



# Bladder Chatter



Volume 3, Issue 3

## TRU Student Health and Wellness Newsletter

By TRU Wellness Centre—Live TRUly Well...

January, 2007

### *The Straight-Up Talk of Disabilities*



#### In this Issue:

- Definition of Disability
- Coping with Disabilities
- Community Resources
- Types of Disabilities
- Words of Inspiration
- Effective Communication
- Written by Lisa Coriale (4th Year Social Work Student)



#### What is a Disability?

"Disability" is a restriction in a person's ability to participate a specific activity. An example of this would be that a person who uses a wheelchair might not be able to walk up stairs. "Handicap" refers to an environmental or attitudinal barrier that prevents the person with a disability from participating to their full potential. The lack of an elevator in a building would be a handicap to the person who uses a wheelchair. As another example, a person who is deaf is restricted in their ability to hear a spoken conversation. Another person's reluctance to use ways to communicate other than speech with a person who is deaf creates a handicap.

#### Some Common Disabilities are:

- Cerebral Palsy
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (O.C.D)
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Depression
- Brain Injury
- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Bipolar
- Downs Syndrome
- Visually and Hearing Impairment
- Dyslexia





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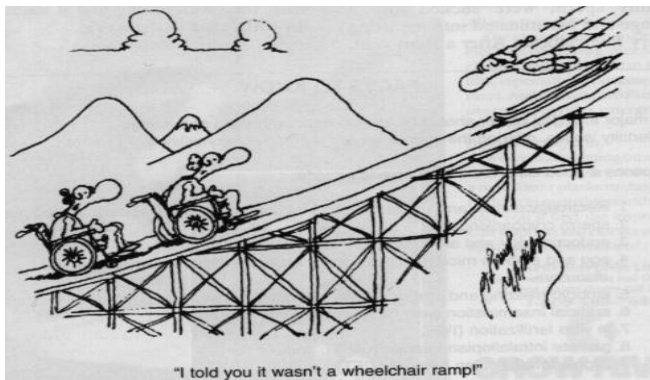
The Straight up Talk on Disabilities continued...



**General tips for effective communication when interacting with people who have disabilities:**

- Focus on the person, rather than the disability. This can be difficult at times, especially if an assistive device is being used for communication. Computers, voice boxes, and hearing aids are all examples of assistive devices used for communicating. Remember these devices are simply accommodations. Your conversation is with the person.
- Approach a person from the front, where they can see you. This is as important for a person using a wheelchair (who may not be able to turn to see you) as for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. It is easier to hear a person from in front, and this position allows you to communicate with expressions or body language that can convey much additional information.
- Speak directly to the person rather than to an attendant, companion or interpreter who may facilitate the conversation.
- Speak in a normal voice. A common mistake is to speak loudly or slowly to a person with a disability, which can be very insulting. If the person is having difficulty hearing or understanding you, they will let you know.
- Respect personal space. Recognize that for a person using a wheelchair, the chair is an extension of their body. Do not lean on it or move them without permission.
- Do not hesitate to offer assistance if the situation warrants. At the same time, respect the person's right to accept or refuse your offer.
- If you are not sure how to act or what is appropriate, ask the person. People with disabilities are usually happy to give you assistance, and your interaction will be more comfortable as a result.

## A Cartoon Just For U!



## Did You Know???

\*\*Approximately 1 in 8 Canadians live with disabilities.

\*\*There are approximately 393 people on TRU campus including Kamloops, Williams lake, and on-line students who access the disability services at TRU.



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The Straight up Talk on Disabilities continued...

**The 3 most prominent disabilities that students at TRU face are:**



## Physical Disabilities

- Refers to a broad range of disabilities including bone/ muscle disorders, and breathing/heart conditions.
- Often rely upon devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, canes, and artificial limbs to obtain mobility.
- May either be from birth or a result of injury, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, amputation, heart disease, pulmonary disease or more.

## Learning Disabilities

- Difficulty in collecting, organizing, or acting on verbal and nonverbal information.
- Has trouble understanding or using written or spoken language.
- Difficulty due to a neurological difference in brain structure or functioning.
- People with learning disabilities are intelligent; in fact, they often have average or above average intelligence.
- Due to standardized tests, academic performance, below what one would expect of someone of their intelligence, age, and grade level. Thus, a person with a learning disability may score poorly on tests, but the low scores are due to a problem with learning, not to lack of intelligence.

## Mental Health Disabilities

- One of Canada's leading public health problems.
- A person of any age, race and religion may develop a mental illness
- Many people are afraid to admit that they have a mental illness for fear of rejection and isolation due to the stigma that accompanies the illness.
- In most cases, mental illness only becomes visible when someone is in crisis. Even so, what others may notice are the side effects from medication, rather than the symptoms of the illness.



### On Campus Services for those with disabilities include:

- Financial aid and Accommodation

To find out more about these services and others, please contact Disability Services on Campus at 250-852-6440 or Email: [dso@tru.ca](mailto:dso@tru.ca), located in the Old Main Building Rm 1651



### Peer Support Services

**Feeling stressed, lonely, angry, frustrated? Peer Support** is a group of trained TRU student volunteers who go through the same frustrations and challenges as many other students, and **provide free, confidential emotional support** to our fellow students. We are here to help students adapt to the personal and academic demands of university life, and we will help you in any way we can. **Peer Support** is available to all students of TRU, and we can be contacted in our office at **OM 1421**, by phone at **371-5996**, and by email/msn at [peer@tru.ca](mailto:peer@tru.ca).



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The Straight up Talk on Disabilities continued...

## Tips on how to cope with a disability:

- Have a support network of family and friends who will support you in achieving your goals.
- Have a hobby that you like to participate in.
- Be confident in all that you do.
- Focus on the positive but deal with the negative.
- Be independent whenever possible.
- Speak up for yourself, keep speaking until the right people hear you.

## Tip of The Day!

Be patient with those who do not understand your disability. Take the time to educate those around you about your disability. This is a good way for people to get to know you as an individual.

## Words of Inspiration...

*Beautiful, Beautiful Bird*

*Beautiful, Beautiful Bird*

*You are the sparkle of my eye*

*Beautiful, Beautiful Bird*

*I gave you wings to fly*

*So don't be afraid,*

*You beautiful bird*

*I am here to help you*

*So spread your wings,*

*You beautiful bird*

*I created you to soar*

*So you must fly,*

*You beautiful bird*

*- Lisa Coriale*



"Sometimes I think of myself as a little caterpillar being transformed into a beautiful butterfly."

*-Lisa Coriale*

## Community resources for people with disabilities:

Community Living Centre

Phone: 250-374-1585

Gardengate Training Centre Phone

Phone: 250-554-9453

Kamloops Brain Injury Association

Phone: 250-372-1799

Kamloops Society for Community Living

Phone: 250-374-3245

Kamloops HandyDART

Phone: 250-376-7525

People In Motion

Phone: 250-376-4689

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Phone: 250-374-8080

## References:

<http://www.canadian-health-network.ca>

<http://www.csun.edu/~sp20558/dis/physical.html>

[http://www.helpguide.org/mental/learning\\_disabilities.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/mental/learning_disabilities.htm)

<http://members.tripod.com/~cripkorner/toons/page-1.html>

This article has been brought to you by Lisa Coriale of the TRU Wellness Centre, now located in the New Residence Hall (Dorm), Rm 111. Contact Andrea Tamburro regarding any questions or concerns @ 828-5010 or via email [atamburro@tru.ca](mailto:atamburro@tru.ca)

