and other expressions of our lives and our culture, infused from our experience of disability.”

(Brown, *Movie Stars and Sensuous Scars*, 2003, pp. 80-81)

“You don’t need to change their minds about the people’s disabilities, you need to change their minds about themselves.”

Dr. Richard Pimentel ([Music Within](#))

Hidden/Invisible Disabilities: A Disability that Cannot Be Seen



Hidden/invisible disabilities are among the fastest growing category of individuals with disabilities.

It is estimated 10% of people in the U.S. have a medical condition considered a type of Invisible Disability

Chronic Illness is often a disability but the word “disability” is not always used.

The same principle of equal access applies to accommodations for invisible disabilities as well as visible disabilities.

Disabilities:

To Disclose or Not to Disclose...

Reasons people do not disclose and the consequences:

- Do not regard themselves as having a disability.
- Fear of personal questions or people finding out.
- Fear of reprisal (discrimination).
- Shame or embarrassment.
- Fear people will treat them differently or isolate them.
- Stigma associated with having a disability.

Right to Risk

“It’s not the disability that places limitations on the individual-It is the individual with a disability that puts limitations on themselves.”

[Right to Risk](#)



Changes of Life & Culture

Evolution of a New Beginning

To improve cultural self-awareness and take charge results in adapting and learning new ways to overcome barriers and live a quality of life.

Disability is presented as an important component of life changes and diversity.

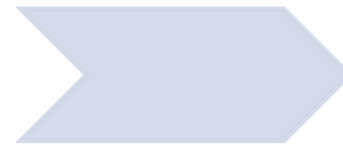
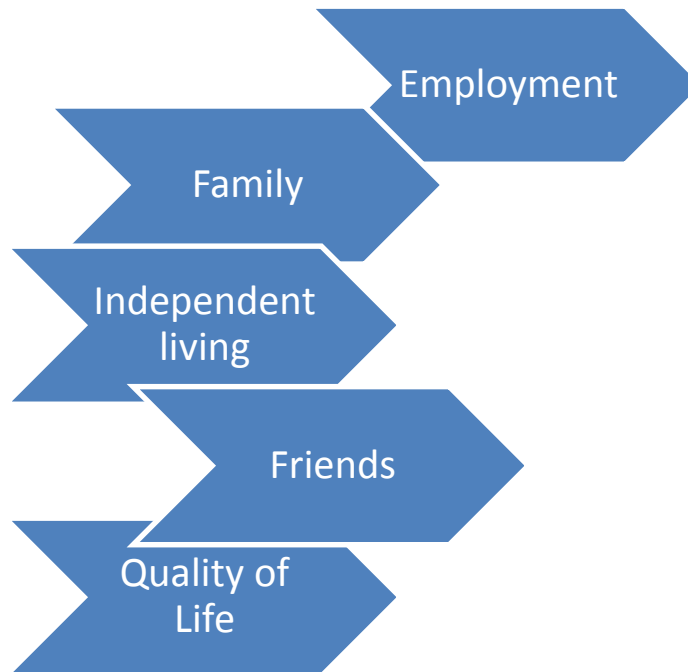
Historically, disabilities have a negative light.
“Condition or patient needing to be cared for – a medical model

Over the past 20 years, a competing view known as social model of disability is seen more as learning to adapt to daily living differently and remove attitudinal & physical barriers.

Disability Awareness Myths & Facts

“Our own personal values sometimes dictate what we think others should do in their lives. Our values are our principles, standards, or qualities that are considered worthwhile or desirable.”

Coonts and Jordan, 2006



Disability Awareness Myths & Facts

Fighting stereotype & people with disabilities are no exception.

