

Prologue

“Why can’t that boy sit still?”

“She was so happy yesterday, now she won’t stop crying. What’s wrong with her?”

“Oh my goodness, I can’t tell if that person is a boy or a girl!”

Questions and statements like these are common in many communities around the world. People are doubtful about individuals who do not fit the “norm”; people are unsure what to think and how to behave around individuals who have physical and mental disorders. This prejudice, discrimination and uncertainty derives from lack of knowledge and the division between people who are normal and not normal.

Equality and equity is not the same. Equality means that everyone is equal. Being equal means treating individuals the same, despite their individual differences. Equity takes people's needs into account and encourages providing the resources that allow individuals to be successful.

Creating a multicultural and accommodating classroom that meets the needs of all students and all skill levels is essential to growth. Elevating knowledge about physical and cognitive disorders can help in uniting together through our differences rather than allowing them to separate us.

It is important to *treat others the way you want to be treated*.

The Alphabetical Book Celebrating Disorders

Andy the Alligator is so sad
because he has something that is perceived as bad
He gets **anxious** when teachers ask him questions
He stutters, gets nervous and grows a fearful expression

Billy the Bear is different from the rest
His emotions are out of control causing him to get stressed
He goes from happy to sad in the blink of an eye
His **bipolar** actions make him want to cry

Carlos the Cat has issues with his brain
He can’t remember lessons and it’s making him go insane
His lack of **cognition** makes each day hard
Often causing him to walk alone in the yard

Daisy the Duck can't control her **depression**
She feels helpless and hopeless and always has a blank expression
Her classmates don't understand and she sits alone
She often feels like she is on her own

Eddy the Elephant and Fiona the Fox
Are the best of friends they even wear matching socks
Even though their personalities are as similar as can be
They recognize that their classmates are all great company

George the Giraffe is not happy with his gender
He is a boy that wants to be a girl, he feels like a pretender
Gender Dysphoria is a real condition
George should be applauded for his courageous ambition
He didn't wish to feel this way and must follow his heart
The fact that he knows what he wants now makes him really smart

Henrietta the Heron moves her eyes all around
Her involuntary movements always make some sort of sound
She distracts the class and can never appease
But it's out of her control; she has **Huntington's disease**

Iggy the Iguana and Julie the Jaguar love going to school
Their classmates are all unique and that's pretty cool
With each individual they must adapt
If you don't embrace differences you'll just feel trapped

Karly the Kangaroo steals things from the classroom
She has a collection of stolen items that she keeps in the bathroom
She doesn't steal for personal gain
Kleptomania causes her stress, guilt and remorse and is a serious pain

Luna the Lemur has severe memory gaps
Her teacher asked her to recall a lesson that was all about maps
Lacunar amnesia is a real thing
It's like having a cut in a piece of string

Mindy the Mouse gets upset at sounds
Her uncontrollable reactions make her head overwhelmingly pound
Misophonia causes classroom noises to make her day pretty rough
So her teacher gives her headphones so her day isn't too tough

Nina the Newt is new to school
But she falls asleep in class and she is called uncool

Her conditions called **narcolepsy** and her body shuts down
The class doesn't understand and it's making her frown

Odis the Otter has **OCD**
He washes his hand for hours and makes everyone late for P.E.
His mind always makes him check things more than twice
He only wishes that his classmates would be understanding and nice

The teacher thinks there is something wrong with Platypus Paul
He always looks scared and avoids adults in the hall
He has cuts and bruises and he won't tell us why
Teachers think it **physical abuse** but they don't want to pry
We know it's important for him to tell an adult
No one should be a victim of physical assault

Quinty the Quail hangs out with a Rabbit named Rob
An unlikely combination of friends that might just seem odd
Differences unite us they make well rounded
Everyone should be in a classroom where skills and uniqueness are compounded

Sammy the Snail st-st-st-stutters when she talks
Talking for her is like trying to construct a tower of uneven blocks
While she works on her **stuttering** she finds talking trying
Luckily her classmates are understanding and for her they are all vying

Tammy the Tarantula has **Tourette's**
She has vocal and motor tics and they come in sets
Her classmates don't have it and think she is weird
Because of her disorder she thinks her reputation is smeared

No disorders yet start with U, V, W, X, Y or Z-ee
And while some disorders are obvious, others you cannot see
Everyone is different they struggle and fall
But accepting each other's differences will make everyone stand tall
Everyone is born different from the rest
But uniting through differences is definitely the BEST!

