

Disability and Rural Communities: Making a Difference in Small Towns



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Presenter – Elesia Ashkenazy

- Diagnosed on the autistic spectrum and profoundly deaf, Elesia Ashkenazy is passionate about Disability Rights and self-advocacy. She seeks to promote widespread understanding of the needs and rights of people with disabilities.
- Elesia is the Director of Community Outreach for National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN).
- She is also the Community Council Chair/Research Assistant for Academic Autistic Spectrum Partnership in Research and Education (AASPIRE). Elesia is a Board Member/Editorial Coordinator for Autism Women's Network (AWN).



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We'll post updates and follow-up discussions related to this webinar here.

Please join us!

Disability in Rural Communities

Making a Difference in Small Towns

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National Youth Leadership Network

A team of leaders
building power and
community among youth
with disabilities

Presentation Overview

50-minute presentation

10-minute Q&A

Advocacy - Community - Inclusion -
Interdependence - Needs - Networking -
Resources



sauce w/ basil, shallots, onion, bell pepper,
lemon leaves, & basil.
Sp. 2 **Pumpkin** \$ 10.
fresh pumpkin sauce with
bell pepper & sweet basil.

To better serve our customers
with greater efficiency
please have no more than two
credit cards per table.

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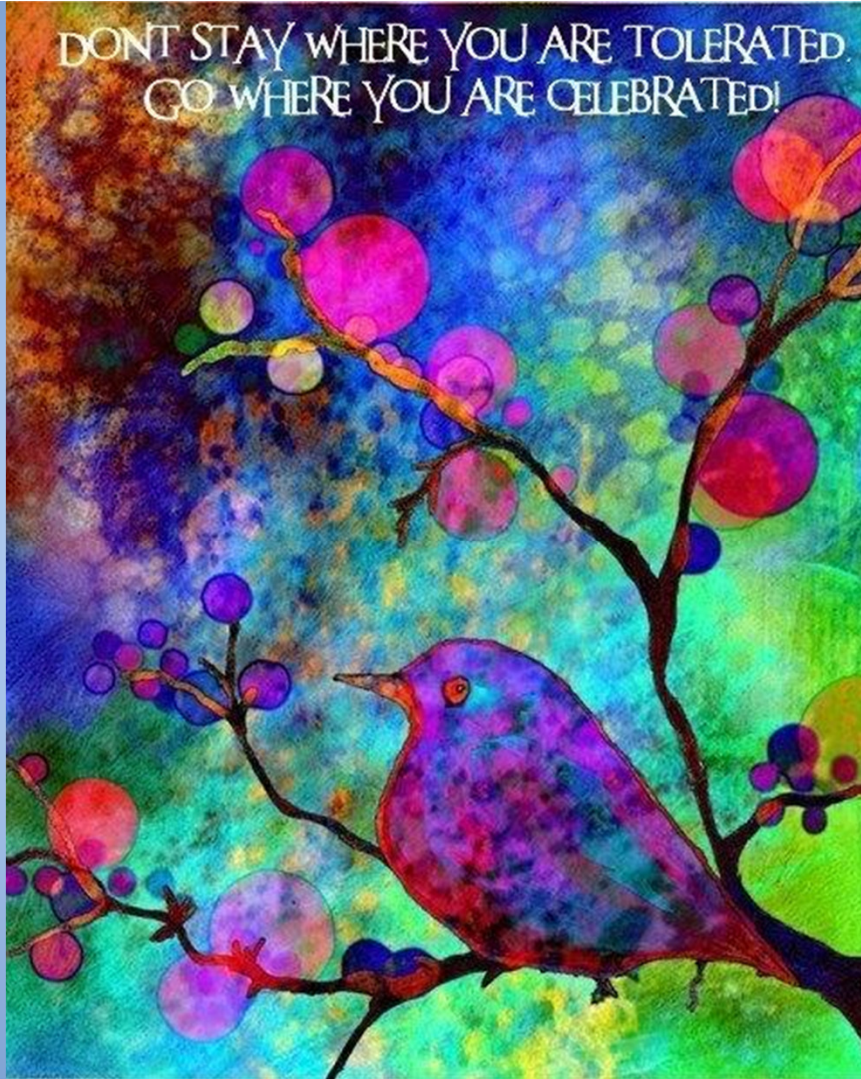


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DONT STAY WHERE YOU ARE TOLERATED
GO WHERE YOU ARE CELEBRATED!



Medical Model of Disability

- Disability is seen as a negative.
- Disability is shameful.
- People with disabilities are deficient and/or abnormal.
- The remedy for disability is to make the person “normal”.
- Professionals are the only ones who know best about disabilities.

Social Model of Disability

- Disability is viewed as a difference.
- How society treats people with disabilities is directly related to disability.
- Communication between people with disabilities and society as a whole impacts accessibility and integration of people with disabilities.

Social Model of Disability Continued

Systemic barriers, negative attitudes, and exclusion by society contribute to disability-related challenges.

When society fails as a whole to consider the needs of people who are at all points on the spectrum of humanity, that is when the challenges of disability truly begin to limit us.

Social Model of Disability Continued

The remedy for disability is advocacy, in addition to societal education.

Professionals have a place within making society and life better for people with disabilities, however, we are the true experts on our lives and support needs.

Why people enjoy and want to live in rural areas

- Independence and interdependence
- Easier to navigate
- Tranquility
- Friendlier communities
- Connection to nature
- Slower-paced

Staying in the Face of Challenge

- Safety and familiarity
- Better easier solutions are not guaranteed in a bigger city
- Pioneer mentality support
- If we support the idea that every person in every community has a right to be an equal participant, this includes people with disabilities

Common Needs

- Centers for Independent Living (CIL's)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offices
- Flexible work environments
- Peer and family support systems, groups, organizations
- Efficient public transportation
- Affordable accessible housing
- Recreation

Common Needs Continued

- Advocacy
- Leadership
- Mentorship
- Equality
- Accessibility
- Up-to-date information
- Inclusion
- Respect

Creating Resources

- Skill trade
- Correspondence
- Outreach
- Networking
- Education
- Shared resources

Remember:

- Everyone has a purpose.
- Purposes grow and even change over time.
- Resources should be kept current.

People with disabilities know best what does and does not work for us. There's a lot we can learn from each other. Together, we can make a difference.

Resources

- Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)

www.april-rural.org

- Rural Assistance Center (RAC)

www.raconline.org

Resources Continued

- Project Action

www.projectaction.org

- Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

www.askjan.org

- Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities (RTC: RURAL)

<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/>

Resources Continued

- National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN)

www.nyln.org



Questions and Answers

Q & A



THANK
YOU 😊