

DISABILITY ALLYSHIP

WORKBOOK

NAME: _____

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A Land Acknowledgment is a statement that makes awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. We all have a responsibility to consider what it means to acknowledge the history and legacy of colonialism. It can be an explicit yet limited way to recognize the history of colonialism as well as a need for change in settler-colonial societies.

We acknowledge and reflect upon how the city of Guelph and Wellington resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land which is known presently as Guelph and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them.

If you do not know the ancestral caretakers of the land you are currently on, we invite you to take time to learn. We will not lose sight of the fact that land acknowledgments exist as a small step in the process towards truth and reconciliation. However, there cannot be reconciliation before there is truth. We recognize the historical and continued oppression of lands, cultures, and the Indigenous Nations in Canada. We are committed to continuous learning, educating, and healing with our kin.

Learn more here:



DISCLAIMER

Allyship is an evolving topic; what constitutes meaningful allyship today might not be considered appropriate or meaningful allyship in the future. The content in this resource guide has been generated from a thorough review of the scholarly and community literature about allyship with and towards disabilities. It is anticipated that this knowledge may become outdated at some stage. Users should consult additional resources when thinking about their allyship practice to ensure that you are current and informed. Additionally, not all people will desire the same type of allyship. This guide should be used as a starting point for conversations with those with whom we would wish to engage in allyship.

This resource guide was developed by Sophia Cherniak, Kelsey Coome, Hannah Finkelstein, Emily McTier as part of an undergraduate course at the University of Guelph in Winter 2021.

To ensure accessibility of this document to a diverse audience, we have refrained from using in-text citations unless a direct quote or material was used. In place of in-text sourcing, we have used a reference list at the end of the workbook.

Imagine 5 youth

- 1 has severe and complex needs
- 2 are on the edge
- 2 are as well as they can be

And the Integrated Youth Services Network Guelph Wellington will help all 5!

The Integrated Youth Services Network is a grassroots community initiative, led by the Rotary Club of Guelph, to bring an integrated youth services model to Wellington County and the city of Guelph. Where youth (age 12 – 26) are at the centre of services that are available in our community. It is a one stop shop for youth mental health which will provide youth with access to safe spaces, professional counsellors and other youth workers. A place for youth to access the services they need when they need them.

It is first of its kind in Canada as it addresses rural needs, the needs of young adults who attend the University and the need to pull service providers together under one unified system. Together with our youth, we are re-imagining mental health and helping youth build positive, bright futures.

This Allyship Guide will serve as a resource for all 7 sites and help youth understand the importance of Allyship and how we can build relationships based on our collective strengths.

And once youth walk through our door...

Every single day, we will provide youth with guidance and support for the future, including:

- 1. Education and career support
- 2. Health care
- 3. Housing services
- 4. Counselling and peer-to-peer programs
- 5. Cool recreational spaces to just hang out

These hubs will be designed by youth, to serve youth. And as they've told us, what they will build—with your help—is:

- 1. A safe space
- 2. A place to hang out, be active, and to just be themselves.
- 3. A welcoming and supportive environment (no stigma!)
- 4. A place that encourages positive and social interaction
- 5. A place they want to be.

We wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the young people who created this guide and the University of Guelph for their support and partnership.

GLOSSARY

Ableism

The practices and dominant attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities.

Chronic Illness

A long-term health condition that may not have a cure. Chronic illnesses are the leading cause of disability.

Cognitive disability

Difficulties in remembering, learning new things, concentrating, making and/or decisions.

Developmental disability

An umbrella term for conditions causing mental and/or physical disabilities which arise before adulthood.

Disability

An umbrella term for any impairment that makes it difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities.

Episodic Disability

Disabilities where symptoms are not always present. Periods of disability and wellness vary in duration.

Intellectual disability

Also referred to as a learning or cognitive disability. People tend to have a reduced ability to learn new tasks and process new information.

