

# DISABILITY MODELS

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**WHY DO MODELS  
MATTER?**

Models of disability provide a reference for society as programs and services, laws, regulations and structures are developed, which affect the lives of people living with a disability.

# EARLY MODELS

## **Origins of Disability:**

- Punishment by God; Immorality

## **Responses to Disability:**

- Charity; segregation; poverty; religion

## **Language re: Disability:**

- Social-ills, “ugly laws”, pity, welfare

## **Contemporary Examples**

- Telethons, Social Security “traps”

# MEDICAL MODEL

## **Origins of Disability:**

- Located in a body (a “problem”); medical disease/diagnosis

## **Responses to Disability:**

- Diagnosis → treatment; cure

## **Language re: Disability:**

- Fix; cure; prevent\*; (ab)norm(al/ative)

## **Critique of Model:**

- Reductionist-people are more than their diagnosis, not everything can (should?) be fixed

## **Contemporary Examples**

- Program Gatekeeping; prenatal screening

# INDEPENDENT LIVING MODEL

## **Origins of Disability:**

- Located in a society; society encourages dependency

## **Responses to Disability:**

- People with disabilities are experts on needs and services

## **Language re: Disability:**

- Advocacy; rights; self-determination; “nothing about us without us”

## **Critique of Model:**

- Interdependence

## **Contemporary Examples**

- Self-directed supports

# SOCIAL MODEL

## **Origins of Disability:**

- Located in a society; society disables an individual through ableist attitudes/physical barriers

## **Responses to Disability:**

- Environmental adaptations; accommodations

## **Language re: Disability:**

- Accessibility; barriers

## **Critique of Model:**

- Individual bodies DO matter

# DIVERSITY MODEL

## **Origins of Disability:**

- Human Difference

## **Responses to Disability:**

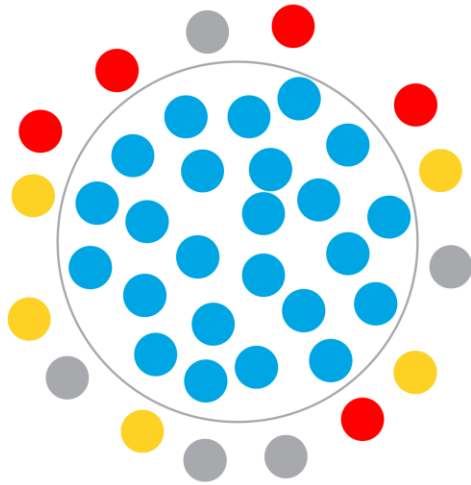
- Multiple experiences/perspectives valued (and sought)

## **Language to Disability:**

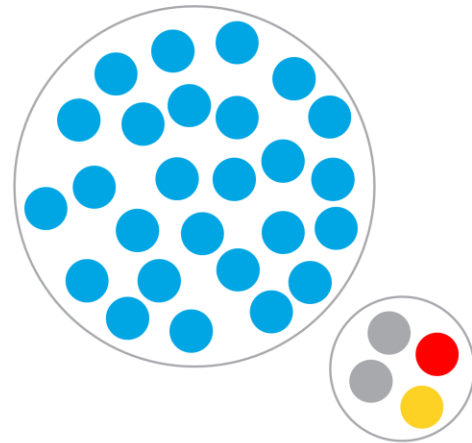
- Inclusion, participation, equality/equity

## **Critique of Model:**

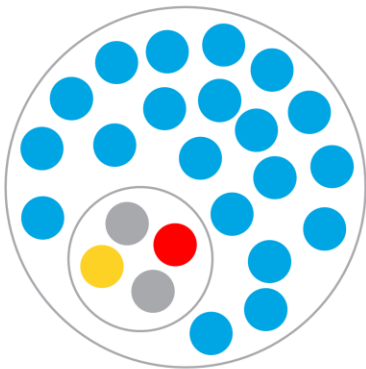
- Is it inclusion or integration?



