



## SEE THE REAL PERSON

SPECIAL DAYS

### PREPARATION

- Explore International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD) [website](#) for information and ideas to share
- Find out about Enabled, a Salvation Army community supporting people affected by disability. You may wish to invite a visitor from a local group to give a talk. Email: [enabled@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:enabled@salvationarmy.org.uk)
- Gather some blindfolds, yoghurts and teaspoons
- If you have a wheelchair available, consider using this
- Prepare to show the music video 'This is me' from the movie *The Greatest Showman*
- Provide a mirror for each member (or ask members to bring one) for the Bible thought

Be sensitive in case this is a difficult subject for some of your members.

### INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The annual observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December was proclaimed in 1992 by the United Nations. This special day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilise support for the dignity, rights and wellbeing of persons with disabilities.

In this session we are going to consider our understanding of disability and how we approach people with a disability. Remember, disability or being differently abled can be an emotive subject, so be sensitive. And don't assume that everyone experiences being differently abled as a negative issue.

### ACTIVITIES

#### DISCUSS

Create an open discussion with your members, with the questions - and answers, below.

**Question:** When someone says the word disability, what is the first thing that comes into your mind?

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Give members a short time for reflection, then ask them what came to mind.

Usually the first thing that people think of when the word 'disability' is mentioned is a wheelchair. We are 'conditioned' to do this, so it is the wheelchair symbol that is used to define disability on parking spaces and toilets.

**Question:** What is the percentage of people with a disability who use a wheelchair?

Encourage members to give a percentage. You could encourage engagement by stating 'higher' or 'lower' as members participate.

**Answer:** Just under five per cent.

Once you have established that the answer is five per cent, you should explain that this means that 95 per cent of disabilities may be invisible.

**Question:** How many people in the UK have a disability?

**Answer:** Just under 14 million - or to put it another way, one person in five.

## CHALLENGES

Raise awareness of the challenges some people face by organising the following activities.

### Blindfold

Put a blindfold on someone and guide them around the room to see what this feels like.

### Wheelchair

If you have access to a wheelchair, take turns to sit in it and be pushed to see how it feels. Find out what talking to others and seeing things is like from this (lower) perspective.

### Feeding

Use the yoghurts and spoons to feed each other to experience what it is like being fed.

## SHARE

Share information and ideas from the [IDPWD website](#).

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## Enabled

Share about how this community provides empowering spiritual and social fellowship for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

If there is an **Enabled group** in your area, invite a member to come along and speak to the group.

## VIDEO

The big hit from the film *The Greatest Showman* expresses the desire for all people to feel valued and to belong. Show the music lyric video '**This is me**' by the cast of the film.

## BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

Perhaps the biggest challenge people with a disability face is the attitude of society. People with a disability are often viewed as victims of circumstances, who are deserving of pity. People with a disability do not agree. They want to see changes in attitudes so that all people with a disability can participate as valued members of society in all aspects of life.

When we talk about change, most people think of changes in access arrangements - which is important. But the change needed is about more than simply access.

Simple changes in how we communicate can make a significant positive change for many people with a disability. For example, when creating a PowerPoint presentation, the size of the font, the colour of the background and the colour of the font can all have an impact. Black font on a white background (as on a printed page) is one of the worst formats for a multimedia screen, but is the one most commonly used. Yellow font on a blue background is considered to be the most accessible - though this still isn't best for everyone.

A person with a disability is first and foremost a person, and our challenge is to look beyond the disability and see the person.

A few years ago The Salvation Army changed the name of SAFE, The Salvation Army Fellowship of Endeavour, to 'Enabled'. The new name was suggested by members. Changing the name reflects that we no longer see members as deserving of pity as they endeavour, but we see them as fully enabled members of The Salvation Army. We want to embrace what members can do, to recognise their gifts, qualities and skills. You see, it's more than just a change of name - it is a change of emphasis and attitude.

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The question for each of us is: What are we doing in our day-to-day lives to ensure that people with a disability feel they belong?

From the very first chapter in the Bible, we learn that God created all of us in his image - we are all included in his creation.

📖 ‘Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

‘So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

‘God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”’

(Genesis 1:26-28)

Look at yourself in a mirror. What do you see?

As you look at yourself in the mirror, reflect on the fact that you are created in the image of God.

EVERYONE is created equally in the image of God. We should celebrate this as well as our individual qualities, gifts and skills.

## SONGS

- ♪ SASB 381 ‘Lord, your praises fill both earth and sky’  
Watch the [instrumental music video \(no lyrics\)](#) by Music and More or the [instrumental live version \(no lyrics\)](#) from The Salvation Army Ladies Band, Mombasa.
- ♪ SASB 363 ‘Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King’ (‘Forever’)  
Watch the [live lyric video](#) by Chris Tomlin uploaded by Overflow TV, or the [music video \(no lyrics\)](#) by The Salvation Army Liverpool Walton.
- ♪ SASB 261 ‘Lord, the light of your love is shining’ (‘Shine, Jesus, shine’)  
Watch the kids’ [lyric video](#) uploaded by vbtyree, or the [lyric video](#) by Graham Kendrick
- ♪ ‘Give me oil in my lamp’

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Watch the [kids' lyric video](#) by Sing Hosanna or the [lyric video](#) by *Songs of Praise*, uploaded by Radio & TV Memories

## WEBSITE AND CONTACT DETAILS

- Connect website: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect)
- Family Ministries website: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families)
- Emails: [familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk)
- Facebook: @sarmyfm
- Twitter: @ukifamily
- Instagram: safamily\_ministries



### Family Ministries

Having faith in the family

Providing intergenerational support, training and resources for

**Children** | **Adults** | **Everyone**