Learning disability

A cognitive disability which impacts a person's ability to process new information.

Neurological disability

Associated with damage to the brain or nervous system, which can result in the loss of physical or developmental abilities.

Neurodiversity

Describes the natural variation of the human brain and mind, including cognitive disabilities, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities.

GLOSSARY

Non-evident disability

A disability that is not obvious to observers, such as a chronic illness.

Physical disability

A physical disability affects a person's mobility, dexterity, stamina, balance and sometimes pain.

Psychiatric disability

Disabilities with psychological symptoms; such as anxiety disorders, mood disorders, and depression. This term is now referred to as mental health disabilities.



STOP

While the material may be difficult and new, we encourage you to take breaks and reflect when you see the stop sign.

Sensory disability

Impairment to any of the senses; sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste, or spatial awareness.

Stigma

A stigma of the disabled community is “child-like” and a “burden” on society. This results in discrimination of this community.

Social or emotional disability

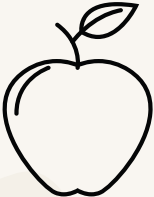
May be brought about by biological factors (genetics or hereditary) or life experiences (trauma or abuse). Impacts a person's ability to regulate emotions and pick up on social cues.

Visual impairment


May be caused by various factors. People who are blind are not visually impaired. People who are blind do not have any vision, whereas people who are visually impaired may have some vision.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

In the first box below, draw the apple, taking as much time as you need.




1




In the box directly to the right, draw the apple with your non-dominant hand (the hand you don't write with).

2



In the box, directly to the right, draw the apple with your eyes closed (no peeking).

3



What do you think was the purpose of this activity?

Write your thoughts



REFLECTION

Was it difficult to draw with your non-dominant hand?

☐

☐

Yes

No

Which drawing of yours was the best?

☐

☐

☐

1

2

3

Was it difficult to draw with your eyes closed?

☐

☐

Yes

No

Which drawing was the most difficult?

☐

☐

☐

1

2

3

REFLECTION

PURPOSE

If you do not have a disability, it's likely that you found your first drawing the best. Your first apple is probably very similar to the drawing you see people without disabilities draw.

We often judge our work by comparing it to the work of others. We also consider what other people might think is "normal", "average," or "typical".

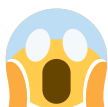
But what happens when your best work looks like the second or third apple? What happens when you're the only person in the room who has to draw with your eyes closed?

Take a moment to reflect on how often superiority is linked to ability in your daily life.

Write your thoughts

STOP

How did this activity make you feel? Circle how you are feeling.



DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU FELT INCLUDED

“



What is Campus Friends?

Campus Friends provides a post-secondary option for adults with developmental disabilities to experience campus life. A partnership between Community Living Guelph Wellington and the University of Guelph, Campus Friends connects UofG student mentors with adults who have a developmental disability to promote successful individualized student-based campus experiences.

”

I attended an improv event called the Comic Strippers. I volunteered to go up on stage to be part of a skit. It was AWESOME!

Being a student at Campus Friends! The mentors treat me just like everybody else!

When someone asks me to go out with them somewhere. I feel good. I'm smiling and I feel uplifted.

DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU DIDN'T FEEL INCLUDED

”

“

The only thing I miss doing is going to my mom's and sister's for the weekend, but I can't do that anymore because they have stairs. I just miss visiting my family. I get a little upset about it, but I talk to her every day on the phone.

In my last gym class in high school, a local climbing club came to our class. They didn't have any harnesses that fit me and my large body. It really hurt that I couldn't participate.

A long time ago when I was not included in conversations, I would feel sad. When someone asked me to go out with them. I feel good. I'm smiling and I feel uplifted.

IDENTITY MATTERS

THE MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY...

tells us that a disability is in our genetic makeup, not an identity. Disability is often thought of as a "problem" to be solved, with fitting into abled society being the goal. This mindset is still popular today. Many people without disabilities are surprised when people with disabilities don't feel like they need to be "fixed."

THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY...

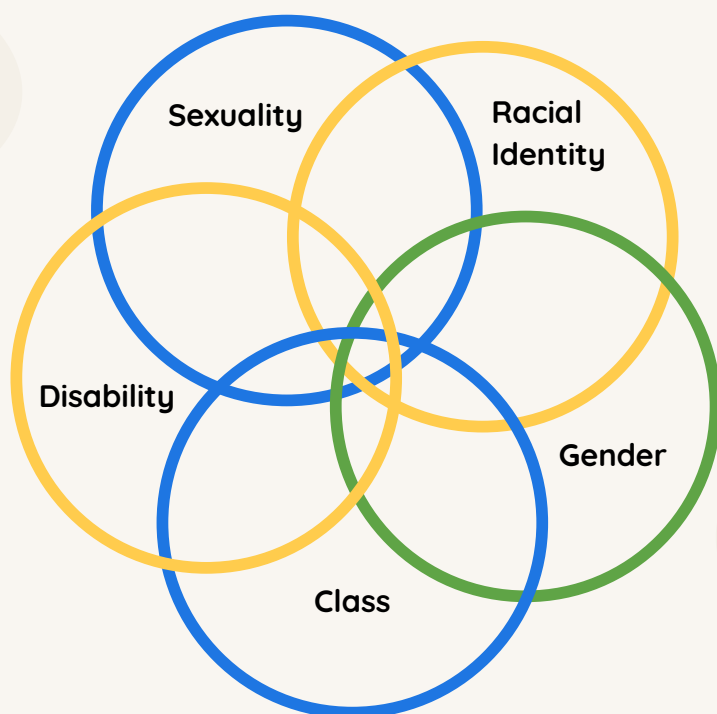
describes that society plays a huge role in creating the disability. In a society where some minds and bodies are considered "normal," other bodies are left out of societal expectations and are faced with inaccessibility and prejudice.

Living with a disability can be hard. But people with disabilities will often tell you that social prejudice and accessibility barriers are the hardest part.

What words describe your identity? In what way do these models change how you think about disability?

IDENTITY MATTERS

When people accept and embrace their disability as part of their identity, they tend to have higher self-esteem. With the increase in self-esteem, people are more likely to get assistance and challenge ableism. It is important for society to support people within the disability community with acceptance.



Finding a community can be an important part of achieving self-acceptance. Disabilities don't exist alone. People with disabilities also have racial/ethnic identities, sexual identities, and gender identities, which may or may not result in discrimination.

KEY TERMINOLOGY

Etiquette & Guidelines

When speaking to or about someone with a disability, it's important to make note of which terms are offensive, outdated, and inappropriate.

It's important to ask people which terminology they prefer and understand why certain terms are used.

Person- First Language

Puts the person before the disability, Using phrases such as "person with a disability" instead of "disabled person."

This approach focuses on the person affected by the condition rather than the condition itself.

Identity- First Language

Uses phrases such as "disabled person" as opposed to "person with disability."

Advocates feel these identifiers help people "claim" their disability with pride.

What's the difference?

"The difference between the perspectives essentially boils down to personhood and disability: is it something that you have, or something that's at the core of your identity?"

- JR Thorpe, for Bustle

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

A glossary of appropriate terms to use and not use regarding the disability community.

Instead of

Confined to a Wheelchair

This description is inaccurate and suggests that wheelchairs are inherently negative.

Hearing Impaired

It is not believed the word "impaired" accurately describes peoples' lived experiences.

Handicapped

This is an outdated and offensive term that should not be used.

The R Slur

This slur is outdated and incredibly harmful. It should never be used in any context.

How about

Wheelchair User

Wheelchairs provide freedom and independence. They are not confining but empowering.

Hard of Hearing

Hard of hearing is a more acceptable term because many people do not view hearing loss as a loss.

