

Modern Disability 101



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Define what “disability” means today
- Employ proper terminology regarding disability
- See key differences between philosophical approaches of interpreting the “disability” experience
- Have a basic understanding of the role assistive technology and accommodations can play in the lives of service members with disabilities
- Identify the federal laws that apply to service members with disabilities and service programs
- Know where to look for one-on-one assistance with disability accommodation, laws, and other disability-related information

What is Disability?

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was originally passed in 1990.

Current disability definition derived from the
ADA Amendments Act of 2008:

A person has a disability if they have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Major Life Activities

Major Life Activities

The ADA Amendments Act of 2008:

Here is a non-comprehensive list of examples of life activities that may establish disability status:

- Caring for oneself
- Performing manual tasks, working
- Seeing, hearing
- Eating
- Sleeping, breathing
- Walking, standing
- Lifting, bending
- Speaking
- Learning, reading
- Concentrating, thinking, communicating



Determining Disability Status

Substantial Limitation

Episodic Impairment

“Big Tent”

**“Regarded As” or have
“A Record Of”**

Determining Disability Status

Substantial Limitation

An impairment that substantially limits just one major life activity need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a disability.

Episodic Impairment

“Big Tent”

**“Regarded As” or have
“A Record Of”**

Determining Disability Status

Substantial Limitation

Episodic Impairment

“Big Tent”

**“Regarded As” or have
“A Record Of”**

An impairment that is episodic or in remission is still a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

Determining Disability Status

Substantial Limitation

Episodic Impairment

“Big Tent”

**“Regarded As” or have
“A Record Of”**

There is a “big tent” interpretation of who has a disability according to the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA states that those interpreting whether someone has a disability or not should err on the side in favor of coverage by the ADA.

Determining Disability Status

Substantial Limitation

Episodic Impairment

“Big Tent”

**“Regarded As” or have
“A Record Of”**

There is another part of the ADA definition that applies to people who have been “regarded” as a person with a disability (e.g. a person who has a significant visible burn but it doesn’t impact major life activities) or have had “a record of” having a disability in the past (e.g. someone with a record of having Cancer but it’s now in remission). People who fit these categories receive protection from discrimination under the ADA on this basis as well.

Biggest Barriers: Attitude of Others

Attitudinal barriers are ideas, fears, and assumptions that impede meaningful communication.



Stereotypes flagrantly and incorrectly limit the range of available opportunities for individuals with disabilities.



Equal access to education, employment, public facilities and services, transportation, housing, and other resources needed to more fully realize their rights as citizens.

Language , Labels, and Portrayal

Language is powerful

People with disabilities have been portrayed in popular culture as “broken” and treated with pity, scorn, sorrow, or anger.



Labels have often been used to define a person's potential and value.

What Are Models of Viewing Disability?

Why do we need models?

Models were and are frameworks or lenses for how society views and treats people with disabilities:

- Helpless and in need of charity
- Inspirational and put on a pedestal



Various Models of Disability

Moral Model

Medical Model

Charity Model

**Social/Civil Rights
Model**

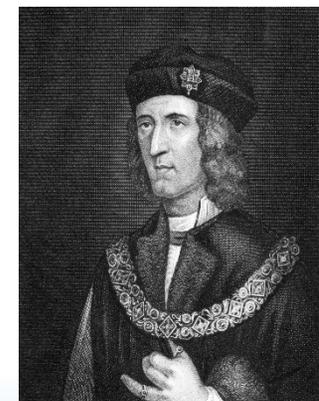
Cultural Minority Model

Moral Model

Having a disability reflects a spiritual or Moral defect.

People have disabilities because of their:

- Affliction by the devil
- Sin
- Punishment for wrongdoing



Medical Model

- Those with disabilities need to be **fixed** and the focus is on medical care
- Make them wear heavy braces or receive radical treatments
- Make them **normal** again



Charity Model

- There are Individuals and organizations that portray the disability experience as a tragedy
- People with disabilities should be pitied and need protection
- Money is often raised based on your reaction to these disability messages
 - Gratitude that you are not disabled
 - Sadness for those who are disabled
 - Belief this is the only way to assist people with disabilities



Social/Civil Rights Model (1980-Present)

The Social/Civil Rights model embraces the disability experience as a characteristic worthy of advocating for by:

- Improving existing systems, laws, policies, environments, and relationships to ensure people with disabilities equal access
- Promoting inclusion, full participation, self-sufficiency, and independent living for all people with disabilities
- Situating the disability rights movement among the other civil rights movements