Glossary of Disorders

Anxiety Disorders:

-While everyone goes through feelings of anxiety from time to time, anxiety disorders are different in the sense that they may cause such a level of distress that it gets in the way of a person's ability to live a normal life. There are several different types of anxiety disorders, such as panic disorder, social anxiety disorder,

generalized anxiety disorder, and specific phobias or intense fears of specific objects or situations.

-Some of the general symptoms of individuals suffering from an anxiety disorder are:

- Feelings of fear, panic, and uneasiness
- Hands and feet becoming either cold or sweaty
- Shortness of breath
- Issues with sleeping
- Nausea
- Tension in muscles

<http://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/mental-health-anxiety-disorders>

Bipolar:

-People with bipolar disorder experience wild highs and devastating lows, rather than the normal emotions that most people experience. The disorder is a medical condition involving changes in brain function, which then results in intense mood swings. These drastic changes in mood can have a negative effect on functioning at work or at school, as well as in relationships.

-Some of the moods or symptoms that individuals suffering from bipolar disorder may experience are:

- Mania: Often begins with a feeling of heightened energy and creativity, but may quickly progress to an extreme, exaggerated sense of self-esteem, as well as an irritable mood.
- Hypomania: A milder form of mania that begins with the person feeling an elevated mood, but is followed by either an escalation to mania or a crash to feeling depressed.
- Depression (see glossary definition of depression)

http://www.mooddisorderscanada.ca/documents/Consumer%20and%20Family%20Support/Bipolar%20Brochure%20English%20FINAL%20150109.pdf?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_content=3Moods&utm_campaign=BipolarDisorderSymptoms&gclid=CMbV5KK728gCFQYIaQoduKEEng

Cognitive Dysfunction:

-Individuals may experience cognitive problems as a result of psychiatric disabilities. This involves such things as being unable to think clearly, a lack of concentration, and an inability to retain new information. As a result, people experiencing cognitive dysfunction tend to have their self-confidence fade and have a harder time maintaining relationships with friends and family.

-Some of the main areas that people suffering from lack of cognition struggle with are:

- Attention
- Memory
- Ability to process and respond to information
- Critical thinking skills

https://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/cogdys_manual/CogDysHndbk.htm

Depression:

-While everyone experiences feelings of sadness from time to time, people with depression feel like the emptiness and despair that they have been experiencing has taken a hold of their life. Getting throughout the day becomes a struggle in itself, and things that used to be enjoyable may no longer seem like they once did.

-Some of the signs and symptoms of individuals suffering from depression are:

- Feelings of helplessness
- Loss of energy and interest in general daily activities
- Weight or appetite changes
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Feeling angry or agitated
- Changes in sleep

<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/depression-signs-and-symptoms.htm>

Gender Dysphoria:

-People who have gender dysphoria feel like the gender that they physically appear to be is not the gender that they are. As a result, these individuals feel a desire to have the body parts of the gender that best represents them and to be accepted by other people as this gender. The discomfort that people with gender dysphoria have with their body may cause distress, anxiety, and depression, interfering with the way that they function at school or work or during social activities.

<http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/gender-dysphoria?page=1>

Huntington's Disease:

-Huntington's disease is a brain disorder that is genetic in nature, with roughly a 50% chance of being inherited by a child of a parent with the disease. The disease causes cells in parts of the brain to die, which then affects the person's ability to control movements and emotions, recall life events, and make decisions on their own. Huntington's disease eventually leads to death, generally as a result of other health complications.

-Some of the general symptoms of individuals suffering from Huntington's disease are:

- Emotional distress (depression, anxiety, obsessive behaviour, etc.)

- Loss of cognitive abilities (inability to focus, recall information, or make decisions, etc.)
- Physical deterioration (loss of weight, involuntary movements, difficulties walking, talking, and swallowing, etc.)