Accessible or Disabled

When referring to a feature like a parking space, say accessible. When referring to a person, say disabled.

Intellectually Disabled

This is the appropriate label to use when describing an intellectually disabled person.

ABLEISM

The practices and dominant attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities.

Discrimination

Discrimination is based on negative attitudes, stereotypes and biases. Many laws, requirements, or standards are put in place without considering the unique needs of people with disabilities.

Harassment

Harassment is when people engage in conversations or actions that are not welcome. Some examples include slurs, name calling or inappropriate nicknames, graffiti, jokes or teasing, and excluding people with disabilities.

Microaggression

Microaggression is sometimes called casual ableism which refers to forms of "socially acceptable" biases. Many people with disabilities encounter this form of ableism on a daily basis.

Did You Know ?

People with disabilities are less likely to be employed than those without disabilities.

Did You Know ?

1 in 3 youth with severe disabilities are neither in school nor employed.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED AS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY?

”

“

It is hard not working right now. My job was at day services and I haven't been able to work because of COVID. My walking and falling are getting worse due to my bad knee. The sidewalks in my area are brutal and still have ice on them so I basically have to walk on the road. People without mobility challenges do not have this problem.

I can't see my mom because I do not drive. Mom is not going to renew her license. I must rely on other people to see her. I can't get up the stairs at my mom's house now. My sister will not drive as she is afraid of getting lost driving. I bought my mom a bed and a chair so she can stay but when she does not renew her license, I will no longer be able to see her.

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication, or communication without using words, refers to the different ways we communicate with our bodies without using words.



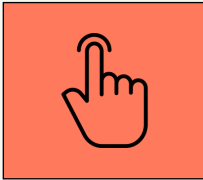
Appearance

The way people dress and style themselves.



Facial Expression

The way people's eyes, noses, and mouths are used.



Gestures

The way people use their arms, legs, and head.



Body Language

The way people stand or sit, as well as the position of their shoulders and chin.



