

The Dangers of Disability Stereotypes:

- This webinar provides an overview of the significant stereotypes surrounding disability that would attribute a person with a disability as static or unchanging
- We discuss ways to demystify the experience of a disability to then understand disability as a unique, complex, diverse way of living
- Stereotypes of any kind are harmful to those they claim to represent because they are largely inaccurate and based upon false perceptions about the lived experience of a group of people
 - Stereotypes are informed by the Medical Model, which sees Disability as an issue to be solved, not as a way of living
 - Your patients and their caregivers may not know these representations are false and believe their fate is intertwined with these troubling depictions
 - Bad depictions can lead to the concealment of a disability, reluctance to use assistive technology, social isolation, and many other complex feelings

Types of Stereotypes:

- The Victim:
 - Depicted as pitiful or helpless because of disability
 - Receives sympathy from the audience
 - A character is defined solely by their disability
- The Villain:
 - Disability leads to villainous acts
 - Tragic backstory
 - Mental illness portrayed as violent
 - Perpetuates the stigma of fearing those with physical and/or mental disabilities
- The Hero:
 - Overcoming a disability through a superpower
 - Considered extraordinary
 - Overcompensatory powers
 - Perpetuates Disability Porn
- The Innocent:
 - Depicted as childlike and sweet because of disability
 - Primary purpose is to reveal flaws in those around them
 - Preserves patronizing and inaccurate perceptions of disability
- The Butt of the Joke:
 - Depicted as humorous because of disability
 - Derogatory jokes/slurs are used for comedy
 - Rise of comedies with disabilities is a positive shift

Consider the Following when Treating your Patients:

- You are the unbiased resource and patients trust you to inform them respectfully
- Introduce your patients to support groups
- Ensure your language choice is positive
- Listen to your patient and know they experience and emotions may vary