

Disability Justice

The Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) conducted a Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities. In the final year of the project, the NCCC responded to interests and needs of the CoP state teams that asked for a focus on racial equity in intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by creating a Racial Equity Learning Community. The NCCC team identified two terms — disability justice and intersectionality — and in partnership with persons with IDD, created a set of materials to define these terms and share what they mean within the context of their lived experience.

“Disability Justice is the cross-disability (sensory, intellectual, mental health/psychiatric, neurodiversity, physical/mobility, learning, etc.) framework that values access, self-determination, and an expectation of difference. An expectation of difference means that we expect difference in disability, identity, and culture. To be included and part of society is about being able to be our ‘whole self’ (all of our identities together). Disability Justice includes space for self-care, reflection, and hard discussions.

Disability Justice redefines beliefs about productivity, attractiveness, and the value of human life. Beyond challenging what is considered normal, Disability Justice addresses the deeply held fear of vulnerability by practicing the value and act of interdependence. The Disability Justice framework is practiced on an individual, cultural and societal level. It asks us to be responsible for both what we do to make change and how we go about doing the work to make it. The focus expanding from educating and advocacy around systems and attitudes, to working with other oppressed groups educating ourselves and creating solutions and community power that can serve everyone.”

This definition of disability justice was created based on Disability Activist Collective notes. Edited 2014 and posted to <https://Disabilityj.Blogspot.com>



LUTICHA ANDRE DOUCETTE is a Black, disabled, queer author of “Cultivating An Intersectional Mindset,” owner & CEO of Catalyst Consulting Associates LLC, artist and changemaker. Her writing has appeared in *Toxicon*, *Yes! Magazine* and the *New York Times*. Luticha shared her thoughts on disability justice with the NCCC.

“Disability Justice is not just a set of guiding principles but a way of being. When we go about the work of diversity, equity and inclusion, it is not just about a series of boxes we check, but how we think and feel. It is about community and the deliberate and intentional mindset to put those most impacted first, not create silos and not massage egos.”

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