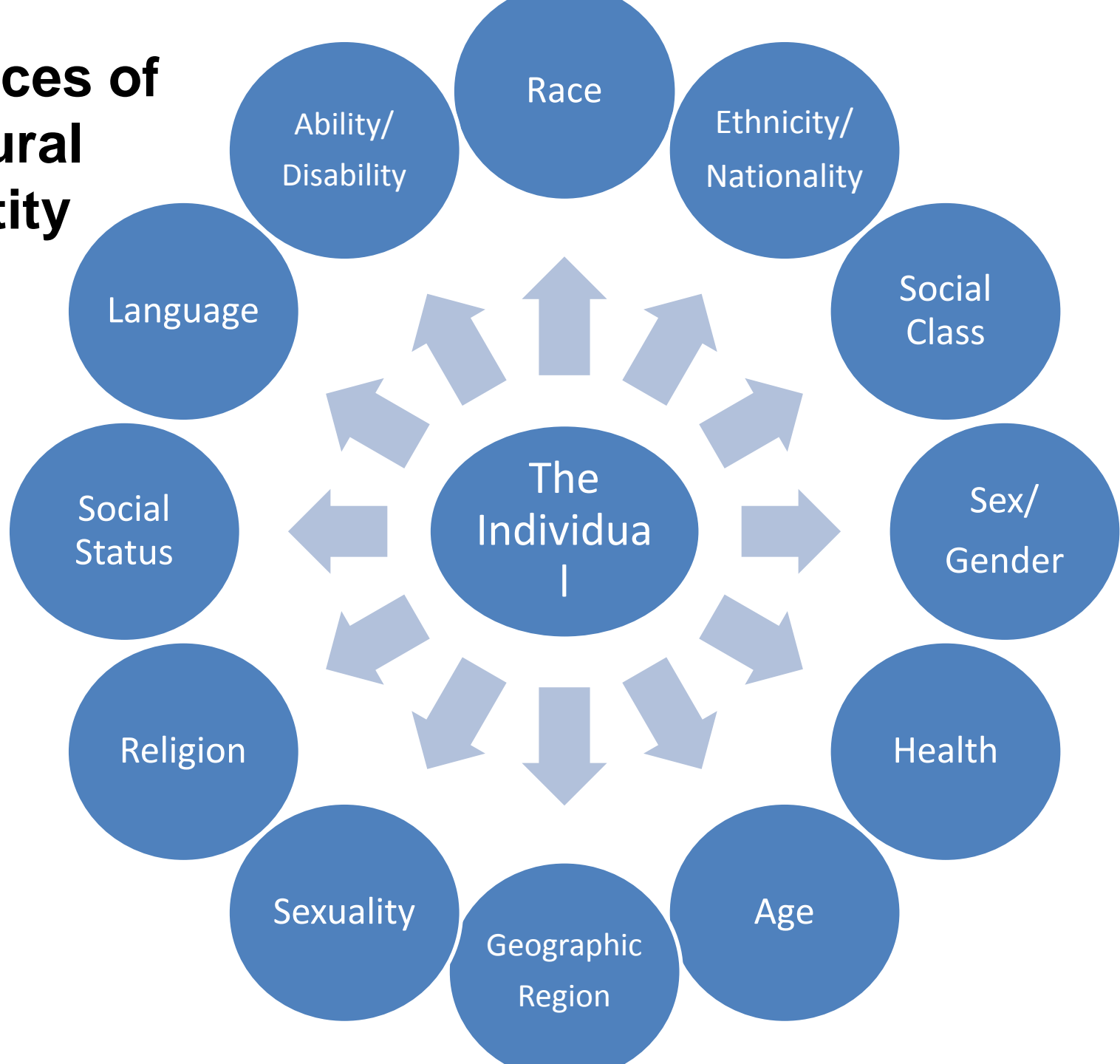
Attitudes are often rooted in misinformation & misunderstanding about what it is like to live with a disability.

1. **Myth:** Disability means handicap. **Fact:** People with disabilities are only handicapped when environmental or physical barriers or people's attitudes interfere with or prevent them from performing certain activities.
2. **Myth:** People with disabilities always need help. **Fact:** Many people with disabilities are quite independent and capable of giving help.
3. **Myth:** People who are blind or visually impaired have a better sense of hearing. **Fact:** Some people who are blind just seem to use their other senses better than the rest of us.
4. **Myth:** When guiding a person that is blind, you should always take them by the arm. **Fact:** To guide persons who are blind, let them take your arm and always ask if they need your assistance.
5. **Myth:** A person who can speak cannot be deaf. **Fact:** Actually, some people who are deaf can speak.
6. **Myth:** Hearing aids completely correct hearing. **Fact:** While hearing aids are effective in managing hearing loss, they do not restore perfect hearing.
7. **Myth:** Speaking poorly is a sign of low intelligence. **Fact:** Speech disabilities are usually caused by physical disabilities or deafness. There is no relationship between speech problems and low intelligence.
8. **Myth:** People with learning disabilities cannot be productive. **Fact:** Many people with learning disabilities develop ways to work with, or around, their particular type of learning.
9. **Myth:** People with Autism all have low intelligence. **Fact:** It depends on the individual, the IQ is not the same and varies from low to very high IQ.
10. **Myth:** People with mental illnesses are dangerous or violent. **Fact:** Mental illness is not a predictor of violence. There are no more people with mental illness committing violent acts than in the general public. People with mental illness are more likely to be victims of violence than committing violent acts.

Examples of Diversity Cultures

- Ethnic/Race
- Disability
- Organizational
- Lesbian/Gay/Transgendered
- Military

Sources of Cultural Identity



Disability & Diversity

Disability is often overlooked as a part of cultural identity and should be recognized as part of cultural awareness.

You may or could have a Disability, it can happen to anyone at anytime!

- **Individual control**
- **Self Directed Services**
- **Having Choice and direction of ones life**

**One must Accept
Responsibility to have
Freedom &
Independence**





independence for persons with disabilities

Thank you

For more information on HOCTIL &
HOCTIL Cool Tools

Come visit us at our website

www.hoctlc.org