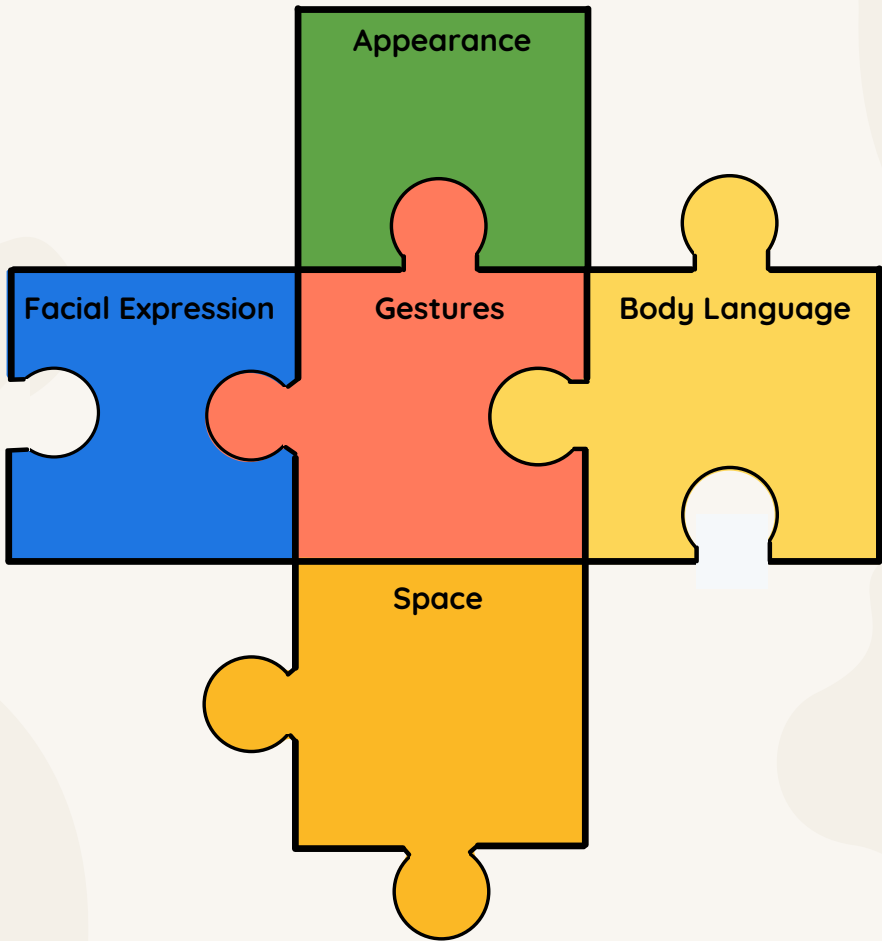
Space

The distance between people or how much space a person takes up.

**Did You
Know ?**

93% of communication
is nonverbal.

Use this guide to find examples of different ways people communicate without words. Write each example in the corresponding puzzle piece.



What nonverbal communication would you like to be more aware of in your life?



AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL)

ASL is a language with the same linguistic properties as spoken languages. ASL is expressed through movements of the hands and face. It is the primary language of many North Americans who are deaf and is used by many hearing people as well.



Did You Know ?

ASL is not only a sign, gesture language but also a facial expression language.

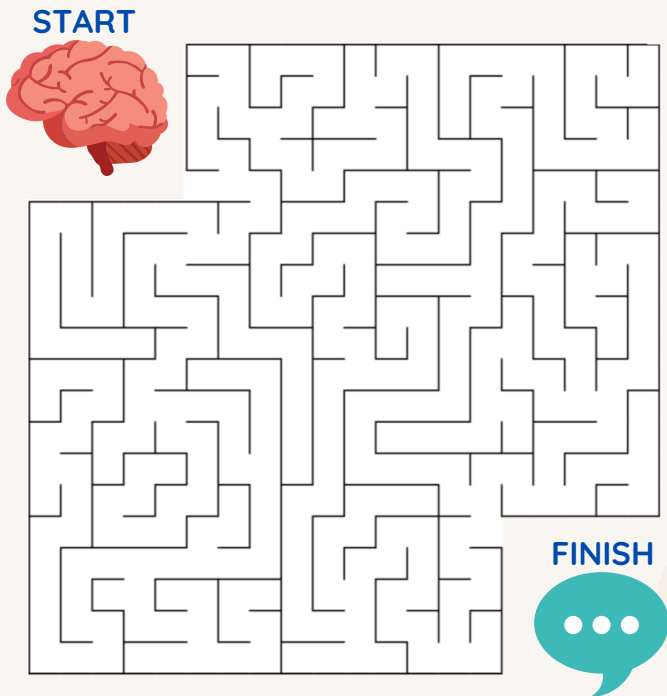
Practice spelling your name using sign language.
How was this activity for you?

Learn ASL
with this
video



THINKING PROCESS

Everybody has different ways of thinking. Some people have difficulty focusing on more than one task, whereas others can multitask. Some people have difficulty getting from point a to point b, whereas others have difficulty focusing on big tasks. An example of a thinking process disability is Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD).



Creating Supportive Spaces

Allow people time to process the information before moving onto the next point. Only sharing one task at a time while breaking bigger tasks into smaller ones.







Did You Know ?

People with ADHD can have difficulty putting their thoughts into words.

