

DISABILITY IDENTITY

WHAT IS IDENTITY?

The qualities, beliefs, etc., that make a particular person or group different from others.

Identity is highly **personal** and **intrinsic**. Yet identity can also be seen as communal and shared because a person is dependent on **interactions with others** for identity development to occur. Identity is **socially and historically constructed**. Identity encompasses aspects of gender, social class, age, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity and ability.

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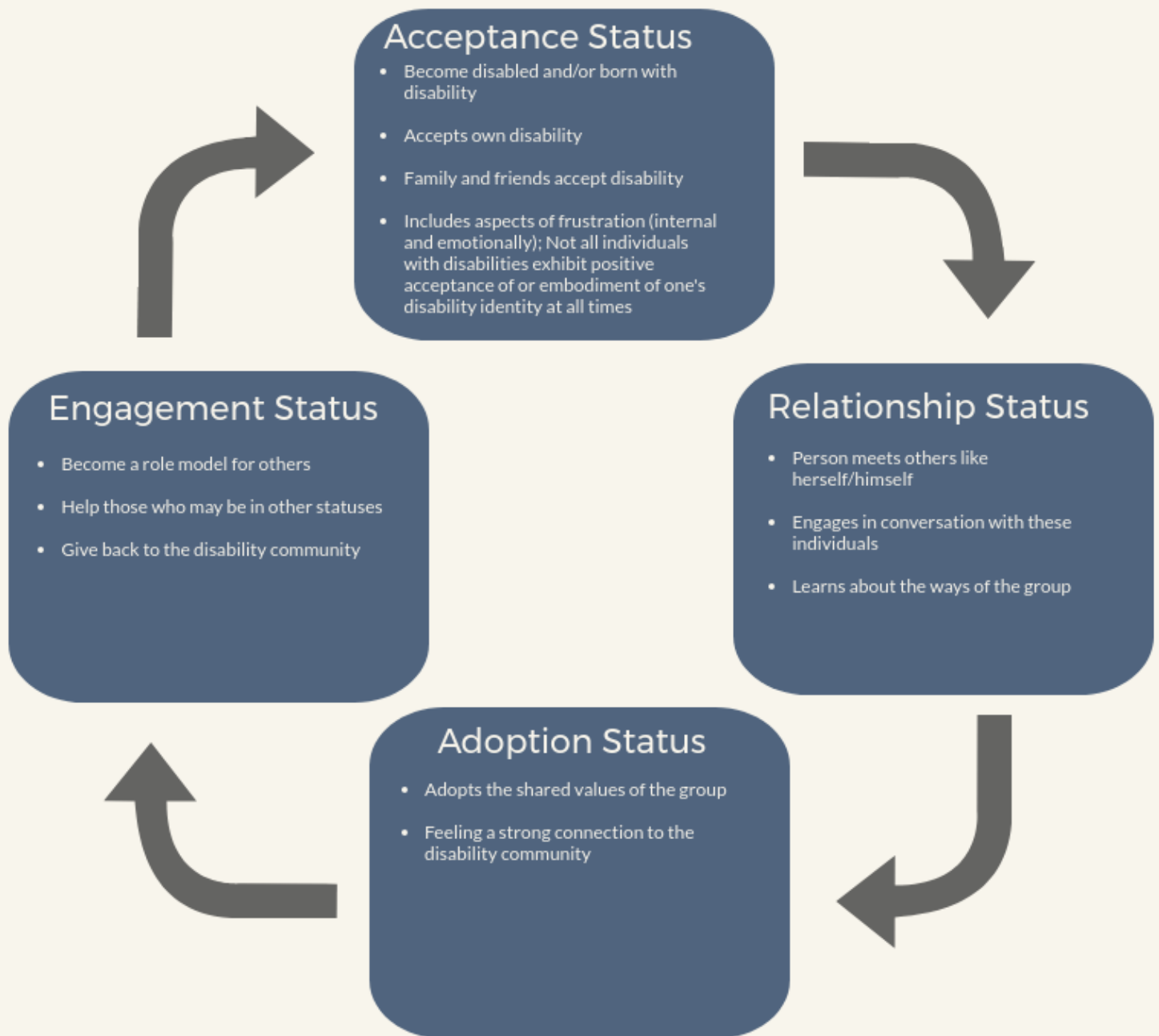
A sense of self that includes one's disability and feelings of connection to, or solidarity with the disability community.

A coherent disability identity is believed to help individuals adapt to disability, including navigating related social stresses and daily hassles.

Self-Reflection

1. What do you think of when you hear the term "disability identity"?
2. If there was a magic pill that would take away your (or your family member's) disability would you take it? Why or why not?
3. How do your multiple identities impact your work and your daily life?
4. How has your family member's disability affected your own identity or identities?
5. How do you define your disability identity or your connection to disability?
6. How and where do you seek out connections to or with the disability community for you or your family?

Figure 1. Model of Social & Psychosocial Disability Identity Development



Sources:

Forber-Pratt, A.J. & Zape, M.P. (2017). Disability identity development model: Voices from the ADA-generation, *Disability and Health Journal*. Advanced Online Publication. doi: 10.1016/j.dhjo.2016.12.013

Forber-Pratt, A.J., Lyew, D.A., Mueller, C., & Samples, L.B. (2017). Disability identity development: a systematic review of the literature. *Rehabilitation Psychology*. Advanced Online Publication. doi: 10.1037/rep0000134

<http://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/notables/2017/07/finding-ourselves-what-we-know-about-disability-identity-development/>

https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/14211.Best_Children_s_Books_with_Disability_Accessibility_Themes

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