

Creating Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities



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October 20th, 2022

Purpose of the Session

- To talk about importance of having spaces for people with disabilities in your area
- To show ways you can bring people with disabilities together and connect with one another
- To talk about how to make sure your space is accessible and inclusive to all people with disabilities
- To show fun activities you can do, in-person and virtually, to connect with more people with disabilities in your area

Notes

- I will do my best to use person-first language throughout the session.
- There are a few times where I would use identity-first language (for example; Disabled, instead of person with disability), but that is in reference to the group I co-founded

About T.J.

- Researcher at University of Illinois Chicago
- Co-Founder of Chicagoland Disabled People of Color Coalition
- Self-proclaimed Disability Community Culture Critic (especially media representation, sports, and “subcultures”)
- Creator of *the Black Autist* and hashtag #BlackAutisticJoy



Image Description: A smiling African-American man with locs, wearing glasses and a purple buttoned-up shirt

What is a brave and fun space?

What does it look like?



Image description: Three people at a party, with a person to the right cutting a brown and white three-layered cake

Tidbits about Brave and Fun Spaces

- Brave and fun spaces may look different from place to place, depending on where you live
- A brave space is a space where you can connect with people with similar interests and identities, feel included, express yourself, and not be bullied for being yourself
- We don't say "safe spaces" because not all spaces are safe for people. Some "safe spaces" exclude certain people or bully certain people if they don't agree with most of the people in the space.

Tidbits about Brave and Fun Spaces

- Fun spaces are exactly what they are....fun! Relaxing! Full of energy!
- But really, fun spaces looks like the following things:
 - No drama, no fighting
 - Sharing food, games, culture, ideas, and more
 - 'Good vibes', warm, welcoming
 - It's like a party!
 - Space to meet new people

What does a brave and fun space look like for people with disabilities?

- It can be in-person at a public place, someone's house, or online through Zoom and other apps
- MUST be accessible and inclusive to everyone
 - Ramps, no stairs, lower sound volume, and more
 - Welcoming and respectable to people with various disabilities, races, genders, and more
 - Multiple options (different foods, activities, and more for different people and needs)

What does a brave and fun space look like for people with disabilities?

- IT'S FUN
- It's led AND centered on people with disabilities
 - Note: Some spaces allow allies in the space, some don't. It's up to the people leading the space



Image description: People in a circle dancing, including a woman with long curly hair and white dress with images dancing with another person

Why Do We, People With Disabilities Need Brave and Fun Spaces?



Image Description: A diabetic Pakistani woman sits in a pizza restaurant with a childhood friend, using a pump to inject some insulin before eating. The friend carries on the conversation while holding a slice of pizza, and is a Pakistani woman with wavy hair, a pink shirt, and high-rise jeans. The woman on the right wears a blue hijab paired with a floral pink dress. Their table is filled with pizza, fries, and fresh-squeezed fruit drinks.

Why do we need brave and fun spaces?

- May not be many people with disabilities to connect and hang out with
- Bullied by people who don't identify with having disabilities
- Places and groups are inaccessible
- Want to connect with more people with disabilities, especially if you are new to the disability community
- Escape from the pressures of advocacy and fighting for disability rights & justice
- Looking for places where you can be yourself



Image description: Shadow of a wheelchair person in a room, looking at trees and other structures outside

Suggestions on Creating Brave and Fun Spaces

- Make sure the place is accessible and inclusive to all
- Respect wishes, accommodations, cultures, and views of people in the space
- Public places are best spots; house of someone you trust (or your home) is okay too

Suggestions on Creating Brave and Fun Spaces

- Space, event, or meetup can also take place online if it rains or there's no accessible places available
 - Examples: Zoom, Twitch, Facebook, chat groups
- Have a variety of activities that many people can enjoy; you can adapt activities to make sure more people are included
- If you are hosting a meetup space at a restaurant, have it at a place where most people can eat the food

Examples of Brave and Fun Spaces/Events/Meetups

- Hanging out at a mall, zoo, movie theater, beach, park, arcade, bowling alley, amusement park, or restaurant
- Game nights
- Online/Twitch/Discord groups
- Creating a physical, welcoming, accessible place for people with disabilities can hang out
- Dance parties

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- Resources for event planning, game ideas, making spaces accessible and inclusive, etc.
- Some resources may not have plain-language; others are videos
- It's a lot of resources! I apologize. Feel free to look at all of them on your own time, or if you have questions, email me at tgordo7@uic.edu.