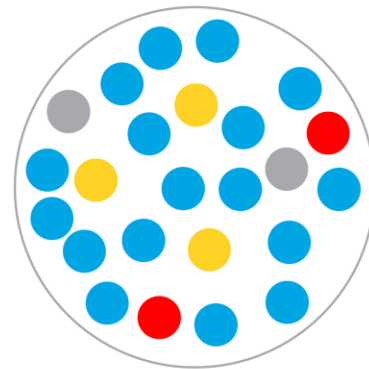
Exclusion



Segregation

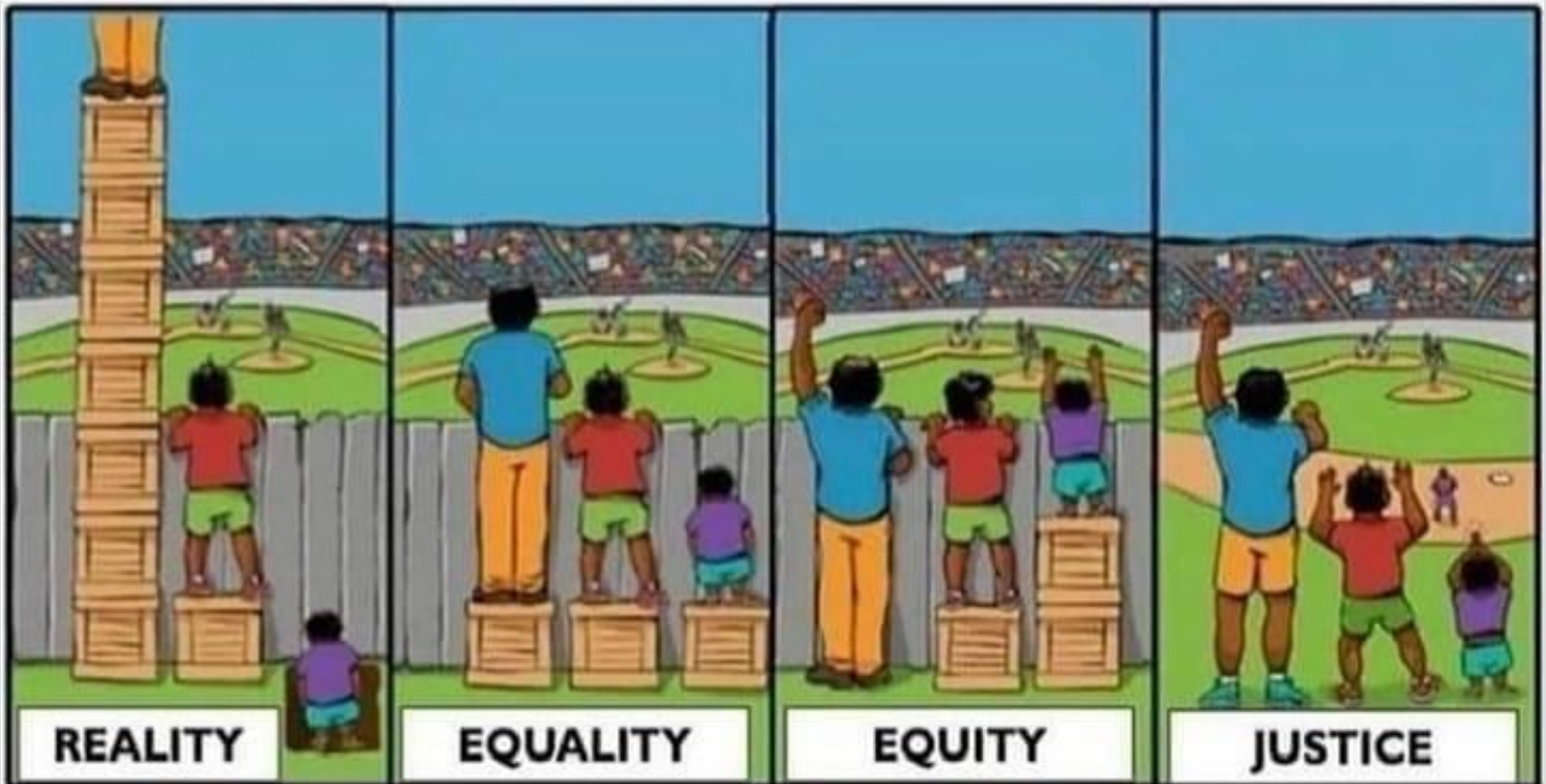


Integration



Inclusion





## REALITY

One gets **more than** is needed, while the other gets **less than** is needed. Thus, a huge disparity is created.

## EQUALITY

The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is considered to be equal treatment.

## EQUITY

**Everyone gets the support they need**, which produces equity.

## JUSTICE

All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

# DISABILITY JUSTICE MODEL

## **Origins of Disability:**

- People with disabilities need more than disability rights (a single issue)

## **Responses to Disability:**

- Addressing multiple systems of oppression

## **Language to Disability:**

- Intersectionality; identities; power; ally/solidarity

# JEDI: JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity asks “Who’s In the Room”

Equity Responds “Who is trying to get in the room but can’t? Whose presence in the room is under constant threat of erasure?”

Inclusion asks “Have everyone’s ideas been heard? Is the information in a format everyone can access?”

Justice responds, “Whose ideas won’t be taken as seriously because they aren’t in the majority”

Diversity asks, “How many more of X do we have this year vs. last?”

Equity responds “What conditions have we created that maintain certain groups as the perpetual majority here?”

Inclusion asks, “Is this environment safe for everyone to feel like they belong?”

Justice challenges “Whose safety is being sacrificed and minimized to allow others to be comfortable maintaining dehumanizing views”

-Daifina-Lazarus Stewart

# REACH OUT FOR:

- Information and Resources
- Collaborations
- Evaluation
- Ideas/needs for new projects

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