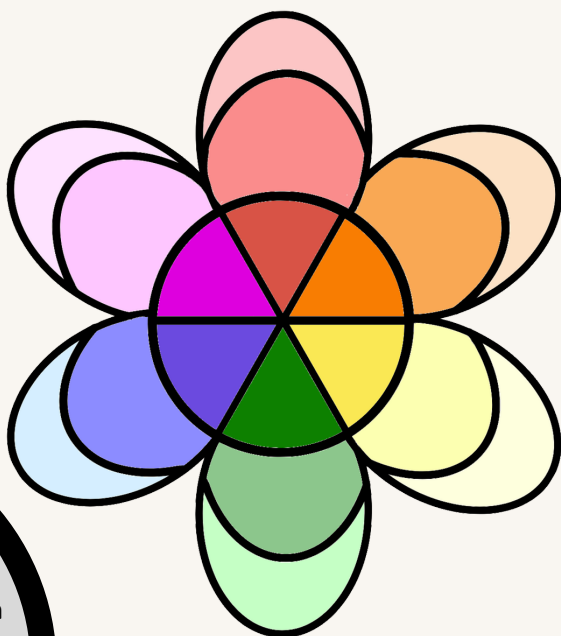
EMOTIONS BY COLOURS

There are many emotions that people can feel, making it hard to express and share with others. With the activity on the next page, you can express how you are feeling by choosing from the colours in the colour palette. If you are feeling really really angry (enraged), then you would say "I am feeling dark red." Remember you can feel more than one emotion. For example, you can be feeling dark red and medium blue (sad) at the same time.

COLOUR PALETTE

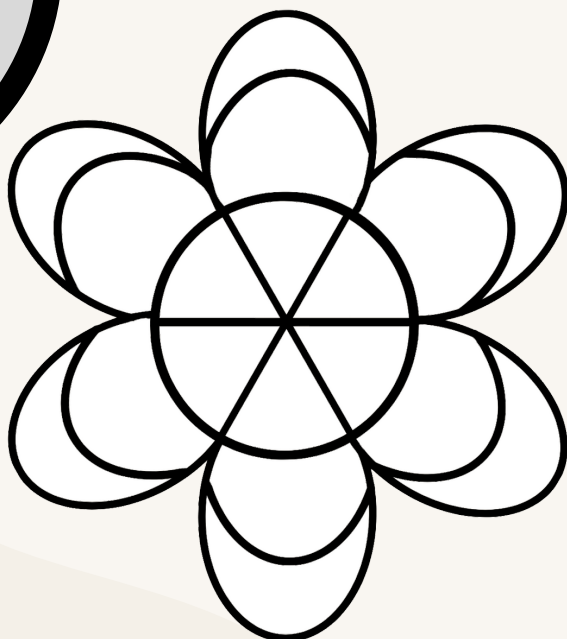
		Dark	Medium	Light
Red		Enraged	Angry	Mad
Orange		Scared	Overwhelmed	Nervous
Yellow		Happy	Excited	Optimistic
Green		Surprised	Relaxed	Calm
Blue		Grief	Sad	Down
Purple		Embarrassed	Shy	Withdrawn

Using the flower below, colour in the petals based on how you are feeling today. You can pick any colour from the colour palette. Feel free to combine as many colours as you'd like.



Did You Know ?

Some people with disabilities have difficulty expressing and recognizing their emotions.



SPOON THEORY

SPOON THEORY

Spoon theory is a self-advocacy tool named for the slang term "spoonie," which is sometimes used to describe people living with chronic illnesses. Spoon theory uses spoons as a metaphor for the amount of energy a person has on any given day. Each spoon is one unit of energy.

People with disabilities must divide their daily energy to account for the difficulties they may face. It's necessary to manage one's spoons wisely to avoid burnout. Using up too many "spoons" today might mean that you have fewer spoons tomorrow.

Spoon theory is especially helpful for those with invisible disabilities, who may have trouble explaining their boundaries.



Have you ever experienced burnout? If so, what did it feel like?

PLAN YOUR DAY

Use the blank boxes to divide your 10 spoons.



- Get out of bed
- Get dressed
- Watch TV



- Shower
- Style hair
- Read/study



- Socialize
- Prepare and eat a meal
- Appointments



- Go to work/school
- Exercise
- Advocate for yourself

Did you find this activity difficult? What sacrifices did you make? Will you use this in the future?