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- Friday Fun-Day: Stay and Play: All About Games ~ 4.10.2020
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/5238320091485412610?assets=true>
- Event Planning Resources
<https://www.selfadvocacyinfo.org/resources-about/event-planning>
- Inclusion Resources
<https://www.selfadvocacyinfo.org/resources-about/inclusion>
- Communication Guidelines for a Brave Space
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/581e9e06ff7c509a5ca2fe32/t/58f25fa937c58130853337df/1492279209799/04+AWARE-LA+Brave+Space+Guidelines+and+History.pdf>
- Rotations 10/14/17
<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10155594750161071&type=3>

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- Disability Inclusion Toolkit
<https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/5800/ford-disability-inclusion-toolkit-1.pdf>
- Accessibility Resources and Guides
<https://dcc.uic.edu/resources/accessibility-resources-guides>
- Holding Inclusive Events: A Guide to Accessible Event Planning
<https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Accessible-Event-Planning.pdf>
- Access Suggestions for a Public Event
<https://www.sinsinvalid.org/blog/access-suggestions-for-a-public-event>
- Nightclub For People With Disabilities Empowers Community | TODAY Originals <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSVerfv2Duc>

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- Activities for Adults with Disabilities
<https://www.pinterest.com/helenmb72/activities-for-adults-with-disabilities>
- Fun And Engaging Outdoor Activities For Disabled Adults
<https://betterme.world/articles/outdoor-activities-for-disabled-adults>
- 8 Fun Meetup Ideas <https://www.peerspace.com/resources/fun-meetup-ideas>
- Meetup group ideas <https://www.pinterest.com/68robbins/meetup-group-ideas>
- Types Of Meetup.com Events, Based On Their Social Dynamics
<https://www.succeedsocially.com/typesofmeetupevents>
- Guide to a Successful Meetup Group & Meetup Events
https://owasp.org/www-pdf-archive/Guide_to_a_Successful_Meetup.pdf

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- Accessible Games: Ideas from NOPBC Game Night
<https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/fr/fr39/4/fr390417.htm>
- Making Games Accessible For Everyone | Xplay
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_1OBM_IOac
- How to run a great games night and make it inclusive and supportive of, accessibility, well being and neurodiversity
<https://herefordshireboardgamers.co.uk/what/how-to-run-a-great-games-night>
- Let's Game! An Accessible Gaming Event Playbook
<https://mdod.maryland.gov/mdtap/Documents/Accessible%20gaming%20Guidebook.pdf>

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- A Practical Guide to Game Accessibility
https://accessible.games/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/AbleGamers_Includification.pdf
- Games & Entertainment Accessibility for People with Visual Impairments
<https://www.pinterest.com/officialperkins/games-entertainment-accessibility-for-people-with>
- DIY Game Night Party! Cheap & Fun for Everyone!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pG5L0NE_32U
- Accessible Games for the Blind & Visually Impaired: Cards, board games, puzzles, and more! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-FM8GM6bN4>

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- How to Adapt Board Games for People who are Blind / Visually Impaired
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7WMG3TIO_c
- How to Host a Game Night <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dt7S4yKapJg>
- How to Host a Amazing Party
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-upoHc2-HY>
- 7 Fun Party Game Ideas That Are Great for Groups
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6sTItXr-mA>
- Game Night Ideas <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9-2HSI7eVk>
- Disability and Inclusion in the Tabletop Gaming Community
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Knps245MXs>

Resources on Building Brave and Fun Spaces for People with Disabilities

- How to make D&D more inclusive for people with disabilities
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9D7JiU3LfU>
- TOP 5 BEST GAMES FOR GAME NIGHT | FAMILY FRIENDLY or ADULTS ONLY
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaN0xRzfV4U>
- Making Game Night More Inclusive
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hb4RB9j_dhw

How to Connect with T.J. and His Works

Website and Social Media Links:

<https://linktr.ee/TimotheusGordonJr>

Chicagoland DPOCC Website:

<https://chicagolanddpocc.wordpress.com>

Chicagoland DPOCC YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5HECGueMQ2cRSIIls5WSLWg>

Email: tgordo7@uic.edu

Thank you for your time and support!!



Image description: In a middle of a crowd, there is a tall, African-American male with locs speaking through a megaphone. He is wearing a blue baseball cap, glasses, and black t-shirt

That's all Folks!

Q&A/Comment Time



It's time to SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT

I'm now open for any questions, comments, ideas or concerns about the topic! When you come up to speak or speaking on camera, state your name and where you're from first.

If you need a prompt, you can come up to me and share examples of how you and your friends in the disability community in your area like to come together. What fun things do you all like to do together? Where do you all like to hangout? How do you all feel when you all come together?