<http://www.huntingtonsociety.ca/learn-about-hd/what-is-huntingtons/>

Kleptomania:

-While typical shoplifters steal for either personal gain or out of rebellion, individuals with kleptomania steal because the urge of doing so is too powerful to resist. These individuals feel increased anxiety or arousal leading up to the moment of theft, and during it they experience feelings of great pleasure and relief. Afterwards, people with kleptomania feel very guilty and shameful, and are fearful of arrest following the theft. The urges will eventually return resulting in a repetition of the cycle of kleptomania.

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/kleptomania/basics/symptoms/con-20033010>

Lacunar Amnesia:

-Amnesia is the loss of memories and facts in an individual. These individuals are generally able to identify who they are, but have difficulty learning new information and forming new memories. Lacunar amnesia is a specific type of amnesia that occurs for either a specific event or a short period of time. This tends to occur in individuals as a result of either an emotional or physical trauma.

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/amnesia/basics/definition/con-20033182>

<http://www.alleydog.com/glossary/definition.php?term=Lacunar%20Amnesia>

Misophonia:

-A person with misophonia is very sensitive to particular sounds, and sometimes visual triggers as well. Each individual suffering from this condition will have their own set of symptoms and triggers, commonly referred to as their trigger set. Sounds may be added, or sometimes even removed from a person's trigger set over time.

-Some of the general symptoms of individuals suffering from misophonia being exposed to a sound in their trigger set are:

- General discomfort and annoyance
- Panic and rage
- Defensiveness or offensiveness

<http://www.misophonia.com/symptoms-triggers/>

Narcolepsy:

-Narcolepsy is a disorder that affects a person's control of sleep and wakefulness. During the day, people with narcolepsy experience an excessive amount of sleepiness and uncontrollable episodes of falling asleep. These uncontrollable sleep attacks could occur at any time of the day during any type of activity.

-Some of the general symptoms of individuals suffering from narcolepsy are:

- Excessive sleepiness during the daytime
- Hallucinations
- Sleep paralysis
- Sudden loss of muscle control

<http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/guide/narcolepsy>

OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder):

-While many of us have simple habits and routines that make us feel better, individuals with OCD experience these behaviours much more intensely, making them disruptive to going about their everyday lives. For people with OCD, the habits and routines that make them feel better are fueled by unwanted thoughts that do not easily go away, causing difficulties to their lives. They experience both obsessions and compulsions that don't necessarily make sense, but are out of the person's control. These obsessions and compulsions may vary and change over time.

https://www.cmha.ca/mental_health/obsessive-compulsive-disorder/

Physical Abuse:

-Physical abuse is when a person is violent or uses physical force against another person, resulting in bodily pain, injury, or impairment. Types of physical abuse include assault, battery, and inappropriate restraint. Perpetrators range from being merely an acquaintance to being a son, daughter, grandchild, etc. There are both physical indicators of physical abuse such as injuries and bruises, as well as behavioural indicators such as a history of smaller injuries and suspicious hospitalizations, and having family members provide different explanations of how injuries occurred.

<http://www.preventelderabuse.org/elderabuse/physical.html>

Stuttering:

-Stuttering is a speech disorder where syllables and words may be repeated or prolonged, causing a disruption to the flow of a person's speech. Other struggling behaviours may accompany the speech disruptions, such as rapid blinking or trembling of the lips. This speech disorder impacts the individual's overall quality of life as a result of their difficulties communicating with other people. Two types of stuttering are most common: developmental stuttering occurs in young children who are still learning language and speech skills, while neurogenic stuttering may

occur after an individual experience head trauma, a stroke, or other types of brain injury.

<http://www.medicinenet.com/stuttering/page2.htm>

Tourette Syndrome:

-Tourette syndrome is a disorder of the nervous system that begins during childhood. An individual with Tourette syndrome will experience unusual repetitive movements or make unwanted sounds that are beyond the person's control, known as tics. Symptoms of Tourette syndrome tend to decrease in severity and become more controlled after the person's teenage years.

-Some of the more common tics seen in individuals suffering from Tourette syndrome are:

- Head jerking
- Shoulder shrugging
- Touching other people
- Throat clearing
- Yelling
- Repeating words or phrases

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/tourette-syndrome/basics/symptoms/con-20043570>