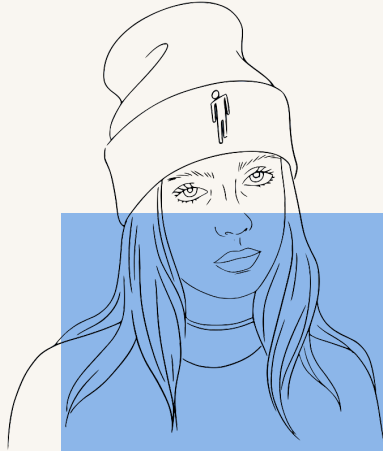


CELEBRITIES IN THE COMMUNITY



"I once sat at my school desk and felt helpless because of my inability to understand the written word."

- Will Smith- Actor
(Dyslexia)



"I think Tourettes has made me a better person and it's made me want to help other people."

- Billie Eilish-
Singer/Songwriter
(Tourette Syndrome)

"Do you know, it's funny," he starts, "but I never thought of being blind as a disadvantage, and I never thought of being black as a disadvantage. I am what I am. I love me! And I don't mean that egotistically - I love that God has allowed me to take whatever it was that I had and to make something out of it."

- Stevie Wonder-
Singer/Songwriter
(Retinopathy causing blindness)



ABC's OF ALLYSHIP

So, you want to be an ally?

Being an ally is being a partner who works alongside members of marginalized communities to correct the systems that block them from advancing in society. Allies work for everyone to be treated equally regardless of race, ability, sexuality, religion, and socioeconomic status.

Who can be an ally?

Anyone can be an ally if they put in the time and effort.



AWARENESS

Increase your awareness through education. Learning can take place at the personal, group, and societal levels.



BEHAVIOUR

Educate yourself in order to change your behaviour. This can be done by speaking up, doing research, or accepting feedback.



CONSISTENCY

Focus on creating a routine for yourself. Challenge yourself to check-in and validate times where you can be an ally.

SAMPLE ALLYSHIP ACTION PLAN

Below is a sample action plan. We encourage you to make your own! There is no right or wrong answer so have fun with it!

STEP 1 Which allies do you know of in the disability community? What can you learn from them?

- Paige Layle- (Autistic Tik Tok star)
- Terry Fox- (Canadian Athlete)

STEP 2 Identify areas in which you can improve your level of support for people with disabilities.

- Create space for people with disabilities to share their story.
- Challenge others beliefs
- Self-reflect

STEP 3 Write one goal that is specific, measurable, and attainable. What is the timeline for accomplishing it?

- In one month I want to listen to 3 podcasts with an open mind (Refer to page 31 for a list of podcasts)

STEP 4 What will be the biggest challenge(s) in accomplishing your goal?

- Being ok with feeling uncomfortable

STEP 5 Did you accomplish your goal? If yes, what feedback do you have for yourself? If not, what needs to happen for it to be accomplished?

MY ALLYSHIP ACTION PLAN

STEP 1 Which allies do you know of in the disability community? What can you learn from them?

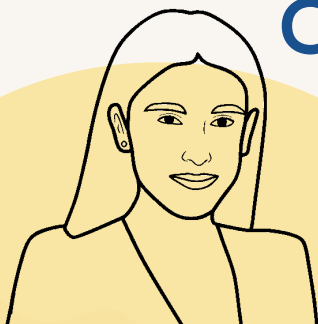
STEP 2 Identify areas in which you can improve your level of support for people with disabilities.

STEP 3 Write one goal that is specific, measurable, and attainable. What is the timeline for accomplishing it?

STEP 4 What will be the biggest challenge(s) in accomplishing your goal?

STEP 5 Did you accomplish your goal? If yes, what feedback do you have for yourself? If not, what needs to happen for it to be accomplished?

CELEBRITIES IN THE COMMUNITY



“You can speak with your face. It’s very easy for someone to say, “I’m crazy. I’m sad. I’m mad. And I just have to do it with my face.”