Cultural Minority Model (1990-Present)

- Form a distinct cultural group based on the lived experience of having a disability and living in an able-bodied world.
- Self-identifying/disclosing a disability is a positive thing because disability is part of a person's identity
- People with disabilities appreciate the differences in life experience fellow members of the disability community share and want to associate with each other



ADA Generation (1975-Present)

- Raised with the ADA affecting their experience in K-12 education
- Did not advocate for the legislation that created the access they are accustomed to but believe accessibility is a birthright and are passionate about ADA implementation
- Benefited from experiencing formative years in integrated settings (access to school, sporting arenas, theaters, public transportation,, public places and employment)
- Known to have high personal expectations, interested in equal access, full participation and living independently
- These are our service members today and in the near future

Providing Accommodations



What are Accommodations?

Accommodations are modifications or alterations made to an environment or to a way of doing something that allow equal access to people with disabilities to fully participate. Accommodations should be individualized.

What is JAN?

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a free service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) of the US Department of Labor that provides a myriad of technical assistance resources about accommodating and supervising individuals with disabilities.

[Accommodation Examples](#)

[Job Accommodation Network](#)

Providing Accommodations

Accommodation examples:

- Allowing someone with a learning disability extra time to complete an assignment
- Arranging a service schedule to provide necessary breaks to monitor and adjust blood sugar levels for someone who has diabetes
- Amplification equipment or a licensed sign language interpreter for someone with a hearing impairment serving in a classroom
- Providing a special keyboard in a service site for someone with dexterity problems

Federal laws require that accommodations be provided to people with disabilities who need them in the classroom, at work sites, and in most public places, including in CNCS funded programs.

Providing Accommodations

Job Accommodation Network

JAN is a free service of the ODEP of the US Department of Labor. JAN's mission is to provide technical assistance about reasonable accommodations and disability information to supervisors, employers, non-profits, employment providers, people with disabilities, their family members, and other interested parties with information on disability accommodations, information on disability law and related subjects. Questions flowing from CNCS programs regarding disability accommodations for service members with disabilities should be routed to JAN.

JAN represents the most comprehensive resource for disability accommodations available. For more information, refer to www.askjan.org.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology Act of 2004

Assistive technology refers to “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.”



Examples:

- Computer screen readers and video magnifiers
- Closed captioning
- Alternative keyboards
- Special mobility devices assisting independent living

Assistive Technology

- Vocational Rehabilitation agency
- Each state has an organization responsible for promoting and supporting the use of assistive technologies: a listing of state contacts can be found at: <http://www.resna.org/taproject/at/statecontacts.htm>.

Federal Legislation



Young people with disabilities are protected under:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Vocational Rehabilitation Act (VR)
- Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Such regulations have led to:

- Increased access
- Greater understanding of accommodations
- Assistive technology being more common

Example

Federal Legislation

Example

Computer screen-reading software, widely used by people who are blind or who have print related disabilities or learning disabilities, cost several hundred dollars. This is often paid for by the state based Vocational Rehabilitation Services agency during vocational or higher education. If national service is part of the rehabilitation plan, it may be likely that service members would be able to bring the assistive technology they've used in their own rehabilitation process into their national service term.

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Example

Federally Funded Programs

Section 504 specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities in federally funded programs.

The ADA, passed in 1990, goes farther and prohibits discrimination by all public and most private entities regardless of whether they receive public funds.

SECTION 504



Summary

You should now be able to:

- Define what “disability” means today
- Employ proper terminology regarding disability
- See key differences between philosophical approaches of interpreting the “disability” experience
- Have a basic understanding of the role assistive technology and accommodations can play in the lives of service members with disabilities
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Resources

- CNCS Disability Resource:
<https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/volunteer-member-staff-management/disability-inclusion>
- Job Accommodation Network: <http://askjan.org/>
- Vocational Rehabilitation Agency: Each state has a state headquarters office with local offices located throughout the state.
http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SVR
- Each state's organization responsible for promoting and supporting the use of assistive technologies:
<http://www.resna.org/taproject/at/statecontacts.htm>
- Americans with Disabilities Act: www.ada.gov
- Helpful tip-sheets and FAQs related to disability accommodations:
www.eeoc.gov

* A link to additional resources does not constitute an endorsement of that organization or material but is provided as Resources that may be helpful to you.

Thank You

Congratulations!

You've successfully completed the
Modern Disability 101 module.