

Intorduction to Anti-Ableism

for health and allied health professionals

1

Hello

Liel Bridgford (she/they) is a Provisional Psychologist, trainer, disability and justice advocate, writer, and podcaster. Liel's work focuses on providing inclusive, accessible, holistic, and trauma-informed support to people, by centering lived experience. She is passionate about working from an intersectional feminist perspective and is an advocate for the social model of disability. Liel is committed to the necessary ongoing learning for holistic anti-oppression work, and identifies as a proud disabled, immigrant, non-conforming female. You can find her on all major platforms via @LielKBridgford.



2

Overview

- Disability and the social model
- What is ableism
- Spot ableism
- Impact of ableism on mental health
- Anti-ableism work
- Tips for getting started
- Q & A

3

Disability and the social model

- 1 in 6 people in Australia *report* to live with a disability (or 18% - 4.4 million people)
- Disability can include: physical differences, neurodivergence, d/Deaf, people with psychosocial disabilities / mental health challenge, chronic illness, communication related disabilities etc.
- Social model of disability: 'disability' is created in the interaction between a mind-body and the environment
- Disability pride is active resistance to ableism

4

Ableism: 'discrimination or prejudice against individuals with disabilities'

- Facets of ableism:
 - physical
 - attitudinal
 - social
 - language
- Ableism is everywhere – unless it is explicitly and intentionally challenged.
- Medical ableism

5

Spotting ableism

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In your workplace – for patients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examination tables ○ Long corridors ○ Bright light ○ Access to interpreters ○ Language 'your body doesn't work properly' ○ In your community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stairs-only entry ○ Uneven sidewalks, blocked accessibility parking spaces ○ Narrow isles ○ Degrading language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In your workplace – for workers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Full time requirements ○ Lack of breaks ○ Negative attitudes to disability, entrenched medical model ○ Physical inaccessibility |
|--|--|

6

Ableism – impact on mental health

- Often most distressing part about living with or acquiring a disability
- Internalised ableism and stigma
- Mobility aids = a helpful tool
- Trauma from medical ableism and societal ableism
- Ableism impact social/meaningful engagement which impacts mental health
- Impact on mental distress and quality of life

7

Anti-ableism work: It's about commitment

- acknowledge that ableism is real
- Intentionally search and notice it
- Speak up
- Take your money elsewhere
- Unlearn, unlearn unlearn then – relearn from disabled people themselves
- Comit to becoming an ally
 - Amplify diverse disabled voices
 - Continued, ongoing learning
 - Challenge ableism – within yourself & society
 - Acknowlegde your privilege

8

Tips for getting started – centre lived experience

- Media/art/entertainment:
 - Read books written by disabled people (e.g., We've Got This, Growing Up Disabled in Australia)
 - Follow disabled people on social media (e.g. @LielKBridgford, El Gibbs, Jessica Walton)
 - Listen to podcasts by disabled people (e.g. (Un)marginalised, The I Can't Stand Podcast)
 - Watch movies by disabled creators (e.g. Crip Camp)
- At work:
 - Ask for disability training and professional development at work
 - Advocate for inclusive hiring and work practices
 - Ask broader and more open-ended questions (e.g. What do you mean by?)

9

Q & A

- Please ask anything – there are no silly questions

10