-Millie Bobby Brown-
Actress (Deaf in one ear)



“I don’t look at my disability as a weakness. It’s made me the performer that I am and the storyteller that I strive to be.”

- Amanda Gorman -
American Poet and Activist
(Speech impediment)

“It has never held me back, and some of the smartest people I know are people who have learning disabilities. The fact that some things are more of a struggle will only make you more determined, harder working and more imaginative in the solutions you find to problems.”

-Daniel Radcliffe-
Actor (Dyspraxia)



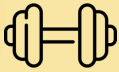
SELF-CARE

What is self-care?

In reality, self-care can look pretty different from the ads and commercials. Self-care is about making sure that we are caring for the different aspects of the self.

Wellness domains

Physical



Social



Intellectual



Spiritual



Emotional/Mental



Environmental



Self-care benefits

- Restore energy
- Become a better ally
- Increase efficiency
- Feel healthier
- Stronger immune system
- Increase focus
- Prevent burnout

Neglecting self-care

- Drains energy
- Leads to feeling overwhelmed
- Leads to stress
- Leads to exhaustion
- Lack of concentration
- Loss of sense of self
- Weakened immune system

ACTIVITY EXAMPLES

Physical

Drink water, eat a nutritious meal, exercise, move your body, get between 7-9 hours of sleep, shower, and brush your teeth.

Social

Text or call a friend, family member or colleague, ask for help when needed, and share your feelings with someone.

Intellectual

Read, watch a documentary, listen to a podcast, reflecting on a show, take breaks from work, or do something you are good at.

Spiritual

Practice meditation or yoga, spend quiet time alone, journal, think about what you are grateful for, and think about the positives in your life.

Emotional/ Mental

Take the day off or at least a few hours off, give yourself a compliment, give someone else a compliment, ask for support, and practice mindfulness.

Environmental

Care for plants, go outside, spend time in nature, be sustainable, use less plastic, eat less meat, unplug electronics, and turn off lights.

In the boxes below, write or draw the activities you will do this week within each wellness domain.

Physical

Social

Intellectual

Spiritual

**Emotional/
Mental**

Environmental

RESOURCES

Volunteer






Campus Friends

-  www.clgw.ca
-  www.instagram.com/campusfriends/?hl=en
-  www.facebook.com/universityofguelphcampusfriends/






Big Brother Big Sister

-  <https://guelph.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca>
-  <https://www.instagram.com/bbbs.guelph/>
-  <https://www.facebook.com/BBBSGuelph>






Best Buddies

-  <https://bestbuddies.ca>
-  <https://www.instagram.com/bestbuddiescanada/>
-  <https://www.facebook.com/BestBuddiesCanada>

Mental health









Kids Help Phone




-  <https://kidshelpphone.ca>
-  Text: 686868
-  Call: 1-800-668-6868

Want to learn more?







Podcasts

-  <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/disarming-disability/id1453438574>
-  <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/disability-matters/id419233724>
-  <https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/chronically-fully-sick/id1527899701>
-  <https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/listenable/id1500522289>
-  <https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/yarning-with-our-mob-elise-and-amy/id1220282876?i=1000498544697>
-  <https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/the-future-is-inclusive/id1488896173>

Videos

-  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFHOCC6Z8Ig>
-  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3bXuGHpudc>
-  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRzbd0REC5U>

Websites

-  <https://services.easterseals.org/family-information-resources/disability-support-organizations/>
-  <https://abilityonline.org>
-  <https://www.childdevelop.ca/programs/integrating-learning-disabilities-and-mental-health/resources>
-  <https://www.neads.ca/en/>
-  <http://www.idonline.org/indepth>
-  <https://deareverybody.hollandbloorview.ca/learn/tips-and-tools/6-tips-to-help-you-as-you-strive-to-be-an-ally/>

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